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The FMA Digest is published quarterly. Each issue features practitioners of martial arts and other internal arts of the Philippines. Other features include historical, theoretical and technical articles; reflections, Filipino martial arts, healing arts and other related subjects.

The ideas and opinions expressed in this digest are those of the authors or instructors being interviewed and are not necessarily the views of the publisher or editor.

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

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From the Publishers Desk

Kumusta

And if you have not figured it out yet the Special Edition is an issue that the FMA Digest puts out that is informational on some of the areas of the Philippines, Filipino people, such as the different areas that one can go to for asking questions, finding information, or just talk to other Filipino martial arts practitioners as in **Special Edition 2005-1**. Or weapons and training gear companies for the practitioner of the Filipino Martial Arts, as in the **Special Edition 2005-2**.

In this Special Edition 2005-3, the FMA Digest looks briefly at Guro Roland Dantes, Champion weight lifter, Television and Movie personality plus a Filipino martial artists and Grandmaster Trovador Ramos, a Filipino martial artists and musician then breaking into the cinema while in Hong Kong to further his movie career upon returning to the Philippines.

Mr. Jay de Leon, then brings us information on Filipino action stars here in the United States, followed by some information on movies that have had some Filipino martial arts in them. Finally the FMA Digest takes a look at training videos for the Filipino martial artist, and recommends if interested that the reader should try and obtain them for further knowledge of the Filipino martial arts.

Of course it is assured that there are other movies, actors, actresses, and training videos out there, some very rare others just a little searching and they can be obtained for private ownership.

The FMA Digest hopes you enjoy the Special Editions.

Maraming Salamat Po

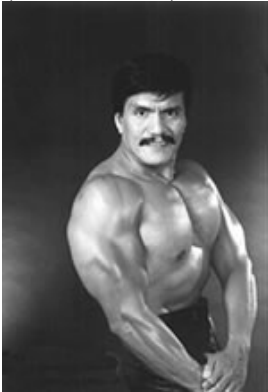
Roland Dantes

Weight Lifter, Television - Movie Star, Martial Artist

An arnis master in his own right, Guro Roland Dantes has studied under and exchanged ideas with a vast who's who in the world of Filipino martial arts. And has promoted the art of Arnis continuously throughout the world.



Additionally, he has promoted the art of arnis continuously throughout the world since the 1970s. Awarded a 7th degree Black Belt in Arnis de Mano in 1977 by the late Grandmaster Remy Presas of Modern Arnis, he was later promoted to the rank of 8th degree black belt prior to Professor Remy passing away. Guro Dantes has also studied with some of the most recognized Filipino martial artists such as: Grandmaster Ben Lima – Lightning Scientific Arnis, Grandmaster Johnny F. Chiuten, Grandmaster Filemon Caburnay – Lapunti Arnis de Abaniko, Grandmaster Antonio Ilustrisimo (Ilustrisimo system/Kali Ilustrisimo), Grandmaster Jose Mena (Mena Style/Doblette Rapihon), Grandmaster Dr. Guillermo Lengson (Kafephil / Arfephil/ Sagasa), Grandmaster Ciriaco “Cucoy” Canete – Doce Pares, Grandmaster Porfirio Lanada – Lanada Arnis, Grandmaster Edgar Sulite – De Campo, Caballero style / Lameco, Grandmaster Jose Villasin – Balintawak, Grandmaster Johnny Chiuten – Combined Open style, Grandmaster Chris Ricketts – Bakbakan, Grandmaster Leo Gaje (Pekiti Tirsia), to name just a few.



Master Dantes has excelled in other parts of his life, not be content with only studying arnis. He also possesses a degree in Bachelor of the Arts and Bachelor of Science he is also a qualified physical fitness instructor, and a graduate of the National Police Academy in the Philippines. Even with this among all these accomplishments, he is a well-known and successful bodybuilder, and television personality and film star.

Roland became interested in bodybuilding through a close friend that was a former Mr. Philippines, Mr. Elpidio Dorotheo who was a close friend of the well-known Steve Reeves. With his prior training in Arnis he was already physically fit and after a few months of training as a bodybuilder he began competing. In 1966, entering competition as a beginner, he was subject and judged by Olympic rules, which was based on points for three events. The events were the two-handed press, snatch, and the clean jerk, with each having to be done with 3 times the contestant's body weight. His first accomplishment was the title of Mr. Novice. Obtaining this was a challenge for throughout his training he was also a police officer and working for his educational degrees.

Continuing with his desire to compete, he won the title of Mr. Philippines in bodybuilding first in 1969, and then in 1973, 74, 76 and finally in 1980. Upon obtaining the



title of Mr. Philippines in 1969, he left the Philippines going to New York, USA to represent his country in the Mr. Universe competition. Along with 'now' well-known bodybuilder and movie star, Arnold Schwarzeneger, 4th in the finales in 1969, 5th in 1973 and 74 and 6th in 1979. He also came in 5th place in 1970 in the Mr. World competition and 9th in the World Games Bodybuilding in 1980. Awarded a Certificate of Merit from the International Federation of Bodybuilders (IFBB) and also received a Gold Medal Award from bodybuilding in 1982 from Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos.



Master Dantes on returning to the Philippines was asked to guest on several television talk shows and has through the years received many TV awards for his work. One of these was the Golden Globe Award for television for Hollywood's ABC movie "Children of Lac" and was the production Manager/Technical Coordinator for the Philippine segment, of the Hollywood TV series "You Asked for It". He has been an English sports announcer for Philippines Channel 7 as well as appearing as a guest on several Philippine TV soaps, musicals, and sports shows. Appearing on San Francisco's channel 7 and on Japanese TV, he has demonstrated Philippine martial arts.

It was one of his early guest appearances on a Filipino talk show that afterwards he was approached by a film company, which was looking for fresh new faces for films, that would give Roland his break in films. He was given a script and asked to come by for an audition, in four days.



It was a month later that the film company contacted Roland and informed him of their interest and would have a part in the production "**The Pacific Connection** - The story is set in the past when the Philippines was ruled by the Spanish. To prepare him, the studio sent him to acting and stuntman school, which he attended 5 days a week for 6 months. At the end of 6 months, Mr. Luis Nepomuceno contacted Roland and informed him that he would have the leading role in the movie. This was a big production at the time and he worked alongside such noted actors and actresses such as Nancy Kwan, Guy Madison, Alejandro Rey, Dean Stockwell, Hiroshi Tanaka, Cole Mallard and Gilbert Roland. Suddenly Roland Dantes found himself in the spotlight and well on his way in becoming a celebrity in films.

Other films in which he has had a leading role are:

Arnis – The Sticks of Death

The Golden Triangle

The Heavy Hand

Uhaw na Dagat – featured at the Vienna Film Festival for best drama. Uhaw na Dagat 'Thirsty Sea' Roland played a deaf mute in a carnival as a stuntman during the Japanese occupation, which was stranded on an island. A dramatic film Roland found this role to be challenging and having to rely fully on expressions to put forth the character in which he had to portray. Also working along side Gloria Diaz – 1st Miss Filipina Universe winner and Eddie Garcia. This was a most rewarding experience for Roland, shooting

being done on a isolated island for 5 months it was one of his fondest memories and for as filming was being done he would be stung by sea urchins countless times making it the worst of memories.

Banta ng Kahapon

Cuarto Y Media

Sintigas ng Bakal

Ninong

In Co-Starring he has been in such films as:

Durugin si Totoy Bato

Hayop sa Ganda

Kato Son of the Dragon

Tiger Shark – Working with martial artist Grandmaster Mike Stone

The Mercenaries

Fatal Angel

Roland Dantes has also had featured roles in various movies such as:

The Children of Lac - This exceptional made-for-television production tells the true story of Ina Balin (who plays herself), a courageous woman who helped to evacuate hundreds of Vietnamese orphans prior to the fall of Saigon. Directed by John Llewellyn Moxey and also including actresses Shirley Jones and Beulah Quo.

Delta Force II - Operation Stranglehold – Meeting Chuck Norris while he was filming the Missing in Action movie series. Roland was asked to take part in this film about DEA agents taken captive by a ruthless South American kingpin; the Delta Force is reunited to rescue them in this sequel to the 1986 film Delta Force.

When asked about which was his best film and his worst, Roland is straightforward. "Uhaw na Dagat" ("Thirsty Sea") was a dramatic film in which Roland played a deaf mute who was a stuntman in a carnival who were stranded on an island during the Japanese occupation of the Philippines. Featured at the Vienna Film Festival for best drama, Roland found this role to be challenging and having to rely fully on expressions to put forth the character in which he had to portray. Working alongside Gloria Diaz who was the first Filipina to be crowned Miss Universe winner and Eddie Garcia this was a most rewarding experience for Roland and one of his fondest memories. With shooting being done on an isolated island for 5 months, it also provided Roland with some bad memories as he was stung by sea urchins countless times during filming.

Trovador Ramos

In the late 60's, early 70's Trovador Ramos left the Philippines to play music in Hong Kong, while employed as a musician he also broke into the cinema. Before returning to the Philippines and getting his debut in the Hong Kong cinema, it has been said that before he was to leave, Bruce Lee approached Trovador in the nightclub he was working at to offer him a role in [at that time] an upcoming movie that was to be titled "Enter the Dragon."



Unfortunately if Trovador accepted this role it would require him to be defeated in a fight on screen. Trovador could not accept this kind of role and turned down the role and returned to the Philippines to continue his acting career. Trovador believed that he could not and would not be bested in a fight scene. The only time he lost in a fight on the big scene was when approached from behind and was hit in the head.

In returning to the Philippine Trovador Ramos continued to promote his martial arts TRACMA “Trovador Ramos Consolidated Martial Arts.” Also continuing his acting career he starred and played supporting roles in various movies.



Filipino Action Stars in the U.S.

By Jay de Leon

Judging from the title, you are probably thinking, this should be a short list. Okay, so what we will do is play loose with definitions a little bit. Some will not be full-blooded Filipinos, but as long as they have one drop of adobo in their blood, they qualify. Some will not be exactly household names, but as long as they have enough credits for a filmology, to me they are stars. Predictably, most of them have appeared in the martial arts genre'. A few are legitimate Hollywood action stars.

Either way, let's have fun looking at this list of Filipino action stars who have graced either the big screen or your television screen.



Mark Dacascos

Hawaiian Mark Dacascos is a world-renowned martial artist, winning countless kung fu and karate championships in the early 1980's. His father, Al Dacascos, is a martial arts instructor of Filipino, Spanish and Chinese ancestry, while his mother Moriko McVey is of Irish and Japanese ancestry. Being a poi-dog (Hawaiian for mixed mutt) with ambiguous good looks has allowed him to play characters of different nationalities. He first got noticed with the television series *The Crow: Stairway to Heaven* (1998)

and has now appeared in numerous movies including *Only the Strong* (1993), *Brotherhood of the Wolf* (2001) and *Cradle 2 the Grave* (2003) where he fought Jet Li. He has just finished filming *The Nomad* (2004) where he plays Sharish, a leader of a large warrior tribe. And to further demonstrate his versatility, Mark makes his debut in 2005 as the host of *Iron Chef America*, a cooking show on the Food Network.



Mark Dacascos

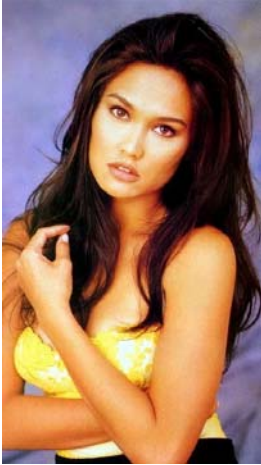
"The Crow: Stairway to Heaven"



Dan Inosanto

Dan Inosanto is the keeper of the flame for Bruce Lee's jeet kune do and a FMA living legend, known as the founder of Inosanto Kali. As for his cinematic accomplishments, Guro Dan, as he is informally called, is most known for his on-screen duel with Bruce Lee in *Game of Death*. In most of his other films, Dan plays the menacing Oriental heavy, for example, as a balisong wielder in *Sharky's Machine* (1981), as Hatchet Man in *Big Trouble in Little China*

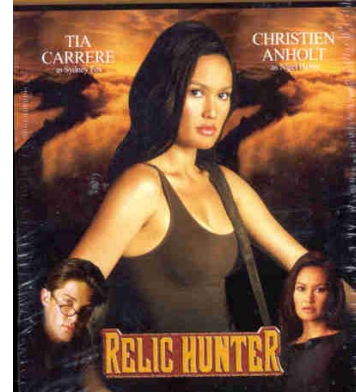
(1986), and as Sticks in *Out for Justice* (1991).



Tia Carrere

Born Althea Janairo in Honolulu, Hawaii, exotic-looking Tia Carrere (also spelled Carrera) is part Filipino, part Chinese, and part Spanish. She has starred in both action movies as well as blockbuster comedies. Her action movies include Showdown in Little Tokyo with Brandon Lee, True Lies with Arnold Schwarzenegger, and Rising Sun with Sean Connery, and her comedies include the cult classic Wayne's World 1 and 2 with Mike Myers. She has appeared in Playboy magazine and is also a singer. You

might recognize her from her TV series, Relic Hunter (1999).



Tia Carrere
TV series "Relic Hunter."

Diana Inosanto

Diana Inosanto is the daughter of Guro Dan Inosanto. Understandably, she was born into the martial arts and quickly learned her father's martial arts systems. With her dark good looks and lithe, athletic figure, she has had a flourishing acting career, starting with the hit TV series Moonlighting with Bruce Willis and Cybill Shepherd. Now married to Ron Balicki who also works in the entertainment field as a stunt and fight choreographer, they have teamed up together to include the production side of entertainment as well as martial arts. She has also worked as a stuntwoman in a number of action movies and martial arts films. Her latest movie is The Vault (2004).



"The Vault" Starring Diana Inosanto



Lou Diamond Phillips
Richie Valens in "La Bamba."

Lou Diamond Phillips

Lou Diamond Phillips is a recognized name in Hollywood, and has been in several blockbusters, including La Bamba and Young Guns I and II. He is half-Filipino and was actually born in the Philippines. He owes his good looks to the Cherokee Indian, Hispanic, Hawaiian and Scottish-Irish as well as Filipino blood that run in his veins. He is loved by the Filipino community, as he is a staunch supporter of Filipino World War II veterans, appearing before the Veterans Affairs

Committee of the U.S. Congress asking for the passage of the Filipino Veterans Equity

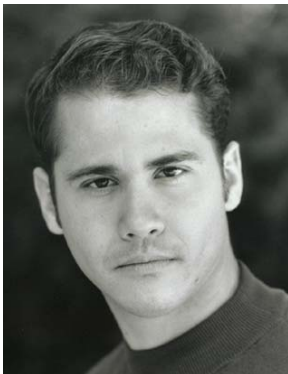
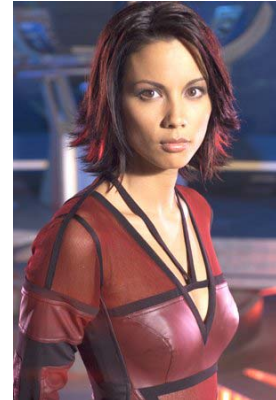
Act, which would restore the benefits taken away from them in 1946. His father, stepfather and five uncles served in the U.S. Navy.



Lexa Doig

Alexandra “Lexa” Doig was born in Toronto, Canada to Filipino mother Gloria and English-Scottish father David. Her first significant role was in William Shatner’s series TekWar. She then appeared in many projects in both the big and small screen before landing a lead role in the movie Jason X (2001), which was the 10th installment in the Friday the 13th series. Not long afterwards, she captured the title role in Gene Roddenberry’s Andromeda.

Lexa Doig in the TV series
“Andromeda”



Louie Eguaras

A relative newcomer to the big screen, Luigi “Louie” Eguaras has been doing commercials, stand-up comedy, theatre and television for most of his young life. His most recent film was “Starry Night” (1999) starring Sally Kirkland.

Louie is also a

blackbelt in Taekwondo and Hapkido, and an advanced practitioner of Jeet Kune Do, Arnis, Muay Thai boxing and Silat. Born and raised in the Philippines, his “Mestizo” looks are the result of Filipino, Swiss and Spanish blood.



Louie Eguaras

Poster for “Starry Night” in the background.



Von Flores

Von Flores is now in his fifth season playing FBI agent Ronald Sandoval in Gene Roddenberry’s Earth: Final Conflict. He was born and raised in the Philippines and went to school and started acting in Canada. Flores has enjoyed leading roles in a number of television productions, including TV movies. He has also appeared in feature films.

Von Flores (extreme left)
In the TV series “Earth: Final Conflict.”



“The Ultimate Fight”
Starring
Ernie Reyes, Sr.
Ernie Reyes, Jr.

Most of you probably remember Ernie Reyes, Jr. as a young martial arts child actor in such movies as Red Sonja, Teen-age Mutant Ninja Turtles and Surf Ninjas. Well, Ernie Reyes, Jr. is grown up now—as a martial artist and as a serious actor. I saw his first full-contact Muay-Thai fight in San Jose, which he won. He continues to work in movies, and his latest cinematic works include roles in Rush Hour 2 (2001) and The Rundown (2003) where he provides the exciting, bruising fight scenes with The Rock.

Most of you probably know Ernie Reyes, Sr. as the father of Ernie Reyes, Jr. Out of paternal pride, he might admit that that is his greatest achievement but his other accomplishments are impressive as well. He is a leading Taekwondo exponent in the United States, credited with the formation of the West Coast Demo team and the Next Generation demo team and revolutionizing the whole demo scene nationwide. He began work in the movie industry as a fight choreographer, eventually working both as an actor, stuntman and action choreographer for many of Ernie Jr. films.



Ernie Reyes, Sr.



Ernie Reyes, Jr.

From bit players to martial arts heavies to Hollywood stars, Filipinos have added to the ethnic landscape of mainstream television and movieland. I hope you enjoyed meeting or knowing a little bit more about a few of them. If you or anybody you know is poised or on the threshold of Hollywood stardom, please let me know.

To contact Jay de Leon, **Email** or reach him at 951-894-1452.

Seen Any Good Filipino Martial Arts Movies Lately?

By Jay de Leon

The movie *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* was a movie sensation, topping \$100 million at the U.S. box office, the first foreign-language film to cross that mark. It elevated the martial arts epic to serious cinema, catapulting the genre into the mainstream Western audiences. It also brought me back to a different place and time, back to the Philippines, during my boyhood. I remember going to Chinatown with a bunch of friends to watch Chinese sword fighting movies. Unlike *Crouching Tiger*, it had no subtitles, but had the same furious clanging of swords, combatants chasing each other through treetops and rooftops, and of course more blood and gore than *Crouching Tiger*. Who cared about the plot or character development? For us kids, it was the ultimate martial arts fantasy.

Just a few months ago, another Mandarin-language saga of ancient China, *Hero* starring Jet Li, topped the box office again. And now, close on its heels is *House of Flying Daggers*, starring Zhang Ziyi, which premiered in the Cannes Film Festival. Not unexpectedly, this movie has again captured the same mainstream American audience that flocked to *Hero* and *Crouching Tiger*.

Which brings us to the eternal question, when will we get to watch an arnis blockbuster? Now, that would be my ultimate cinematic fantasy. Imagine it now - Visayan pinuti (sword) vs. Muslim kris, double stick sinawali vs. tapado strikes, a Yaw-Yan kickboxer vs. a Harimaw buno grappler—the possibilities are endless. All we need is Ang Lee (director of “*Crouching Tiger*”), a young version of Roland Dantes (sorry, Master Roland) as the hero, a young version of Bob Wall as the villain, a few million dollars, a cast of thousand Arnisadors and, of course, Zhang Ziyi.



Zhang Ziyi

My feeling is that blockbuster will be a while. But did you know that arnis movies have been produced? Thought you'd never ask. Here are some arnis movies, running the gamut from major U.S. theatrical releases with a smidgen of FMA, to straight to video movies, to Filipino movies in Tagalog.

Sticks of Death (English)

Released 1979, Starring Roland Dantes, Rosemarie Gil

Plot: Johnny Guerrero (Roland Dantes), a cop, teams up with an American Interpol agent named Frank Santini to bust an international drug ring. In between ambushes and fights with the bad guys, Johnny and Frank enter a full-contact *arnis* tournament.

FMA Highlights: Lots of Filipino weaponry including slingshot, poison darts, modern weaponry such as collapsible baton, and improvised weapon such as a trash can, *arnis* training scenes and demos, FMA masters Jose Mena vs. Cacoy Canete in a tournament fight.

Review: Thumbs up, way up. Roland Dantes happens to be a ranking grandmaster in my system, Modern Arnis.

The Pacific Connection (English)

Starring Roland Dantes, Dean Stockwell, Nancy Kwan, Guy Madison, Alejandro Rey, Gilbert Roland.

Plot: Ben (Roland Dantes) avenges the death of his parents at the hands of the evil Portuguese governor and his two sons, after training in *arnis* with a blind monk.

FMA Highlights: The most intimidating FMA action was the poster that showed Roland Dantes' Mr. Universe physique and proclaimed

“Arnis: Deadlier Than Karate! More Brutal Than Kung fu! Swifter Than Any Sword.” The movie featured double sticks vs. assorted weapons including sabre, katana, and nunchaku.



Fire in the Night (English)



Graciella Casillas

Graciella performing several *sinawali* training scenes.

Review: Not enough FMA. Since Casillas is a true *Arnisdador*, her training scenes were entertaining enough to watch. The climactic fight did not even involve weapons.

Released 1985 (straight to video), Starring Graciella Casillas, Patrick St. Esprit, Simeon “Muni” Zano, John Martin.

Plot: Terry Collins (Casillas) enlists the aid of FMA master Manolo Calba (Zano) to prepare for a challenge fight with the town bully Mike Swanson (St. Esprit).

FMA Highlights: Highlights include Graciella Casillas dancing authentic Filipino dances (including the *tinikling*, the dance that requires dancing between bamboo poles) that Calba required of her as part of her training, and FMA highlights include



Movie poster

“Fire in the Night”

Starring Graciella Casillas.

Kamagong (Tagalog)

Plot: Three men fight in full contact double stickfighting matches for different reasons. “Kamagong” refers to the Philippine ebony wood that their sticks are made of.

FMA Highlights: Double stick vs. double *balisong* fight; climactic duel at high noon witnessed by the whole town.

Review: For Tagalog audiences only.

The Hunted (English)

Released 2003. Starring Tommie Lee Jones and Benecio del Toro: knife choreography by Rafael Kayanan and Tom Kier

Plot: Aaron Hallam, a trained assassin AWOL from the Special Forces (del Toro), goes over the edge and on a killing spree, killing four deer hunters in the area. The FBI, unable to track him down, turns to the only man who can, L. T. Bonham (Jones), the man who trained him.

FMA Highlights: The knife fights choreographed by FMA Blademasters Rafael Kayanan and Tom Kier. Kayanan was supposed to be an extra in the movie, killed by del Toro.

Review: Panned by the critics, but enjoyed by the macho crowd. Go ahead and enjoy the movie, and go back later and slow-mo the fight scenes.



The climactic knife fight
between Tommie Lee Jones and Benecio del Toro.

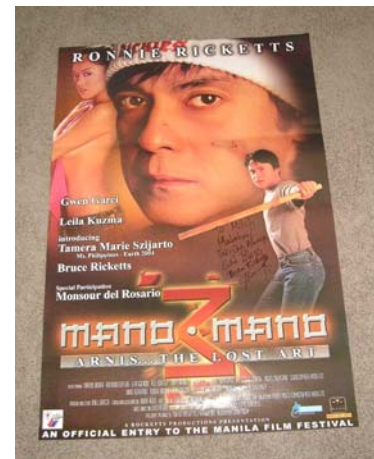
Mano Y Mano 3 (Tagalog)

Released 2004, Starring Ronnie Ricketts, Gwen Garcia, Leila Kuzma, Bruce Ricketts, (13 yr old nephew of Ronnie and son of “Topher”): fight choreography by Christopher “Topher” Ricketts.

Plot: Nato Aragon (Ronnie Ricketts), an *arnis* champion, avenges the death of his policeman brother murdered by a powerful crime boss.

FMA Highlights: Non-stop fights, arnis vs. samurai fight, all choreographed by “Topher.”

Review: This movie was the lone action entry in the 2004 Manila Film Festival. I met Bruce Ricketts at Myrlino Hufana’s Expo and *Laban Laro* 2004, and saw him showcase his superb *arnis* skills. According to “Topher” Ricketts, the movie was a blockbuster, and who am I to contradict him? By the way, if you will look closely, that poster was autographed by Bruce Ricketts.



Game of Death (English)

Released 1979. Starring Bruce Lee, Gig Young, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Dan Inosanto.

Plot: Billy Lo, a martial arts movie star, (Bruce Lee), takes on a crime syndicate of drug dealers who kidnap his girl friend and try to kill him. In the climax, he has to fight his way to the top of the tower or pagoda, however greater and greater masters of different martial arts guard each floor.

FMA Highlights: Okay, this is no FMA movie. But of course Dan Inosanto gets to play the Filipino master guarding one of the floors and gets to showcase his *eskrima* stick skills, culminating in a *nunchaku* duel with Bruce Lee.

Review: This movie was incomplete when Bruce Lee met his untimely death. Since some of the fight scenes had already been shot though (even before *Enter The Dragon*), the producers decided to complete the movie, using a Bruce Lee double, stand-ins, cut-outs and cinematic sleight-of-hand to fill in the missing scenes. The movie is of course a cinematic chop suey, but the martial arts fights are vintage Bruce Lee, with the climax being a brutal mano y mano fight to the death between Lee and his student in real life, basketball star Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. Basically you pay the price of sitting through an hour of celluloid trash to watch the last half hour, when the real Bruce Lee uses his *jeet kune do* to battle several real life masters of their arts. You will have to decide if that hour is worth it, unless of course you have a fast-forward feature.



Sharkey's Machine (English)



Released 1981. Starring Burt Reynolds, Rachel Ward, Vittorio Gassman, Henry Silva, Brian Keith, Charles Durning, Earl Holliman, Bernie Casey, Dan Inosanto

Plot: Tom Sharky, an Atlanta narc demoted to a vice cop (Reynolds), goes against a crime boss (Gassman). Along the way, he falls in love with a stunning prostitute (Ward), gets a finger sliced off by a *balisong*-wielding Oriental (Inosanto), and, in the climax, has an suspenseful shoot-out with the boss's cocaine-addicted brother and designated hit-man (Silva) that you will not forget.

FMA Highlights: Dan Inosanto is one of Henry Silva's hired killers. He gets to flash some fancy balisong moves, and in one of the movie's bloodier scenes, slices off Burt Reynold's finger. All right, I agree the scenes cannot even count as depicting FMA. The first time I saw this movie, I was just excited to see Guro Dan, and would always point out to everybody around that his weapon was a balisong.

Review: First of all, this movie had a bona fide all-star cast, including one of my all-time villains, Henry Silva, and one of my all-time screen beauties, Rachel Ward. This was a good action movie, and one of the better early Burt Reynolds action movies. That is probably no ringing endorsement considering all the trash he has starred in. But he seems to be making up for those with his mature portrayal beginning with Boogie Nights. I know, who appointed me movie critic?



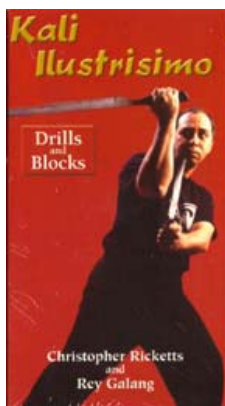
Rachel Ward

Finally, my Modern Arnis instructor, Master Godofredo Fajardo, currently teaching in Saudi Arabia, told me to mention that he was featured showing sword skills in the 1992 Tagalog movie Dugo ng Panday with Bong Revilla (a top action star in the Philippines). Oy vey, everybody wants to be a movie star. If any of you die-hard movie fans that rent Tagalog movies ever run into this one, please shoot me a copy. I need something to watch until that defining FMA movie comes along.

To contact Jay de Leon, **Email** or reach him at 951-894-1452.

Filipino Martial Arts Videos You Should Have In Your Library

By Jay de Leon



One of the ways to enhance your skill as a Filipino Martial Arts (FMA) practitioner, (or any other martial arts for that matter), is to watch videotapes or DVD's of Masters in action. I do not recommend learning from videotapes if you are a beginner. Learn the basics from a qualified instructor. There are too many nuances of a fighting system that is difficult to pick up from a video or DVD unless you have a minimum level of expertise.

Some of these nuances include footwork, angles, timing and flow. In addition, most of the techniques or sequences presented involve a level of so-called attributes, like speed, power, coordination and balance. It took a lifetime for these Masters to execute at that level. Chances are, you will not even come close after one viewing. I

would say, after at least two solid years of training in one particular system, only then would a video tape or a DVD provide you with enough instructions or information to improve your skills.

Some videos are enjoyable just as historical documentation of the system of a Master, especially if he has passed away. For example, some of my favorite videos are those of Punong Guro Edgar Sulite. The videos are excellent instructional videos. They also serve as a memorial and remembrance of the superb arnisador and beautiful human being who was Edgar Sulite.

Well, of course, the technical or production aspects of the video or DVD also come into play. I guess it helps if the video has excellent quality, proper lighting, good pacing, professional editing, audible sound, and so on. It goes without saying that DVD generally delivers better viewing than videotape, and the newer videotapes present better quality than the much older tapes. Some viewers also want to be entertained, so they want the performer to be livelier, with a few jokes thrown in between the techniques.

There are literally hundreds of FMA videos out there now. Lately, there has been a slew of videos produced in Europe and now being marketed in the U.S. As a caveat, beware of videos by individuals of dubious credentials and FMA lineage. What to watch? It all depends on what you are looking for. Are you looking for a particular instructor, a particular system, or a particular subsystem (e.g., defense against a blade, baton techniques, etc.)? Or do you just want to be entertained?

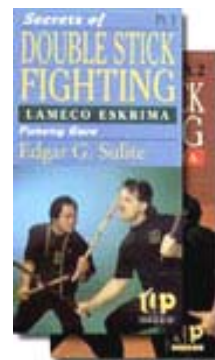
Finally, I have seen a lot of FMA videos in my time, but of course, I have not watched every FMA video out there. This was a hard list to compile. I have tried to be objective, but of course, I am biased towards certain instructors and certain systems and certain personalities. Also, some of these videos I bought a long time ago, and I have no idea if they are still available on the market.

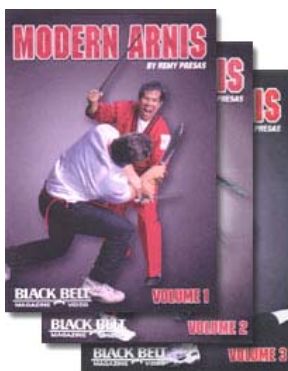
Here then are FMA videos that I recommend for your library:

“Double Stick Fighting, Part 1 & 2,” and **“Espada y Daga,”**
by Punong Guro Edgar Sulite - Produced by Unique Publications
Video, Burbank, CA, USA.

Advanced Laban Laro,” by Punong Guro Edgar Sulite -
Produced by Lameco International.

Punong Guro Edgar Sulite is revered as the founder of Lameco Eskrima. Unfortunately, Edgar Sulite died while on a trip to the Philippines, at the young age of 39. I never got to meet Edgar Sulite, but I like his style and I am now a student of Felix Valencia, one of his senior students. These tapes are excellent instructional videos of *Lameco*, and a poignant reminder of Edgar Sulite. I also get to watch my fellow instructor Phil Rapagna “play-fight” with Edgar in one of his tapes.





Modern Arnis by Remy Presas

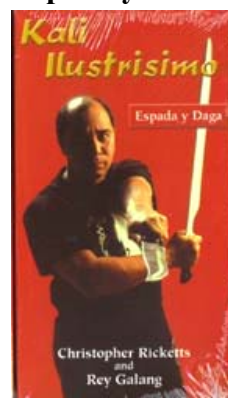
Produced by Black Belt

Professor Remy Amador Presas, founder and Father of Modern Arnis, lost his battle to brain cancer in 2001. Undoubtedly, many of his able senior students, including his own children, will carry on to preserve his legacy, including producing videos of his techniques. But nothing will ever replace the original. Here, forever preserved in video, are the techniques of Modern Arnis presented by Professor Presas himself. If nothing else, for those of us that knew Remy, these techniques serve to remind us of the grace and fluidity of Remy's flow, and the joy that radiates from him as he demonstrates his art.

“Kali Ilustrisimo Foundation,” “Kali Ilustrisimo Drills and Blocks,” “Kali Ilustrisimo Flowing Drills & Fighting Grips,” and “Kali Ilustrisimo Espada y Daga,” by Christopher Ricketts and Rey Galang

Produced by Unique Publications Video

Kali Ilustrisimo is the highly regarded FMA system founded by Grandmaster Antonio “Tatang” Ilustrisimo, and both Christopher Ricketts and Rey Galang are first generation senior students of the art, in addition to being top echelon members of Bakbakan International. In these tapes, they reveal for the first time various techniques of the art : Bagsak, Lastiko, De Cuerdas, Patapyas, Estrella, Media Fraile, Pluma, Cadena Real, the signature flow drill of Cuatro Cantos, Dos Manos, and the Tulisan knife forms of Alas and Lengua de Fuego.



Professor Florendo Visitation (right)
and Shihan David James

“Vee-Arnis-Jitsu: Stick Concepts Part A & B,” by Prof. Visitation & Shihan David James
Produced by ESPY-TV Martial Art Video

Professor Florendo Visitation, known affectionately as Prof. Vee, is the founder of Vee-Arnis-Jitsu, the product of many years of training in several martial arts, including FMA from Prof. Remy Presas and Rene Latosa.

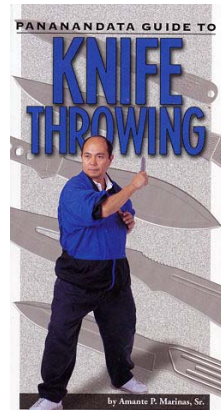
These tapes reflect the FMA portion of his art. Shihan David James is the current inheritor of

his system, teaching out of their New York facilities.

“The Art of Filipino Weaponry—Pananandata: Balisong, The Art of Opening & Closing,” and **“Pananandata : Double Balisong,”** by Mat P. Marinas

Produced by ESPY-TV Martial Art Video

Amante “Mat” P. Marinas is the founder of Pananandata (literally, the art of weaponry), and one of the most prolific writers on FMA around. A true master of Filipino weaponry, he has either written about or produced tapes on a whole array of weapons including blowguns, throwing knives, ropes, nunchuks, bolo, the 14-inch diameter ring, horsewhips, tonfa, chain and, of course, the balisong (Filipino butterfly knife). The other tapes in this series, in addition to the balisong tapes, feature single stick, double sticks, tonfa, and self-defense with common items.



“Balintawak Eskrima” by Bobby Taboada



Guillermo “Bobby” Taboada is the foremost authority on the Balintawak style here in the U.S. Balintawak is a hard-hitting, dynamic and efficient system, with plenty of feints, ruses, and combination blows with stick, fist, elbow, knee and foot. Bobby Taboada’s tapes have an eight-volume set from the basics of the system, to footwork drills, equipment drills, and power drills, and a seven level instructor set including a course examination that prepares and tests you to be a “full qualified instructor.” These tapes are as definite as you can get with the Balintawak system.

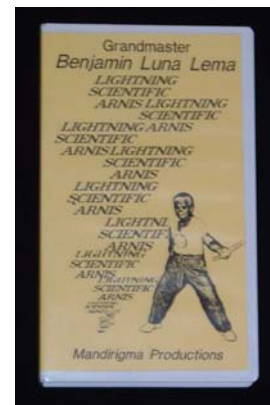
“Lightning Scientific Arnis” by Grandmaster Benjamin Luna Lema

Produced by Mandirigma Productions

“Lightning Scientific Arnis” by Master Elmer Ybanez

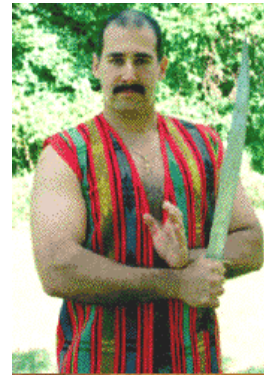
Produced by LionHeart, 75 min.

Grandmaster Benjamin Luna Lema was the founder of Lightning Scientific Arnis, while Master Elmer Ybanez was his most senior student. Sadly, Master Ybanez died in 2001 at the young age of 49, soon after the passing of the Founder himself, “Mang Ben.” I believe that these are the only two tapes produced by these two masters. I have never formally trained in this style, yet this is one of my favorite styles just from watching these particular tapes as well as other practitioners. I would love to train with my friend and now one of the senior instructors of this system in the Philippines, Bot Jocano, who is actually in the tape as one of Master Ybanez’s demo partners. Bot, you’re on my list to train with on my next trip to the Philippines.



“Pekiti-Tirsia Solo Baston Part 1 &2,” and **“Pekiti-Tirsia Abcedario,”** by Master Instructor William McGrath
Produced by LionHeart

Tuhon William “Bill” McGrath was at one time, the heir apparent to the Pekiti-Tirsia organization in the United States under Grand Tuhon Leo T. Gaje. He now heads his independent organization Pekiti-Tirsia International. I do not believe *Grand* Tuhon Gaje himself has produced any tapes of his own system. So the material in these tapes are as authentic Pekiti-Tirsia Kali as you can get.



“Knife Fights” by Felix Valencia

Felix Valencia is a senior instructor of Lameco Eskrima and one of the premier martial arts and law enforcement edged weapons training specialists in the US. He has provided defensive tactics training to numerous law enforcement agencies, knife companies and firearm/weapons schools, including the Los Angeles Police Dept., Trident Knives, Gunsite and Close Quarter Battle. He has also worked as a fight choreographer for martial arts and action movies. This set of six DVD’s gives you the bladed techniques Felix teaches to his elite clientele.

“Real Contact Stickfighting: Volume 3 Sinawali,” Featuring Eric Knaus with Marc Denny and Arlin Sanford

Produced by Panther Productions

Eric “Top Dog” Knaus and Marc “Crafty Dog” Denny are, of course, the founding members of the “Dog Brothers.” The Dog Brothers are known for, and sell tapes of their “Gathering of the Pack”, which is their annual or semi-annual full-contact tournament wherein participants fight with live sticks or other impact weapons, wearing minimal padding or protection. This particular tape is one of a six-volume set. In this tape, the emphasis is on using double sticks and applying sinawali patterns in combat, as well as in transitioning from sinawali to empty hand fighting. As in all their tapes, the material taught is illustrated throughout with fights.



Eric Knauss, “Top Dog”(left), on the cover of
“Real Contact Stickfighting : Vol. 3 Sinawali.”

Other videos out in the market include those of Rene Latosa (Latosa Eskrima), Dan Inosanto (Inosanto Kali), Arsenio Advincula, Richard Bustillo (Doce Pares) , Kelly Worden, Ernesto Presas (Kombatan), Dominador D. Ferrer (Kalantiaw Arnis), Nes Fernandez (Pangasinan kali/eskrima/arnis), Blaise Loong, Hock Hochheim (Modern

Arnis and Kombatan), James Keating (Comtech), Mike Inay (Inayan Eskrima), Ron Balicki and Diana Inosanto (JKD, Inosanto Kali), and Graciella Casillas. Again, depending on what you are looking for, you probably can not go wrong buying videos of these real-deal arnisadors. Anything else outside this list, you're on your own. And if you do find a good one, please let me know.

So start building your video library. And if you yourself have a new video up for release soon, let me know if you would want a review of it.

To contact Jay de Leon, **Email** or reach him at 951-894-1452.



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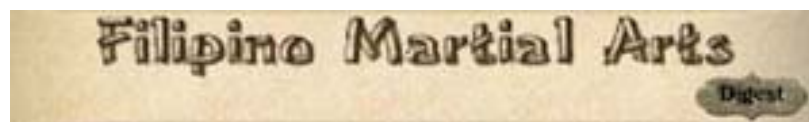
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