



## **Defensive Knives for Urban Environments - Part V**

### **Most Accessible Knife Training in 2025 - The Full Stories**

#### **The Full Story Filipino Martial Arts (FMA)**

##### *\*Worldwide training*

The Filipino Martial Arts (FMA) are weapons-based fighting systems that originate from natural movements assumed to be those of indigenous Philippine tribes and are evolving according to perceived demands of its present audience/practitioners. “Arnis” and “escrima” are Spanish-derived words which are understood to be the more immediate progenitors of FMA. There are also ancient influences from Silat, Indian and Chinese systems with Spanish influence being the most significant in the whole country except for some remote mountainous regions.

The traditional names “arnis” and “escrima” derive from Spanish terminology – “arnis” evolved from the Spanish word “arnes,”

referring to the harness on which the armor was hung in preparation for battle. “Escrima” is also a derivative from the Spanish derivative from the Spanish-derived word “esgrima,” meaning fencing.

Because the prevalent training tool and actual street weapon for arnis practitioners has been rattan sticks or hardwood batons. When steel blunts are used for practice, it has been fashionable to call these movements “kalis,” the Malay word for sword (still in use by many tribes in the Philippines today). “Kalis” means the “keris, kris” which is phonetically derived from the Turkish “kilij” meaning sword. The term “kalis” is noted in many of the Spanish dictionaries of the Spanish colonial period to mean the sword, fighting with the sword or practicing with the sword.

While many practitioners today use the term kali, this term was introduced to Filipino martial arts in the 1970s. Leo Gaje introduced his system to North America after arriving in the US in 1972. Dan Inosanto also played a significant role in promoting this terminology.

Arnis was taught within Filipino communities until the late 1960s, the breakthrough came in the late 1960s-1970s when Filipino masters began teaching outside their communities, combined with Hollywood exposure and the practical appeal of weapons-based training for military and law enforcement applications. The connection to Bruce Lee through Dan Inosanto was particularly significant.

Today's FMA maintains its traditional weapons-based foundation while adapting to modern training methods and competitive formats. It's recognized both as a cultural heritage and a practical martial art system used by military, law enforcement, and civilian practitioners worldwide.

*\*Some great instructors include:*

Some old systems are still being taught by the Paete Arnis Club under Granmaestro Reynaldo "Doy" Baldemor. There is GM Bobby Taboada of Balintawak. Bobby "Silver" Tabimina also of Balintawak. There is also GM Rene Tongson teaching a very similar system to Ilustrisimo called Abanico Tres Puntas. There is Samuel "Bambit" Dulay of Modern Arnis.

These gentlemen are excellent teachers for the preservation of Arnis. There is also Engr. Devaney Tupas Fuentes who teaches a very recognizable Spanish system.

### **Videos**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hYVkvA\\_oelU&list=PL8LQ57y0iLPp](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hYVkvA_oelU&list=PL8LQ57y0iLPp)

Romy Macapagal

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WPjaZEX06P8&t=2s>

The Archived System of Kalis Ilustrisimo – Part 2

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B74QCotqeC8>

Interview with Mang Romeo "Romy" Macapagal of Kalis Ilustrisimo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WPjaZEX06P8&t=707s>

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## **Accessible Instruction**

### **Ray Floro – Australia**

\*Classes, Seminars, Video Instruction (Best of the best)

Ray Floro of Floro Fighting Systems teaches his own interpretation of Kalis Ilustrisimo with influences from modern fencing.

\*Ray has instructed me in several aspects of his knife system in NYC and in Australia. He absolutely improved the direction of my knife training.

<https://rayfloro.net/>

<https://courses.rayfloro.net/>

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*\*Bowie, Draw-point, FMA's & RBT knife instruction*

### **James A. Keating – USA - Oregon**

Classes, seminars and video courses

\*James Keating is an encyclopedia of edged weapons and unarmed fight skill knowledge. I attended private lessons with him in Oregon.

<http://www.jamesakeating.com/>

<http://www.jamesakeating.com/catalog2.html>

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### **WR Mann – USA - classes, international seminars**

[www.Defensescience.com](http://www.Defensescience.com)   [Defensescience@gmail.com](mailto:Defensescience@gmail.com)

Unarmed against the knife and knife-to-knife combat

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### **Craig Douglas – [www.Shivworks.com](http://www.Shivworks.com)**

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### **Kelly Worden – USA Washington - <https://www.wordendefense.com/>**

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**Michael Janich** USA – Colorado /

<https://www.martialbladeconcepts.com/seminar-schedule>.

[www.martialbladeconcepts.com](http://www.martialbladeconcepts.com) [martialbladeconcepts.tv](http://martialbladeconcepts.tv).

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**Kelly Mcann** – USA – Virginia - [www.kembativz.com](http://www.kembativz.com)

\*I attended Kelly McCan's course and found it outstanding, great handgun instruction and general Reality-Based-knife training

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### **The Full Story on Silat Training**

*\*Taught in: SE Asia – Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei. There are Silat academies in Europe and the U.S. however, not as many as FMA's – and of course there are seminars.*

\*I studied Silat in Indonesia and Malaysia. I prefer the Malaysian styles that are more inclusive of other martial arts.

Most Silat styles can be roughly categorized into Pencak Silat (from the Indonesian Archipelago especially Java) and Silat Melayu (from Malay Peninsula and Sumatra), with Bruneian silat being part of the broader Malay tradition but with its own distinct characteristics.

### **Key Distinctions**

#### **Cultural Influence:**

- **Indonesian:** More Hindu-Buddhist influence, greater diversity, more acrobatic
- **Malaysian:** More Islamic influence, traditional Malay customs
- **Bruneian:** Royal/aristocratic traditions, family-based systems

#### **Technical Focus:**

- **Indonesian:** Higher kicks, jumps, varied ranges of combat
- **Malaysian:** Traditional weapons, cultural performance aspects
- **Bruneian:** Often blade-focused, practical combat applications

#### **Transmission:**

- **Indonesian:** More systematized and publicly taught
- **Malaysian:** Balance of public and traditional methods
- **Bruneian:** More secretive, family-based lineages

All three share common roots in the Malay Archipelago's martial traditions but have evolved differently based on their unique cultural, historical, and social contexts.

\*One of the more popular styles of Silat today is the Bruneian system, taught by Maul Mornie, his system is Silat Suffian Bela Diri SSBD. He teaches classes in the UK and also present global seminars.

#### **Maul Mornie**

<https://ssbdusa.com>

#### **SSBD Videos**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ns8O39Xly5k>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGFEDrQRWSo&t=35s>

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#### **James A. Keating – USA - Orgeon**

Silat classes, seminars and video courses

<http://www.jamesakeating.com/>

<http://www.jamesakeating.com/catalog2.html>

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#### **Reality-Based Training (RBT) & Combatives Training**

*\*USA, Europe, Asia*

During the 1990s, self-defense instructors like myself confronted an uncomfortable truth - traditional martial arts left most students

unprepared for real violence, despite years of training. Only a rare few could make these techniques work under actual pressure. This period also marked a turning point in martial arts, with both military combatives and mixed martial arts gaining significant momentum.

Jim Wagner is a prominent figure in the self-defense and tactical training world, known for pioneering the "Reality-Based" training concept. My definition: Reality-based Training (RBT) is a modern self-defense training system that teaches skills that anyone can use to deal with a wide spectrum of situations from the smallest of daily intrusions right up to winning a violent physical attack. RBT teaches awareness, threat assessment, and unarmed and weapons skills. The training emphasizes the psychological, physical realities and legal aspects.

### **Instructors**

**Jim Wagner:** CA, Classes & International Seminars, Videos

<http://jimwagnerrealitybased.com/>

\*I attended two of Jim Wagner's training seminars lasting several days Each, self-defense in a variety of situation but also survival skills in many scenarios. Jim Wagner was the first instructor to come up with – Pre-Conflict, Conflict and Post Conflicts phases of a fight.

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**WR Mann:** Defense Science NYC, Classes & International Seminars

<https://defensescience.com/> [Defensescience@gmail.com](mailto:Defensescience@gmail.com)

WR offers semi-private classes and international seminars through defense Science. Featuring unarmed and armed defense and combat.

WR co-authored an article about Reality-Based-Training in “Martial Arts of the World.”

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**Kelly Worden** – USA Washington - <https://www.wordendefense.com/>

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**Craig Douglas** <https://shivworks.com/>

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**Kelly McCann** <https://www.kembativz.com/>

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## **Combatives**

*\*Europe, USA, Parts of Asia*

Combatives refers to hand-to-hand combat training and techniques, that originated from the military around the turn of the century and evolved throughout WWI and WWII. It's a comprehensive system. It combines easy to learn elements from various martial arts and fighting disciplines to create practical, effective combat skills for real-world situations.

*\*There's a significant overlap between modern combatives training and reality-based defense principles, and many combatives instructors have adopted RBD methodologies.*

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## **The Full Story on Bowie Knife Training**

*\*Best instruction taught by James Keating in Oregon, USA*

James A. Keating is considered one of the fathers of “Modern Bowie Knife Fighting today.” In the late 80's and early 90's he developed a



system for the Bowie that was based on western swordsmanship - mainly cutting and defending from military saber and thrusting methods from Rapier. His work became foundational for modern practitioners interested in historical American blade work.

The system recognizes that the Bowie was very likely used in many different ways historically, but no doubt some of those ways would have been based on training in saber that men had learned serving in the military and fighting in various wars. Keating developed the Comtech Bowie Knife Series I through VI on DVD providing comprehensive instructional material for his system.

\*Classes, seminars and video courses

<http://www.jamesakeating.com/>

## **Videos**

History of the Bowie Knife

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p8HJGEwldVA>

Blade Reviews

<https://bladereviews.com/interview-with-master-at-arms-james-a-keating/>

The Bowie Back-cut

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNhU5q4Sim4&t=7s>

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## **HEMA**

HEMA stands for (Historical European Martial Arts), the modern study and practice of European fighting techniques primarily from the medieval and Renaissance periods (roughly 14th-17th centuries), based

on historical manuscripts and treatises. HEMA has experienced explosive growth since the 1990s, with clubs worldwide, international federations, major tournaments, and a thriving community of researchers, instructors, and practitioners who blend historical scholarship with practical martial application.

Historical sources include: Johannes Liechtenauer (German longsword), Fiore dei Liberi (Italian martial arts), Ridolfo Capo Ferro (Italian rapier), George Silver (English fighting methods) and Joachim Meyer (German fencing). For individuals interested in knife instruction, HEMA offers, Renaissance-era Italian dagger techniques within the HEMA community. The HEMA community operates more as a decentralized network.

**\*IFHEMA** (International Federation of HEMA)

**\*HEMA Alliance** (HEMAA)

### **Videos**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WNIFpaRuocA&t=17s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fNmsXX1NtgA>

She only trained in Arnis and Krabi Krabong and won a HEMA competition

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CIHY4EUF6Bw>

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### **Krabi-krabong**

Thailand does have knife fighting techniques, though they're typically integrated within the broader krabi-krabong weapons system rather than existing as a standalone knife-specific martial art.

Within krabi-krabong, the weapons include the krabi (curved sword/cutlass), but the system also encompasses various shorter

bladed weapons and daggers. Some Muay Boran instructors teach knife and sword techniques as part of their curriculum indicating that knife fighting methods exist within the traditional Thai martial arts framework.

Krabi-Krabong was featured in **"The Man with the Golden Gun" (1974)**

See the scene: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6fx1\\_n4ggs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6fx1_n4ggs)

Krabi-krabong is a traditional Thai martial art that focuses on weapons combat, particularly sword and staff fighting. The name comes from "krabi" (sword) and "krabong" (staff), though the art encompasses a broader range of weapons including spears, clubs, and shields.

This martial art has deep historical roots in Thailand's military tradition, originally developed for battlefield combat by Thai warriors. It was practiced by the royal guards and military forces of ancient Siam, serving as both a practical fighting system and a way to maintain physical fitness and discipline among soldiers.

The techniques emphasize fluid, circular movements that flow naturally from one position to another. Practitioners learn to wield weapons with both hands independently, developing ambidextrous skills that allow for complex combination attacks and defensive maneuvers. The footwork is dynamic and includes stepping patterns that help maintain balance while moving in multiple directions during combat.

While less internationally known than Muay Thai, krabi-krabong remains an important part of Thailand's martial heritage and is still taught in some traditional schools and cultural centers throughout the country.

Modern training camps like Tiger Muay Thai offer knife fighting instruction where students learn defensive and offensive techniques with bladed weapons. The approach typically emphasizes fluid movements, quick strikes, and defensive positioning that complement the overall philosophy of Thai martial arts.

### **Videos**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3r7HqXtpCI>

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*\*Written by WR Mann, defensescience.com defensescience@gmail.com*

*\*Romeo K. Macapagal – Technical Advisor and Head of the Archived System of Kalis Illustrisimo*

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*\*Coming up - Defensive Knives for Urban Environments Part VI*

*\*Less Accessible Knife Training in 2025 - The Full Stories*