

# FMA

# Informative

Propagating the Filipino Martial Arts and the Culture of the Philippines

Informative Issue No. 2  
2011

## *Learn in 6 - Teach in 12*

*Simple! Not rocket science or something so complex that it takes years to understand the principles and concepts behind it.*



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The PMA Informative, tries to bring forth a multitude of information, on every subject on the Philippine martial art and culture to educate non-practitioners, students, and even experienced practitioners in hopefully reminding them and informing them about subject which may have been forgotten or not fully known.

This the 2nd Informative Issue deals with the Modular “Learn in 6 - Teach in 12” which was created by Grandmaster Bram Frank. You may ask why this, well let us say that this is one of the most basic, common-sense perspectives in learning blade work that is known and he is kind enough to share this with anyone that is willing to learn.

When some instructors teach they try to impress or demonstrate their style in a manner that if you are not familiar with the style or an experienced martial artist then you walk away saying, “gee that looked good, but I really cannot remember any of what was shown”.

When teaching modular it has to be simple. It cannot be rocket science or something so complex that it takes years to understand the principles and concepts behind it. It has to be simple so that it can be transferred from one person to the next in a small amount of real time and remembered. Simplicity and common sense; the time a normal educational class would take. So with Bram Frank's modular he has set the bar at 6 hours to learn, (one full day) and 12 hours, (two full days) to learn to teach the concepts. This makes modular the perfect way to get ideas of usage transferred from one person to the next person, even if the transference is in large numbers.

Now in this issue is just a taste of his modular and it is most highly recommended that you obtain his training manual or attend one of his seminars or training sessions.

Bram Frank is known throughout the world so it is only right to say a few things about the man himself: for which I thank Senior Guro Edessa Ramos a long time friend, “sister” and student of Bram Frank.

Bram Frank is especially into Gunting and so it was fortunate that he has shared his knowledge of The Gunting Family of Knives.

**Note:** Like his instructor Professor Remy Presas the Grandmaster and Founder of Modern Arnis, Bram Frank was Black Belt Magazines 2007 Hall of Fame: Weapons Instructor of the Year

Well it is hoped you will enjoy this issue and see that to pass on knowledge you do not have to always show something flashy and complicated, but the best for education is simple, using common sense and the basics.

**Note:** Cover photos by Pirri of Mexico.

Each issue features practitioners of martial arts and other internal arts, other features include historical, theoretical and technical articles; reflections, Filipino martial arts, healing arts, the culture of the Philippines and other related subjects.

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## Modular Learning Perspective

### “Learn in 6 - Teach in 12”

Teaching modular has to be simple. It cannot be rocket science or something so complex that it takes years to understand the principles and concepts behind it. It has to be simple so that it can be transferred from one person to the next in a small amount of real time. Not training time or martial arts time but real classroom time. Real classroom time is referring to the time a normal educational class would take. In this case we set the bar at 6 hours to learn, (one full day) and 12 hours, (two full days) to learn to teach the concepts. This makes modular the perfect way to get ideas of usage transferred from one person to the next person, even if the transference is in large numbers.

How is this possible? It's possible because modular is based on bio-mechanical user skills. What one does naturally and instinctively is used as the principle of motion and translated into basic user skills... By utilizing those basic skills, one can learn the applications very, very quickly...

Principle of action: Bio Mechanical action a person's arms close across one's body from high shoulder to low waist. The same arm opens back to the same side at waist height. The recovery is a circular, vertical motion of said arm on the open or outside of one's body. This describes motions that in fencing or sword work are commonly named Downward Diagonal strike #1, Horizontal Closed strike #4 and Downward Vertical strike #12 or in modular as 1-4-12.

These same actions are also basic instinctive safety actions: #4

is get away, push away, #1 is get way push away, #12 is cover one's head, push away.

By utilizing actions that are based on Bio mechanical action, no thought is necessary to make these actions happen. This is important in combative situations where fine motor thought and fine motor skills disengage quickly. Sometimes under duress due to training one retains and one has complex thought but that doesn't mean one has fine motor skills... Motor skills skip that level. One is either fine motor skill or gross motor skill at a physical level. One might have fine or complex thought but only gross actions to back it up. As the heart rate increases a little, fine thought becomes complex thought which almost immediately drops to gross thought and now both thought and physical actions are on the lowest level. If one's defensive actions are not based on the lowest denominator they cannot be accomplished within the context of use.

Many times trained martial artists get beat on the street: it's not that the street fighter is tougher, it's that the trained martial artist attempts fine motor application of his/her skills while the street fighter splits the common denominator and keeps it simple. A punch is a punch and a kick is a kick. No attempting of almost impossible movie stunts: just raw fighting done as the street fighter knows works. To compensate for this tendency modular is designed as a GMS- Gross Motor Skill fighting skill set. This is NOT about making a great fighter out of someone

with little or no skill. It's not about taking someone of good skill and making a great fighter out of them. It's not about the great difficulty of teaching, understanding and comprehending such intangible as distance, timing and footwork: things that do take years of training and dedicated practice and application to ingrain in one's repertoire. What it IS about is teaching some basic correct responses to attacks within a limited range of complexity and the ability to use these responses under duress. Accomplish that simple task and the good guy goes home to his family and the bad guy has a very rotten day... or no future days at all.

Teaching modular is about perspectives: and the perspectives are on many levels. Presentation is the key to understanding modular: Right to left orientation, Forward to reverse grip, Single or double weapons (matched or unmatched), Tall to Short, and Close or Closer. These presentations of perspectives can exist by themselves or be mixed with each other. Present this in a complex fashion with lots of set rules and it's going to be rocket science: present this in a conceptual way and it borders on natural response. We want Natural response! We want to learn and teach simplicity. We want to be able to use our skill sets successfully as we need them.

Modular actually has a set progression: it is based on what we might encounter most and biased towards the reality of that encounter. Reality and its parameters are mutable and in combat what people teach as the gospel truth

can be mutable. Truth mutable? Yes, truth can be mutable if the truth that is taught works only with young strong males and not with someone eight years old or eighty years old. Truth is mutable if it only works with people wearing summer clothing not winter. Truth is mutable if what is taught only works in specific circumstances and not in generalized situations.

What is also paramount in learning Modular is that the core of learning is based on teaching.

### Imagination is More Important Than Knowledge

Albert Einstein said that imagination is more important than knowledge. That might seem to be a strange statement but it's profound: creative thinking encourages pushing the envelope and being in an uncomfortable place, whereas knowledge or assumed knowledge usually puts one in a place to be safe and not challenge one's security. Imagination asks on to explore unsafe or unknowns where knowledge is a known mapped place: you've been there before usually quite often. If one encourages imagination one encourages learning and self exploration. This usually bleeds over into other phase of one's life.

Martial arts stimulate imagination and learning: they challenge one's presupposed ideas, concepts and way of thinking. They also encourage play acting, playing inside one's head and a physical manifestation of those plays, along with use of imagery. One has to use imagination to see how martial arts translate especially with concepts rather than spoon fed techniques and exact answers to assumed situations. If Einstein was alive today he'd be doing mar-

Teaching allows for a reality check of what one knows or doesn't know, the ability to link ideas and concepts and to be honest with ones self and others as to the actual quality of what one is attempting to teach. The only thing worse than the Telephone game, where unknown details are replaced with assumed details and over time and repetition the red cart white horse becomes the gilded chariot with a purple dragon; is when an instructor teaches what he or she doesn't

tial arts.

Personally imagination is not something I need stimulated. Martial Arts encouraged more thinking, thinking out of the envelope and I missed part of the connection to the part of knowledge. What I mean is that I couldn't make the jump from what I did as imagination and application - translation in martial arts to the other phases of my life. As I said in the opening: This usually bleeds over into other phase of one's life. I didn't get the bleed effect that would help me in my early life especially in school.

In school the teacher would teach the class and I certainly could use my imagination: only this doesn't translate into knowledge. Knowledge comes from free association of imagination and uses of the tools talked of in learning the knowledge. Since imagination came easily I expected knowledge to come as easily and if knowledge was as easy as imagination then experience and use were of course right around the corner. Only that's not how it works. One actually has to practice the knowledge base, one has to

really know; yet it is presented as gospel. Modular is set up to allow a continuous flow of information between one's students and one's self all at a GMSS level no matter the number of repetitions or seeming complexity level and allow both student and instructor to grow in use and understanding. Modular as stated is a Train the trainer methodology...

Modular asks that one use Common Sense, as uncommon as that is in use and thinking.

apply the knowledge base and that practice is generically known as "homework". Home work is the bane of all school children and students, because its seen and understood as useless and all it does it set one up to see that one has no idea of what one is doing and that one's teacher will make one feel as if one is a total jerk when the homework is corrected and one's homework is all wrong. This is self fulfilling prophecy: one can't learn as it's taught each day in class, home work really shows that and it becomes something else, a Killer of imagination and a willingness to explore. Safety is in hiding or being stupid. I mean why do it since it only shows that one doesn't know or doesn't understand. Why be embarrassed in class?

What has this to do with martial arts and the learning of Martial Arts? Everything! When the Instructor demonstrated a technique or motion no one expected to learn it immediately in class: especially me. We would practice the move all class long and then on our own after class. When I got home I would practice the moves as best I could. I could see the moves in my

head, I wanted them to be exactly as the instructor did them, and I had to use imagery and imagination.

Some of this necessitated other cross training to get the dexterity and strength while still practicing the same moves over and over again. Martial arts did encourage dedication, repetition and practice. Contrary to regular school where once shown something I expected somehow to know, do and be perfect, in martial arts I expected to go to class to be told I needed even more practice and doing it wrong, poorly or almost was a good sign rather than a neon sign saying “I’m stupid”... How novel, the ability to practice what I was being taught and not feel self conscious about being right or wrong or doing it correctly the first time, every time. Practice to be perfect rather than the pitfall of perfect practice: instead of doing it to be better one usually tried to look good for the teacher.

## It’s a Left Side - Right Brain Thing

Modular learning is set up from the perspective of a normal learning situation; that is how does a right-handed - left brain person see, understand and comprehend information. Most of us see things and use our dominant hand or side. It’s like using a toothbrush to brush one’s teeth; it is normally a simple task done with our right hand but a terrible experience with our left hand. Brushing our teeth with our opposite hand should simply be left handed, nothing complex, just a simple mirror image conversion: but what happens is we visualize brushing with our

There’s another name for all this, and I said previously that homework is the bane of all school children and students, it’s useless and all it does it set one up to see that one has no idea of what one is doing and that one’s teacher will make one feel as if one is a total jerk when one goes into the classroom with homework done all wrong or worse with excuses why one couldn’t do the homework at all.. Only that’s what all this martial arts practice really is: homework. Plain and simple, its homework, work one does at home away from the classroom. It’s practicing what was learned or shown at one’s own pace and understanding and that practice is called “homework”.

That simple revelation would have saved me many hours of anguish in school, stopped many fights with my parents and probably changed my scholastic grade average. I might have enjoyed school as much as I

right hand while we do it with our left. We make it a right handed procedure but using our left hand. If this sounds backwards, well it is backwards. It’s an unnatural reaction in mechanics but a natural response in logic or within a dominant sided logic train. Professor Presas used to say “*Bram, this is left to right, it doesn’t work the same, its sort of backwards*”

What it is, this use of one’s left hand or backwards motion is a small glimpse into being left handed. And not left handed in a sense of I’m a natural leftie and I live my life normally: but I’m left handed in a right handed world

enjoyed martial arts. (by the way, I was a competitive swimmer: I did the same thing with swimming, learn at class and “practice” and then homework on my own for hours and that made no connection to school work and “homework”. I used imagination and imagery there as well as I saw my events and swimming them, the turns and the final touch).

Einstein was correct. Imagination is more important than knowledge and if I had ever imagined that school work and homework were the same as martial arts class and practice then the bleed over would have made my life easier. That bleed over is something I try to use when teaching students today: the understanding of relationships, perspectives and the similarity in all forms of learning including the type one does in a regular school setting. Learning is a complex skill that needs to be taught to people: how to learn correctly.

and I must do things NOT from a normal left handed perspective but form a right handed perspective. Left handers quickly learn no one cares about lefties. Hell, left handers are only 10% - 19% of the world. Certainly not enough to effect how things are made to function. Door knobs turn the wrong way. Bottle caps turn the wrong way. Water faucets turn the wrong way. Everything and anything that turns, calibrates, moves, slides or functions is of course designed to make it easier for right handed people. What’s a lefty to do? The easiest and most common thing to do is as Professor Remy Presas

used to say.”Go with the flow” which is by using one’s left hand to do right handed oriented jobs.

That’s the cause for the modular learning perspective. The ability to be left handed in a right handed world without losing one’s identity or uniqueness and without trying to become something one is not: right-handed. This is a different perspective from normal teaching... One regularly hears of the Instructor telling all to use their right hands or just to emulate the right handed instructor. Then the left handed people on their own try to reverse learn or reapply right hand left brain logic onto their left hand right brain logic centers and then chaos reigns supreme. Why? It’s very simple. Instead of how does it fit in a right handed world, lefties try to make the motion or learning set into a natural left handed response. In most situations a bit of chaos is OK, in self-defense or life altering situations chaos without understanding it can be a truly disastrous event.

There’s another reason we need to understand the relationship of left to right: we might need to use either of our hands at any time or both hands or to use our non

dominant hand to accomplish a certain task and the task appointed might be one of life or death. Most people never think of their other hand nor if forced to make any reasonable use of that other – off hand. And when the need comes up they find it impossible to do. Not so much left handers, they have been forced to understand and exist in a backwards environment, but a right hander under duress and made to use the other hand, the left hand, usually can’t do it and collapses under the stress.

So that brings me to the use of backwards motion. It’s a way for left hander’s to compete and exist within the normal framework of a right handed situations and specific tasks but it allows a right hander to do what we logically would expect: use our left hand exactly as our right hand. Note: as stated before motion wise, in some cases bio-mechanically, Backwards is not the optimum solution. The optimum solution would be working in a mirror image or left to left, but intuitively and because of the framework of positioning and our orientating perspective of the world standard: right handed-

ness we are forced to use backwards, left to right or the left hand doing right handed motions.

Working in a backwards perspective makes Bio-Mechanical shut down usable in a left to right format. A normal left hander reacting to an incoming Right handed attack will be outside the attacking motion. That situation in a strict martial arts sense is an advanced, trained response that needs, depth perception, timing, distance and confidence: one is blending or phasing with one’s attacker and the motion. To damage or hurt the right handed attack one would be striking at the outside radials, bone and the extensors. None of these targets will get the response of many famed knife instructors claim of cut this and the opponent will immediately drop his weapon. Actually they will hold the weapon tighter because they now cannot open their hand: extensors are damaged or cut making it impossible for one to open or extend one’s fingers. Extensors extend or open one’s fingers, flexors close one’s fingers. Cutting the radials and extensors ensures that the knife or weapon is not going to drop!



Decision and Switch points within Backwards 1-4-12: 1-4-12 switch #1 low, feed #2, decision cut to #3, decision 1-2-2, decision closed 2 feed #1 back to 1-4-12

#1: Ms Amy cuts a #1 attack standard at Bram's head. Bram intercepts with a Backwards #1 cut into Ms Amy's attacking arm.

#2: Bram checks Ms Amy and counters a Backwards #4 cut

#3: Ms Amy intercepts Backwards #4 cut with forward pressure: Because of the forward pressure the decision to counter #4 becomes switch 1 low: moving from the low line and to a counter on high line.

#4: Bram switches: Switch 1 Low line control and controls Ms Amy's attacking arm for #2 counter cut. (switch from low to high)



Decision and Switch points within Backwards 1-4-12: 1-4-12 switch #1 low, feed #2, decision cut to #3, decision 1-2-2, decision closed 2 feed #1 back to 1-4-12

#5: Ms Amy checks the #2 cut

#6: Ms Amy holds the check, pivots, steps back with her right, while body shifting away from the attack and cuts Bram's attacking arm

#7: Ms Amy counters with a #3 cut

#8: Bram intercepts the #3 cut, checks it and then counter cuts Ms Amy's attacking hand /forearm. Readies a #12 counter cut.



Decision and Switch points within Backwards 1-4-12: 1-4-12 switch #1 low, feed #2, decision cut to #3, decision 1-2-2, decision closed 2 feed #1 back to 1-4-12

#9: Bram counters Backwards #12 attack to Amy's head

#10: Amy intercepts the attack with a standard Open-Close move; slant block, cutting Bram's attacking arm in the process, all while stepping left and body shifting away from the attack.

#11: Amy clears Bram's attacking arm and checks it.

#12: Amy counters with a #2 cut which Bram intercepts.

Decision and Switch points within Backwards 1-4-12: 1-4-12 switch #1 low, feed #2, decision cut to #3, decision 1-2-2, decision closed 2 feed #1 back to 1-4-12

#13: Bram intercepts the attack, cuts through he attacking arm while stepping back right and body shifting.

#14: Bram body shifts and decision closed 2, counters #1

#15: Amy body shifts away from the attacking #1

#16: Amy intercepts, cuts and checks the incoming #1 attack



Decision and Switch points within Backwards 1-4-12: 1-4-12 switch #1 low, feed #2, decision cut to #3, decision 1-2-2, decision closed 2 feed #1 back to 1-4-12

#17: Amy checks the #1 attack and prepares #4 counter (1-4-12 Backwards)

#18: Amy counters #4 cut and Bram intercepts the attacking #4 with a drop of his right hand

#19: Bram Cuts the #4 arm in a "gutting move"

#20: Bram counters with a closed #12 attack which Amy intercepts with an umbrella block.

Decision and Switch points within Backwards 1-4-12: 1-4-12 switch #1 low, feed #2, decision cut to #3, decision 1-2-2, decision closed 2 feed #1 back to 1-4-12

#21: Amy cuts the v#12 and prepares her umbrella trapping & block

#22: Amy cuts, body shifts, steps up right 45 and traps with umbrella, countering Bram with a #1 cut.

#23: Bram steps back left and intercept cuts the #1 attack

#24: Bram traps Amy's #1 cut and prepares a #4 counter.



**1-4-12 Low Line Standard**



**1-4-12 Low Line Standard**

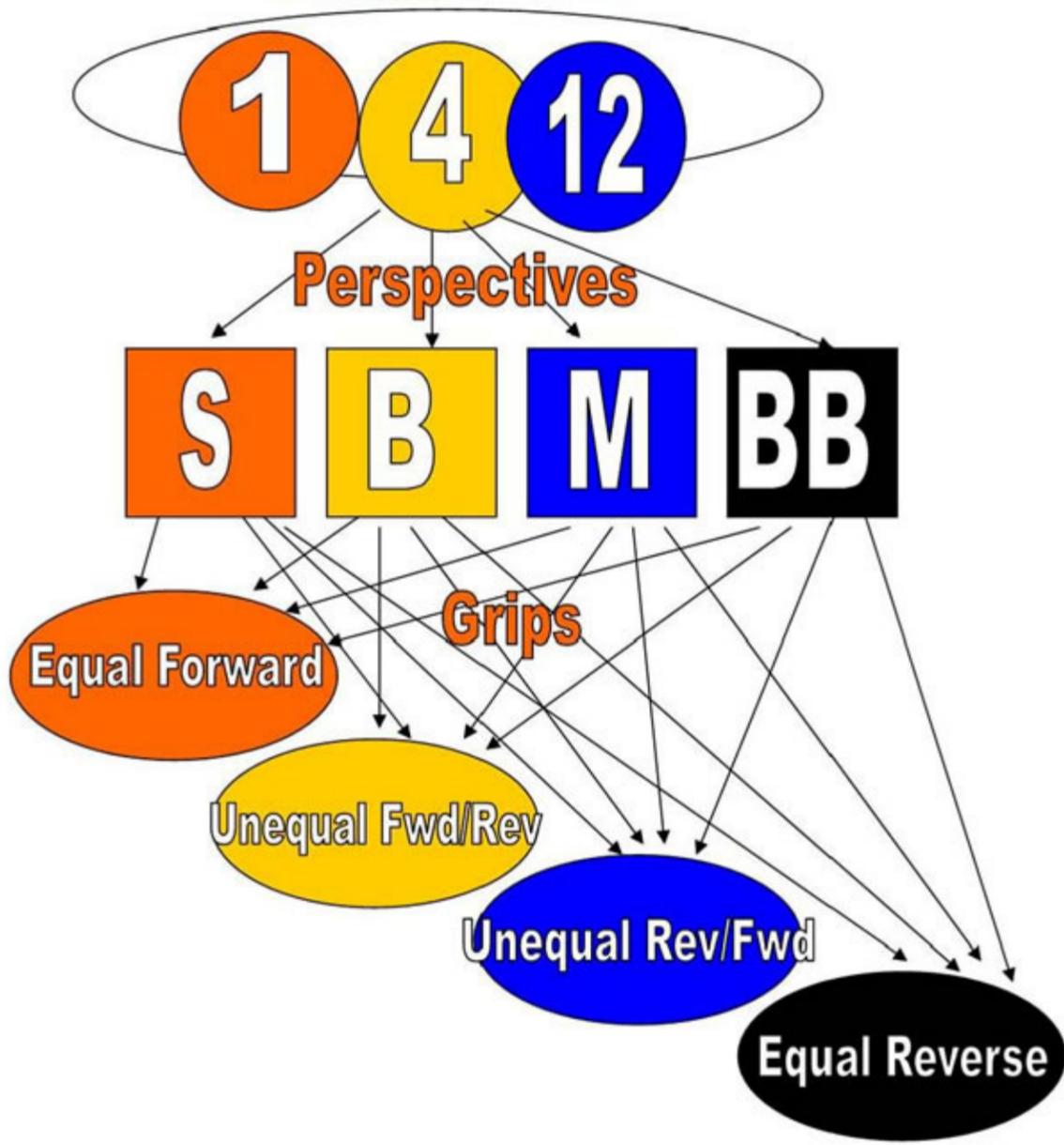


**1-2-2 High Line Standard**



**1-2-2 High Line Standard**

# Module 1-4-12



Standard Backwards Mirror  
Backward Backwards

**Horizontal - Vertical:** teaches using tools as they appear in no set order. Teaches distance, zoning and hit with clearing. Teaches response to common counters. Teaches to grab, control and restrain within the flow of usage Teaches gross motor skill usage & tools

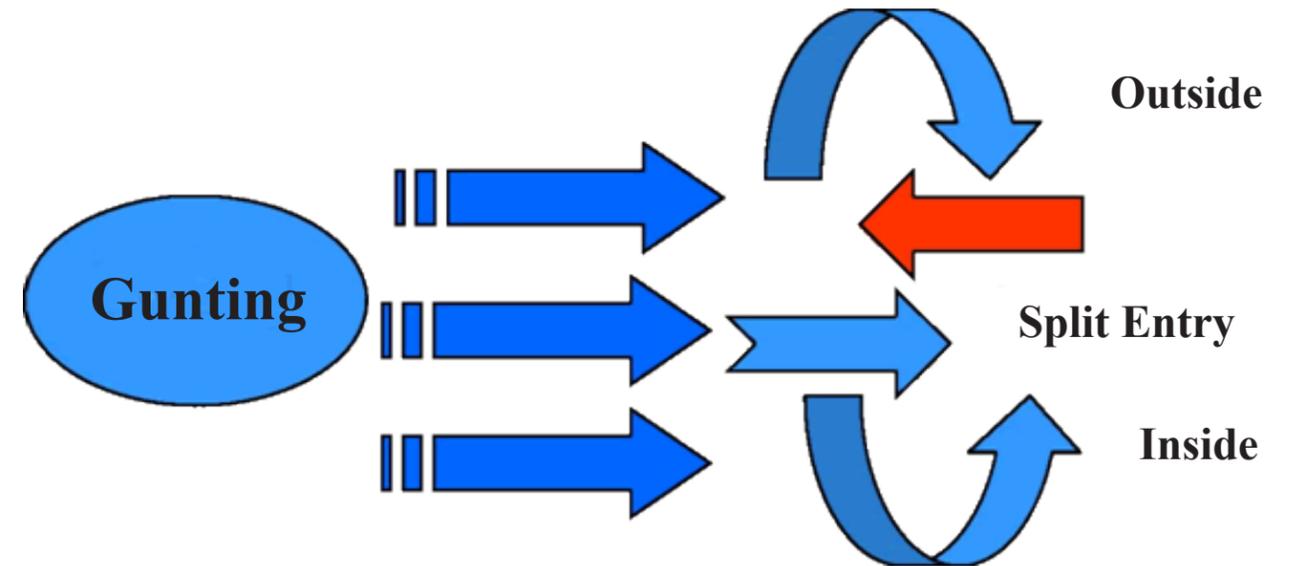
Conceptual motion: Open-Close: scissoring with gunting.

Basic motion: Horizontal to Vertical

- 1) Horizontal to vertical, check-horizontal disengagement Pak-sao- (slap hand) - with hit
- 2) Horizontal to vertical, check-Lop-sao-(grabbing hand) disengagement to outside hit and left arm arm-bar.
- 3) Horizontal to vertical, check- left hand grab checking hand. circling elbow center-lock takedown, butt strike to head.
- 4) Horizontal to vertical, check with downward pressure, Jao-sao - ( circling hand) strike to left side of head.
- 5) Horizontal to vertical, hard check-zoning to outside, and circling to arm bar vertical tendon strike ( right arm).

Horizontal to vertical, check hand removed and replaced by Right check, thumb lock-hand trap too arm bar (right arm).

Horizontal to vertical, check - lower butt grab on hand, upward arm bar, switch hands left arm arm-bar take-down.



## Perspective of Height: Too Tall - Too Short

The basic perspectives of Standard, Backwards, Mirror and Backward Backwards, all views of which hand do I engage with or use, have basic sub texts of High line Low line. These basic sub texts have nothing to do with whether the basic four perspectives are responded to with High line or Low line. Sometimes actual situations set the parameters of these sub text perspectives, sometimes physical reality, sometimes one's setting within an environment or the combination of these factors. We can only control to a small extent whether or not our attacks and counters in our own view might be High line - Low line.

If the determining factor within personal combat is one of a height relationship or who is on higher ground or the perspective of being over another, then it might be outside of our control. For example one might be on uneven ground, on steps, on a platform or ledge or one might be physically taller or shorter than one's opponent. Any of these situations might make it that all of ones responses no matter how one meant it might come out are either all low line or

all high line even if delivered on a conventional plane of motion with a seemingly rigid label. For example one might be a height such as 5.5 (1 2/3 meters) and one's opponent might be a height of 6.5 (2 meters) a seemingly small difference. But in reality there is a great personal perspective difference. The shorter of the two combatants when delivering a high line response might only be delivering a low counter or attack by physical reality to the opponent: the motion might not ever achieve the physical plane needed to be perceived by the opponent as "high line" for it actually arrives on the opponent's "low line". This situation might be the reverse if the attack or counter originates from the taller opponent to the shorter: the attack though intended as a low line response, ends up 1-4-12 to compensate for the high line - low line and in reality becomes a high line attack as perceived by the shorter person. Nothing we can do can make the accepted perception match up with the physical reality. One is forced into using different parameters or perspectives of those same parameters to deal with the situation.

Though the situation might become or seem to become one of

a constant simple patterned Modular response the actual version of combat will become uneven or a form of backwards height variation rather than the same or following...repeating in the sense of there is no point in using a high line attack against a short person because high line attack is directed at empty space while a low line attack is aimed at the opponent's head: even though that wasn't the intent and one is forced to constantly repeat one's attack or defensive perspective to a singular response perspective. What can happen as well is that there is a blending of 1-2-2 with 1-4-12 to compensate for the variations of response within the attack-defend parameters.

Height, weight, environmental conditions, clothing, reach, are all examples of things that can mitigate truth in combat yet are able to be dealt with by using modular conceptual thinking. The old adage that size matters is really true. Therefore Modular teaches us to work within the differences in perspective rather than trying to fight them or change them: because changing those perspectives or elements of truth sometimes is an impossible task...

at all costs!)

Martial artists take a dim view of Colonel Applegate for they are conditioned to believe that their techniques or tricks will always work on an opponent. Empty hand will win over any adversary including one with a weapon. "Karate" the art of empty hand comes from the warriors. It was developed to fight other warriors. Proper

martial art technique can and will predominate over an armed opponent. This myth prevails, continues, and is self perpetuating. Some instructors teach martial arts techniques that they say will be the cure all for combative situations. Some current day "Grandmasters" actually advocate restraint holds that they claim will allow an average citizen or student of the arts, to stop an enraged attacker. Most of what these "Grandmasters" teach is based on the principle and idealistic concept that the opponent will remain passive throughout the restraint technique. One even stated during teaching "grab my wrist, no, not that way, this way" as if any attacker would grab him, as he needed them to. Worse, these expert "Grandmasters" actually call what they teach self-defense or street combative techniques. Locking up an opponent with a joint lock, before the opponent has been disabled is almost fantasy. Current self-defense instructors with real time experience advocate

## How Does One Teach Self-Defense?

In today's world sometimes I don't really know. Pick up the phone book and look through the yellow pages marked "MARTIAL ARTS. Learn to defend yourself! Defeat any attacker" Read the trade publications. Even the main stream martial arts magazines of today carry the ads. Everywhere the great martial arts myth exists. Learn explosive self-defense! Learn unstoppable Martial Arts! Teach any person martial arts skills and no matter their body type, size, age or strength they will be able to overcome an attacker. Superior technique always overcomes brute

what has aptly named the "ICL" method. Intercept, Control and lock. "Intercept" the limb; either by destroying or impairing it, then control-restrain the limb or opponent, then joint lock them. "ICL" is a serious street effective way to stop an opponent's attack and then locking up an opponent.

Most martial arts instructors take a personal perspective on combat or self-defense and everything is judged by way of that instructor's ability to perform the techniques that are taught. This might have validity if the instructor himself was involved in the attack but most of the time it is the recipient of the instructor's knowledge that becomes involved with the altercation. The person involved in the attack cannot possibly respond as the instructor did, yet will try to imitate the instructors teachings even when faced with total loss of fine motor skills and memory of "how to" causing further deterioration of the person's response in the face of

force. OK folks, it's time for a reality check.

Yes, I know that one can go to a martial arts class and see the instructor disarm, disable and defeat several attackers of bigger size and strength. And yes, I personally know famous martial artists, male and female that if put to the test would be an attacker's or even a group of attackers worst nightmare. None of this is reality based. The average person cannot duplicate these feats, and worse if they did try; would end up in serious trouble. Most of the great

attack. Most of the time the martial arts student "loses" and the art itself gets' maligned as being ineffective. Actually it was how and what was taught that was ineffective not the art itself.

Current martial arts instructors still cling to the old belief of "learn this in the order I teach it. WHY? I learned it that way, so will you." There is a need to control the knowledge as well as an adherence to linear learning. Instead of looking at combat, especially street combat as a living opportunity, some instructors of today try to teach learned responses to spontaneous situations. "The attacker will do this, then you respond with this!" Well that doesn't work, for while a student is doing the script from page three, the attacker hasn't seen page three. More than likely the attacker has no idea that a script exists and while the student tries to mold the situation to fit page three as described by the instructor the attacker is adlibbing his way through.

martial artists that I know have trained for many years. Intensely. They run, lift weights, and practice all the time. Most have at one time or another suffered great personal harm and injury within the context of training. The physical or mental injury is acceptable to achieve the training goal: competence in martial arts. Actually it sounds as if I was describing a normal athlete. That's correct a normal high school athlete, male or female goes through incredible training to stay competitive today. College athletes train harder than professionals of the past and an elite few make it to

*The adage of "the same difference" is true and usable in modular thinking.*

## Combat Must Be Simple

During a confrontation memory gives way to instinct which quickly de-evolves into the animal response of survival. Detail work and fine motor skills quickly vanish leaving only gross motor skills to remain. Colonel Rex Applegate the father of close quarter combat stressed these facts during his lifetime. After many

years of personal experience in actual combat and the subsequent training of soldiers for that combat, Applegate came upon certain truths that are considered true principles of combat. He advocated simplicity, directness, attitude, targeting, and use of weapons on a sliding scale from possession of weapons to empty hand. (A situation he advised was to be avoided

the professional level where training is their life.

There are millions of ex athletes out there. Many people continue to train by lifting weights, doing aerobics, or playing pick up games of varying intensity. Gang members, outlaws, criminals all have labels which society has applied to them which somehow the average person uses to identify and confuse the issues. Society uses the labels to degrade the people labeled and to raise themselves over those labeled criminals outlaws, gangs are all “inferior” in some way to the rest of society. Labels don’t change the fact that these segments of “labeled” society contain the athletes of the past or current status. Before the righteous indignation comes out, before you start screaming at this writer’s opinion, go check out the jails. Watch the inmates. The average inmate would literally tear an average person limb from limb. They lift weights, run, box, wrestle, and live in an environment soldiers of old Sparta would have approved of. Hidden cameras have shown those inmates actually train in their own version of street oriented martial arts. The socially unacceptable segment of our society, which we try to prepare to defend against are actually closer to the ideal of what, we expect to be. That’s right. We take the average citizen with no physical ability and a couple of hours a week to give up between life issues and we expect to teach them to overcome real opponents. It’s not going to happen.

Not only does the attacker usually have the training advantage but the other “cards” are in the attacker’s favor as well. Mentally the attacker is geared to do

harm to another human being without thought or care as to the repercussions of such an action. Neither civil nor criminal liability affects the attacker’s state of mind. As in a true warrior “mushin” exists, “no mind” or directs mind of purpose, directed action driven by thought. When the attack happens, spontane-ity is in the advantage of the attacker. Surprise is only on the victim’s part, one moment safety, the next fighting for ones life. Scientific research has shown that under great duress, fine motor skills disappear and only gross motor skills are available. That means the average person train-ing twice a week to learn complex self defense skills is left with only basic skills when an actual attack happens. So much for great self defense! So much for defeat any attacker.

Does this mean that everyone who isn’t a trained fighter should stop training? Should all people doing “Martial Art” with the emphasis on ART stop training? Should we give up and just accept the fact that the bad guys are better trained so they have the advantage? Actually in some ways we should! I can here the screams now! The righteous indignation of “who is this jerk? Accept the ‘facts’ as stated? **NO WAY!**” We need to accept that most of the bad guys have intent and ability to perpetrate anything they choose at the time they choose. That’s why they are the bad guys!

The way of self-defense as taught today is flawed. Several self defense systems actually tell people that the average person in a few hours of course work can learn “combat joint locking” and safely immobilize an attacker. “We have eliminated forms, high kicks,

throws and all the useless parts of our foundation art to make a real self defense system which anyone can learn!” They infer in their training scenarios and seminars that street attacks occur in certain ways rather than spontaneously. “Grab my wrist, NO, not that way! Like this!” Others tell the average person that they can kick, poke or punch their way to safety. A select few might. The women, children and elderly won’t be able to and nothing will enable them to. “Oh just eye poke them!”... “Kick them in the knee!” “Disengage from the attack and counter attack!” all good statements but what if one lacks the size, strength, or ability to achieve the goal. That’s correct. Size does matter. So does strength!

With that premise in mind self defense takes on new meaning. One need to stop martial arts prejudices, martial arts bias and move on to reality. No one style can solve the problems of self-defense but old style war attributes can go along way in helping out. No warrior of any era would have gone to war without weapons. Weapons are the great equalizers. Before the readers get uppity again, reality is that no unarmed person is taking out of action an armed oppo-nent. Americans have this John Wayne mentality and we tend to believe the fables of one punch and the bad guy falls down. The bad guy will drop his weapon to fight unarmed cause that’s the way and the hero will always drop his weapon to even the odds. **NO WAY!** A weapon? Yes a weapon and tool that is mankind’s oldest and dearest friend. The knife has been with man for over 1 million years. An edge that cuts flesh. The principle of “an edge that cuts flesh” has never changed. The

concept has: as stone and glass gave way to bronze then steel. But the principle is unchanged for all time. Warriors and war arts have for thousands of years tried to solve the riddle of steel. Steel cuts flesh. Flesh drives steel to cut flesh. Steel always cuts flesh. Flesh is stronger than steel. Armor was designed and redesigned. Shields and helmets were used. Techniques of avoidance were invented. Steel still cut flesh as well as just about anything in its path. New defenses for knives are invented all the time. They just don’t work. Steel cuts flesh always!

That’s why weapons are used. That’s why a knife is the ultimate self-defense tool. Its hard to defense, it works on a heavily worked principle of physics “an edge that cuts flesh” and it takes little or no strength to make it work. Very scary if you’re the one on the receiving end! Its just as scary to a bad guy as it is to a good guy... add to this the fact that knives have reached a new level of sophistication. Technology has kept pace with need and knives of today come as fold-ers. The era of the folding tactical knife has arrived.

As for the legality of carrying a folding knife there are many myths, street stories and “I know a cop and he says...” *The laws and ordinances about weapons vary and the shade of gray is, useful tools which can double as self defense tools or “weapons”.* One needs to check ones lo-cal laws and ordinances. Don’t ask the police. They don’t know. Go to the library, research with the Attorney generals office, request copies of the actual laws and any amendments. Remember there are laws to contradict other laws. That’s why

we have attorneys and Judges. BLADE Magazine has a great column written by a Judge who happens to be a knife maker... Judge Lowell Brey, and back issues of his columns carry the laws and discussions on the way the laws are interpreted. Basic rule of thumb is this: Federal law allows for the carrying of folding knives with a “blade length” of 4 inches or less. Some states have other blade length require-ments. California allows for blade length of 5.5 inches as of this writing. There are exceptions to all the laws within each state. Lots of cities and towns as well as airlines prefer “blade lengths” of 3 inches or less. The FAA requires 4 inches or less for airline carry and several air-port security companies such as GLOBE have added the phrase of “or menacing” to the rules... This is to allow for officers discretion and a way to circumvent the written actual law. (Try to stay within the confines of the law for the law enforcement and security officers have a hard enough job as it is without ordinary citizens making it any harder.) As of 9/11/01 no knives of any kind are allowed on aircraft; a serious mistake in my eyes!

With that said, there now exists a modern self-defense tool that can be carried, is assessable and is legal. How hard is it to teach the average person self defense using this tool? Not very hard. The advantage of an edged weapon / tool is that it has an edge that cuts. It takes no strength to cut. Anyone of any size or age can cut someone else. Size and strength don’t matter here! A good basic rule of cutting is that any cut is good, that some cuts are better than others are and a few cuts are

“show stoppers”.

This brings up the axioms of knife work:

**Rule #1:** *Steel cuts flesh*

**Rule #2:** *One can’t change rule #1*

**Rule #3:** *Unless one has a blue suit with a big red “S” on it Rules #1 and #2 always apply!*

If one can hold a knife it will work. Anyone can make a knife cut. **ANYONE!!** Most people including children have used some kind of knife in daily life such as in a kitchen, cooking, at work, even playing knights in armor. We as a people are accustomed to knives. Most of us have learned to keep the edge away from what we don’t want cut. This obviously leads to we point the edge towards that which we do want cut. ahh, simplicity!

Punches to body parts need focus, strength and ability to cover distance. It is the same with kicks, If you can just reach your attacker his mass might be too great and your touching will only enrage or encourage them, Not so with a knife. When you reach out and touch someone with a knife its serious. A “touch” can become a stab. A “touch” can slide and become a fillet. A “touch” can become a slashing cut. Cutting, stabbing, and filleting muscles bio mechanically impairs body function. People retract from cuts and hurt. An obstruction or a barrier appears. The opponents arm to yours. “Slap the arm! block it away! Drive it into them. Clear the obstruction and then counter strike!” Only they are too strong and push back into you. Not when one blocks or enters with a knife. Put that edge into their arm, the obstruction and the attacker will pull away not push into it. Pushing into the edge of a

knife cuts, push hard it cuts deeper. You push, they move the arm and connecting body out of the way!

The average person can use an edged tool for self defense easily. I can hear it already. The attacker will just disarm them. Use the weapon / tool against them. One of the premier martial arts and knife instructors / disarming experts in the country starts out his video series with the warning that folding tactical knives can turn a disarming experience into a nightmare. While another one of the world's most famous martial artists, author and knife instructor, tells students and readers that disarms appear and disappear in seconds making them almost impossible to pull off: he shows disarming as an aside. He shows combative disarming: cut off the attacker's fingers and the attacker is disarmed. He teaches that at last resort, when one's life is about to be taken, then one puts one's empty hands into the mouth of the blender to try and affect a disarm. This means in reality that on the street, an attacker intent on harming the average person will be unable to deal with an armed defense let alone disarm them or turn the

weapon back wave your hands in front of your face. Try vertical figure eights, upward figure eights or down-ward figure eights in the air with your hands. Try side to side motions, back and forth. Do eye stabs or jabbing motions. Try "Karate chop" motions...now imagine a knife in your hands while you do these motions. Picture the knife's edge meeting flesh each time. Can't picture it? Go into the kitchen, take a sharp knife and cut an apple, cut a carrot, cut some meat...see how little force it takes. Now go back and try the motions again! (of course leave the knife and food in the kitchen!) It's pretty easy to do. Anyone can cut something. Access the knife? Try being aware of how many times in a day in the middle of doing something you pause momentarily to wipe your face, scratch an itch, pat your hair, straighten out your clothes and immediately go right back to whatever you were doing. Reaching for the knife is as simple as scratching that itch. Accessing is as simple as continuing the original motion. This holds true for disabled peoples as well. I know that people (including some so - called self defense systems) say that a

disabled person can be taught to kick or punch or even worse can be taught to try to joint lock an attacker. Try seeing how much leverage one has without leg power sitting in a wheelchair. (don't be fooled! Sit in a chair, cross your ankles and hold your legs in the air.. Now try the great joint locking technique! Try that punch.) If the "Physically challenged" person can use their hands then self- defense with an edged tool is very effective. No strength needed. Just "reach out and "touch" someone!" This wasn't to make anyone a knife expert. The point wasn't to say this method of knife training is better than the other method. It was a rational response to several absurd self-defense points of view. The point was to hopefully open some eyes... to make one think "*what if*" ... or "*really, I never thought that way before!*" Hopefully to make one understand that the way of the warrior still exists and not to believe in the martial arts myth. Learning the art of the blade will enrich your self-defense skills and give you a new base to teach self defense from! Live long and prosper!

## Build Belief in One's Self

Teaching must be simple: simple in concept. Do not attempt to teach too much at any one time. People must be able to retain, use and teach what they have been taught: not shown or demonstrated to. If you attempt to teach it all at once, no one will remember anything: all that you will teach be forgotten. Think about any class or seminar you have attended. It could be the seminar was taught by a great practitioner: fun to watch difficult to do and forgotten as soon as that section was done. It could be an OK practitioner and simple stuff... forgetful at best. It could be wonderful instruction and progression that only makes sense while the seminar is in session.

Most seminars were fun to watch and difficult to learn from. When I used to go to seminars with my students, we used to assign different parts of the seminars to different people to try to memorize. That way when we got home we could combine the information to redo the seminar as we learned it and try to make sense of it or try to find the alleged progression.

### The Key to Train the Trainer Teaching

The key to Modular learning is its simplicity. That's correct: Simplicity. If what one teaches is simple and the training methodology is simple...then the chance that the subject is remembered as taught and useful to the students under duress is enhanced.

Modules are easy to learn. There's limited knowledge to be remembered. As one learns or masters a module, the next module

### This is totally unacceptable!

The information should be readably accessible, usable and teachable. Keep it simple. Repeat the information. Do not assume anyone understands it, **REPEAT IT!** Demonstrate one of the key phrases: use those phrases so that your students use it themselves when they teach. "It is NOT Rocket Science!" Build on what your core information is and then return to that core. You should end your teaching session on whatever the basic concept is: end the session on something they have accomplished! Constantly remind the students they can do this: that they are able to do what you've taught them. Ask them rhetorically and demand a "yes" answer. "*can you do this?*" "**YES, I can!**"...When your students leave the teaching floor / or the seminar, they should be walking out the door saying "I can do this!"... If people leave saying they can do this...Then you have won the teaching battle. For if people believe they can do it, they will be able to do it. Build belief in one's self and ones ability

to do it!

Do not try to teach too much: teach enough within a finite time period. Remember that Rome was not built in a day but many a project was completed in a day. Teach in small amounts that can be assembled into a bigger piece. modular: like a Quilt. Remember a 6 hour seminar is a full day, Add lunch break and water breaks and it is an 8 hour day, a full days work. Do not teach more than 6 hours at a TIME!

**4 Hour Clinic:** Gunting: Teach 5 entries : simple and advanced: thumb trap Modular Tactical: Teach 1-4-12 Standard, Backwards, Equal forward & Equal Reverse.

**6 Hour Seminar:** Gunting: 5 Entries, simple and Advanced, Kinetic Opening, Finger traps, counters Modular Tactical: Teach 1-4-12 Standard, Backwards, Equal Forward and Reverse, 1-2-2

**12 Hours or Two Day Seminars:** Gunting: Add to 6 Hour: Backwards, Reverse grip, repeat 5 Entries Modular Tactical: Add to 6 Hour: 2-3-12, 5-2-4, repeat 1-4-12.

is learned. If one cannot remember the new Module, that's not as important as one can remember the first modular.

Most modules are sets of three moves. Humans can remember three things, especially if there's an order to them. Three is a comforting number. Is that important? yes...for anything that's easy and comfortable we tend to accept readily.

Modules are also great for we as humans also like to build on foundations to stack things to put things together...it's in our nature. Therefore teaching by modular units allows for the best comment an instructor can ever hear... the refrain from the students saying "I can do this"... Modules also allow for exact duplication of training methodology over a large scale while allowing personal interpre-

tation.

How? Each Module is exact. It's taught as an exact piece. It's like making a quilt. Each frame or piece of the quilt is designed in a particular pattern, a pattern that never varies. To get variation in the quilt, several unique patterns are made... again each square unique unto itself. If there are only 4 unique patterns and 4 different color versions of each... there's now 16 different patches or frames to the quilt. That gives 256 possible combinations before a repeat happens. That's a lot of variation..

That means no two quilts would be exactly the same...yet each is made up of identical parts. The same applies to the teaching. Each person learns the identical modules but how they are put together is the individuals own way...yet at the lowest level the building blocks...the frames of the

quilt or the Modules are identical. Uniformity and individualism at the same time. Yin & Yang... Duality within the same space...a dichotomy of action. Martial arts, self defense being taught at its best.

Let's look at reality within the flow of combat or interpersonal physical interaction: there are no rules, no scripts, no prerecorded actions and responses. Things just happen. By having separate modules that encourages one to put them together in any pattern or sequence with no regard to set way of doing things... we get a sort of spontaneity, a going with the flow.

No regard to is the tool in the bad guy's right hand or left...  
No regard to is the tool in a forward grip or a reverse grip...  
No regard to is the attack on the high line or the low line...

That means 6 major variables have been reduced to 1...a much easier situation to deal with...

What holds these modules together as in a quilt are connecting threads. These connecting threads may or may not stand on their own as Modules but they certainly act as a bridge to connect the various Modules. Module #1 is a way to express the most common motion allowed by our body: arms closing across our bodies, arm opening low and the pick up-recovery of our arm to a high position. This motion has been taught for thousands of years as a natural motion; not just as an arm motion but in use of fighting sticks and sword play. It is a realization of form following function. It has been called many names: Single Sinawali, Sumbrada, Shadowing, Six Count, Box set and the like.

**Standard**  
**Backwards**  
**Mirror Image**  
**Backward-Backwards**  
**Equal Forward**  
**Unequal Forward - Reverse**  
**Un Equal Reverse - Forward**  
**Equal Reverse**

Four ways to approach your opponent - Four ways to hold a knife or tool. You have two arms the opponent has two arms: that's four possibilities to match up. You can hold it two ways, tip up-forward or tip down-reverse and so can your opponent: that's four possibilities. That's 4 times 4 equaling a total of 16 possibilities. 16..no more no less. Only 16...Not hundreds of combinations. Only 16... Not infinite possibilities. It's not Rocket science. Anyone can learn to do this.

There's ONLY 16 possible combinations. It's like a patchwork quilt. Each person learns to make the exact little piece. 16 identical pieces. They get sewn together in any order or pattern. Take the quilt apart each piece is identical. Sew it together and there are endless variations of quilts. This allows for continuity of teaching and learning yet allows for totally creative responses...as close to real time as possible. There's only 16 possible combinations.

The proceeding information was just a sample of “*Learn in 6 - Teach in 12*” to obtain the full knowledge of “*Learn in 6 - Teach in 12*” get the complete CSSD Arnis Instructional and Modular Instructional DVDs series visit **CSSDSC** at: [www.cssdsc.com](http://www.cssdsc.com), available soon.



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# Blade Master Bram Frank

An old Chinese proverb says: when the student is ready the teacher appears.

Bram Frank is a first generation personal student of the Professor. The first time he saw Professor and Grandmaster Remy A. Presas, he said to himself, this was a martial arts genius, the true “master” of what he did. The day he met his teacher, he knew immediately that this was what he wanted to learn and the man he wanted to learn from. He had found his muse, his master, his mentor. Prof. Remy was the one who told him to learn slowly by working hard until the art was really his, to be patient, to understand how important it is to be smooth in order to be fast and soft in order to be strong. This master showed him that if one trained slowly, one could see, understand and master the why’s of the concepts. Modern Arnis and Professor Remy Amador Presas showed Bram how to think conceptually: “*You are already there. It is all the same! You must understand and feel the flow.*” (Professor Presas). And Bram said to himself, “*Gee, that’s how I thought martial arts and fighting should be.*” Thus began his odyssey.

Bram attributes his conceptual method of teaching to Professor Remy. “Bram...do you see the differences? Yes? Good... Can you now see it’s all the same? It’s the same difference!” Remy’s way of teaching demanded that you think, that you actually use your mind, that you see the connections. He used to say that the key was translation: that Modern Arnis allowed one to translate between tool and empty hand. To him it

was important to understand the art at a functional level. Remy encouraged Bram to teach from day #1, telling him to “go teach what I taught you, for in teaching you will learn fastest, and find out what you really know, and know what you really need to learn.”

Hence Bram does not teach in linear fashion. He teaches conceptually, that is, he teaches others to learn by teaching. At that time, Bram realized that Remy was giving him something to be proud of and to build on, to live life through understanding. Remy was teaching him about life, not fighting. Fighting and Arnis are just ways to understand how to deal with any situation: to go with the flow.

The desire to understand steel was a fervor that kept growing in him. It shows in his knife designs, in his art. Bram visualizes Filipino martial arts motions into Celtic-type designs, which frequently become tattoo flash. Just as he grew conceptually, and learned to see motion visually, he also learned a different kind of perspective on life, and a bit more about patience with things as they happen.

Bram’s training under Professor Remy included the origins of Arnis. The soul of Arnis was defense, based on the use of the bladed weapon. It was protection for the weak against the oppressors. It was an art founded on a simple way of transferring knowledge, a blade art that is Philippine in origin, with many aspects



derived from the myriads of multi-ethnicity of the Philippine Islands. Within Arnis is a fully functional art of cutting. The names of Arnis changed with region to region, but the soul of Arnis - that act of defending one’s personal freedom - pulsed unchanged. Remy clarified to him that there are hundreds of styles of Arnis but all use the same principles and utilize the same concepts of motion under their personal labels. Inspired by his professor, Bram has been in constant search since then of the origins of Arnis.

Professor Remy introduced him to the “Jungle bolo”. This bolo has a narrow tip, a piercing point



not made useful in agriculture but for thrusting, to tip rip. It is a fast blade used to fight other humans. He bequeathed to Bram his jungle bolos, inherited from his uncle and grandfather. Each was handmade; each was crafted to fit the person so that rotation of the blade did not cut one’s own arms. (Now the old ways of measuring a “stick” made real sense. One didn’t measure a stick; one measured a blade for safety). Whereas all of Bram’s sword and armor research was on cultures long gone, with the jungle bolo came the blade usage that was more recent and made for real combat.

These two old “Jungle bolos” had buffalo horn handles, very light and fast and able to cut deeply. They were magnificent, with very fine thrusting tips. Quite recently, out of respect for Remy, for Bram’s teaching, and for the continuity of the Presas art of the bolo, the Presas Family Bolo was replicated by Ed Schempp, an expert blade craftsman and father of Mosaic Damascus. Ed Schempp’s replica was made of two layers of longitudinal Mosaic Damascus over a 60RC core steel. Schempp said it was the finest tactical fighter he has ever made, and that with great power comes great responsibility. Schempp’s gift served as a statement that Bram was one who knew the Art of the Bolo and treated it with great respect.

It has been said that the stick transfers to the blade, but Bram says that this is not completely true, especially with such techniques as blocking and disarms. One cannot transfer Stick to Blade directly. One cannot translate from impact tool to cutting tool directly. The purpose is differ-

ent. The orientation is different. No force is needed to cut, whereas impact is affected by strength or amount of force. The order of progression for default is blade, firearm, stick, and then empty hand. The blade is regarded as the highest art of self-defense. With a blade, there is little or no room for error. If one can do something with or against a blade, it works for the others. If it works with using a firearm, it will work against a stick or empty hand. But not necessarily against a blade. And so it goes on down the pyramid of default. You can grab a firearm. Maybe, you can grab a stick, you can grab a hand, but you cannot grab a blade, unless you are willing to lose your fingers and your hand.

Lots of the currently taught disarms do not focus on disarming a blade, for the tool is grabbed and rotated or the tool comes in direct contact with an angulated joint. An edged tool in contact with an angulated joint is called disjoints or de-limbing, that is, in butcher talk or culinary arts. Disarms against a knife-wielding opponent are like putting your hand into a food processor while it’s whirring. It’s risky, downright dangerous. Incidental contact with a stick can be hurtful; incidental contact with a blade could be fatal.

Force to force blocks with a stick does not take into consideration any edge orientation. Because of edge orientation, one blocks with the flat of the blade, not the edge. Edges chip and break! Blades are not impact tools. Steel is hard to make and no one would sacrifice their edges to chipping or breaking. Fighters would not want to sacrifice such an important tool. Medieval,

Renaissance and Japanese sword manuals all agree: block with the flat, block near the guard if possible, use the spine for redirect, do not break your sword!

With blade, one must learn hand control not weapon control. One must learn edge orientation and usage. Edges are matter separators. How one enters a combat situation is definitely important when it comes to blade. There is a difference between high line and low line. Changing up at one’s discretion can lead to serious injury to one’s self. The blade cuts through anything in its path, including the user.

Bram always wanted to be as Remy had encouraged him to be: **A Trainer of Combative Arts**. He dreamed of teaching Military, Police and Security as his main field of work. Professor Presas blessed the Combat Arnis and CSSD/SC programs of Bram Frank. Bram was one who loved the blade. Combat stirs his soul. The Combative Arts aspect of Arnis keeps him humble, he says, “for anyone can die, anyone can be hurt, and you can do everything correctly and still fail. That’s real combat; Finality.”

In designing his combat systems, Bram did no such thing as reinvent the wheel or come up with a new way to execute techniques. What he did was to come up with a better training methodology. It is a repackaging of the conceptual things from Arnis and other contemporary fighting arts. It is tool based. “We use edged, impact and projectile tools,” Bram explains. “It’s a Train the Trainer methodology. We have to be able to impart knowledge and usage within a few hours of training. That’s how Arnis worked in the old days. In Military

and LE (law enforcement) and Security fields, I have only 6-12 hours to impart my section of training to the students. Then the students have to move on. It's got to be 'one mind- one way, many weapons'. My guys come home safely from military combat and LE Street combative situations. My students have survived street attacks and assaults. It works real time."

The fact is, when adrenalin is pumping, one loses fine motor skills. Therefore the techniques must be simple and direct. It is the law of physical reaction. Adrenalin dump happens, period. When it does, trained people sometimes only move from fine motor thought to complex motor thought. Unfortunately, physical reactions do not follow that easily. Meaning, you think you can but your body says NO! "That's why the simple gross stuff works. It doesn't look pretty but it happens. We get tunnel vision and time distortion as well." Bram came up with a system that allows for people to function on the gross motor skills level, so that even with the sh\*t hitting the fan, they keep going; they succeed rather than go fetal and die.

Knife fighting is a totally different matter. Bram's is the Modular combative reaction and skills system with an edged tool. It involves SDR: Self Defense Response with blade or edged tool. Modular is a reasonable, ethical and moral response to a personal attack by using an edged tool. "I don't teach people to 'fight with knives'. I do teach people how to save their lives and the lives of their loved ones while using an edged tool."

Bram is the Director and Founder of the Common Sense



Self Defense/Street Combat (CSSD/SC). Its training covers all combat ranges. It uses projectile tools from far way, but also from up close and personal. This means firearms, both handguns and rifles. And also edged tools and impact tools mostly up-close-and-personal tools. "Real combative situations take place much closer than people care to imagine. This is NOT threat assessment or management. This is threat involvement! I can reach out and touch someone... I can smell them... I'm close! We have to know ranges because it's something that is talked of, yet in reality, one has no control over combative ranges except in the minute." CSSD/SC covers long range, middle range, close range and grappling range.

The core combat principles of CSSD/SC are simple: use common sense, stay alive, and cheat a lot! Use only bio-mechanical functions that can be done at gross motor skills level. The basis is "Open-Close"... what will the body actually do? Stop function. Remember that form follows function. Stop form, stop function of the weapon limbs. Shut down the attacker's tools. Destroy the function of the fingers, hand, arms, making it impossible to use or utilize a tool. And always remem-

ber: Rule #1 says, "Steel cuts flesh." Rule #2 says, "You can't change rule #1!"

Learning all aspects of empty hands and weapons combat is important. One needs empty hands to get to one's tools. For CSSD/SC, the empty hands are not "empty hand" concepts. They employ tool concepts and defaults when using empty hands. Just like regular Arnis, any of the CSSD/SC weapons methodology can be translated to empty hands. "We use firearms, impact tools, edged weapons, restraint tools and OC spray," Bram says. "We are equal opportunity weapon-tool users."

CSSD/SC now operates in the USA, UK, Canada, Italy, France, Germany, Israel, and Australia, to name a few. Its instructors teach Military, Law Enforcement and Security in these countries. It continues to grow and evolve, not just from the master but from the spirit of innovation of its members as well. Bram's students understand that they have a stake in this. "For example: David gave us Pac Man grabbing. Greg gave us Modular Firearm. Florian gave us environmental stress training. Steve gave us restraint and cuffing procedures. Yuval and Guy gave us Walking the Cuts-Blocks into empty hand translation. We've had second generation CSSD instructors Emir and Tomer come up with a thrusting flow drill." And Bram continues to find better ways to teach, better ways to show the instructors how to teach.

Some approaches to knife teaching must be viewed with concern. It is often a case of non-users telling potential users what to do. It's dangerous to spread urban martial arts myths

about knife usage. People tend to forget: Knives cut flesh. ALWAYS. Teaching must be accompanied by a responsible, ethical, and moral use of blade, and an understanding of what edged tools really do. People who have no knife experience should not dictate or teach knife usage. Those who have never really cut anything, never hunted or worked in a kitchen, should not ask people to wade in and get cut. "Would you learn driving from someone who NEVER drove a car? Would you let a person who never used a firearm teach you firearm safety?" Bram is concerned that we let non-knife users teach the use of the blade and how to defend against it.

Think of edged tool as if a firearm. Bram emphasizes the need to concentrate on something Remy had taught him: Don't be there. In other words, get out of the way of the attack. Use body shifting, get yourself off-line.

Bram's Abaniko blades came out at last. The Abaniko is a fixed blade series designed for extreme tactical usage and made by Ontario. The Abaniko follows the idea of a gross motor skill tool: it is held in a standard pistol grip, one of the strongest grips we know of. There is a 7' and a 5' Abaniko. The knives come with a functional identical training drone. As a knife designer, Bram made sure that all of Bram's knife series have Filipino names in honor of Remy Presas and Arnis. They are the following: Abaniko, Lapu-Lapu, Gunting, Guro, Gunt-asong, and the Gunt-arambit.

Bram's first folder series is the highly successful Gunting. He wanted a tool that offered options, so out came the world's only full-force continuum tool. This

means, it escalates and de-escalates through the full force continuum. The Gunting starts out as an impact tool that can be used for restraint and control. It can be partially opened to be used as a less-than-lethal cutting tool, meaning, it is capable of executing bodily damage without having to kill. It opens kinetically within usage so as to escalate to the lethal

force option, yet it can be closed within usage so as to de-escalate the force continuum. SWAT magazine called it "the best less than lethal tool ever designed for Law Enforcement". Police Marksman Magazine called it "the only legitimate answer for an Officer to carry an edged tool." Police Shotgun News called it an historic event in the world of Law Enforce-



ment knives.

The Gunting aids in the removal of suspects from cars. It aids in body searches, especially with pockets that might contain needles or sharp objects... And it really aids in controlling and cuffing the suspects!

With the Gunting, Bram has actually designed a tool that would do all the Arnis moves and limb destructions, escalate or de escalate in force, execute Dillman Pressure Point attacks and restraints as well as Wally Jay Small circle Ju Jitsu. It was his way of honoring Remy, Wally and George.

The Gunting system is easy to learn and the tool usage is self-evident. The CRMPT or Close Range Medium Impact Tool version is a non-lethal non-cutting version of the Gunting that is perfect for law enforcement, security, military and civilian use. Bram designed it as the perfect SDR tool. There is of course limited liability in its usage. One can use it against a knife. It's like a knife without the



CRMPT

Close Range Medium Impact Tool version

cutting!

Bram often teaches large numbers of students at seminars. He is one who thrives in crowds. They feed off his energy. Not unlike a rock star; the bigger the crowd the more the juices flow! For him, it's no different from teaching several combative units at a time. Like he always tells his students, this is not rocket science. This is a train the trainer methodology that allows beginners to train with advance students at the same time. It's easy to learn and everyone can get it very quickly.

CSSD/SC's approach to teaching self defense skills is clear: If it's not reality-based, don't do it. "I believe in tool-based self defense," Bram declares. Everyone has the god-given right to defend themselves against attack. And such skills should work effectively for the little girl, the old guy and the young lady, not just the muscular jock. Therefore it's got to be simple, direct and essential. Self defense has to be based on Common Sense even if that element is really not so common."

It's exciting to be a student of Bram Frank. It's exciting to realize after some time how one has evolved. The realization always comes as a surprise, for the process is smooth and the development is subtle. Once the teacher has shown the door, and the student has discovered the key and how to use it, a whole new world opens up. It is obvious from his training methodology that Bram aims to create instructors. "Instructors that are better than I am," he says. He wants his students

to think, to understand, and to know that all things change while they stay the same. He is like a parent who wants his children to do better than him, to surpass him. He follows the footsteps of his teacher Remy, who wanted his students to make the art part of their own art.

### **Bram Frank as Mentor**

*In his own words relayed to Senior Guro Edessa Ramos*

Training in knife or bladed weapons is not just about the use of an edged tool. It involves the understanding of motion. It involves the critical need to understand an attacker's actions, his abilities with a cutting tool, and the repercussions of confronting such a person. The best art of self-defense lies in the ability to recognize threat, to recognize the opportunities for defense and quickly pick out and apply which of the various methods would be most effective. The ability to effectively implement the cutting tool could spell the difference between life and death.

Knife is real. Knife is honest. When training with blades, the first thing we learn is that accessibility is real. A cut does not lie.

Knife training teaches the art of empty hand: checking, intercepting, inserts. The art of striking disarms, joint locks and grappling moves. These are only effective if one understands anatomy and physiology as well as psychological response to situations. Knife forces this understanding on the user.

A blade is a matter separator. It makes no difference whether you are using the edge or the point; you are dealing with the heart of steel. Steel shapes flesh, steel cuts flesh. Flesh guides steel, and it is the human heart that directs it all.

The tool itself does not determine right from wrong, good guy from bad guy. The heart of the person does. Therefore it is important that we know, in our teaching that the tool is in the hand of the good guy. But at the same time, it is so important that we learn what a bad guy can do with the tool, so we can deal effectively with the terror he is capable of inflicting.

### **Women and Blades**

Steel is so cool! it can be malleable, hard but brittle, or strong, flexible and of course sharp. Steel makes you see how fragile life can be. How serious the art is. Why we need to respect life. Why we need to train. And that steel can last for generations or crumble within years, so one needs to care for it. Steel is a person's best friend, mankind's best friend.

Warriors know no gender. Blades are cool. Women with



Bram Franks demonstrating the finer points to Senior Guro Edessa Ramos

blades are incredibly cool and sexy... and deadly. A small animal can fight a bigger animal and win. The ability to function under du-

ress is not tied to gender.

Once trained in the martial arts, one has the knowledge of how to maim and kill, how to hurt but also how to avoid doing so, and how to teach and impart this knowledge to others.

It is very rewarding to teach women in the use of fighting tools. Women have enough common sense to not relish fighting because they understand the absurdity of testosterone-driven action. They know the duality of being human, and that is the ability for nurture and at the same time destruction.

### **On Teaching and Learning**

Some of you travel and teach all the time. You know that it can get very tiring and lonely, no matter if you have friends. There's just too much of sharing of yourself with others, seemingly with no end in sight. Thus even pleasurable things like teaching can wear you down. And that's normal.

Learning is a daily thing. A real teacher is one who realizes that he will never know enough. And the surest road to knowing is to teach. Sometimes you need to hear yourself teach in order to see the truth, to believe finally that you know it already. Professor Remy Presas used to say to us all the time: Find the art within you; make it the art within your art. So

you need to find how you want to express what's in you, how to share it, how to add to the depth of that knowledge you give to others.

It is difficult for those practitioners who live in areas where they have no constant instructor. So learn from teaching rather than from being dependent on having an instructor nearby. Explore the boundaries. Practice and grow. And watch with enjoyment how you help others grow with you. Visit an instructor somewhere or go to seminars if you can. You can get additional truths there, but then move on. Stagnation and repetition without originality or creativity can be smothering. Originality only comes from you.

When you teach be bold, be true, and show them how simple it is. Try to train trainers. Teach a "train the trainer methodology" that supercharges how we learn and understand. You might encounter people who would say that they don't need what you're teaching, that they know it already. So do not teach them or attempt it until they are ready, if ever they get to be. You are imparting a knowledge that has captured you. Your tune is beautiful... sing to those who want to hear your song.

And always teach that smooth is best.

Always remember: smooth is fast.

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Senior Guro Edessa Ramos teaches mixed styles of Traditional and Tactical Combat Arnis in Zurich, Switzerland. For more information visit: [http://www.tntarnis.ch/TnT\\_Arnis/Welcome\\_to\\_TnT.html](http://www.tntarnis.ch/TnT_Arnis/Welcome_to_TnT.html)

This article includes portions of an interview by David Foggy courtesy of Bram Frank.

### **Interested in blade training?**

**Visit Bram Frank and his Organization: [www.cssdsc.com](http://www.cssdsc.com)**

# The Gunting Family of Knives

By Bram Frank

*The Gunting Family of Knives: it's a complete species.*

The Gunting family of knives is ever expanding and sometimes my terminology to describe that family of knives seems to confuse people. I think it's easiest to understand if I compare it to a biological tree: each knife evolves into another within set parameters of definition. In other words I consider the Gunting to be a species of knife with many varieties or types within that species. This species of knives is named after Filipino actions and motions. In science they use Latin to make names and in knives and Tactical applications I personally use Filipino terminology to show my respect and to honor the Filipino martial arts. All the Gunting family of knives can easily do all Filipino actions and limb attacks, as well as thrusting, tip ripping, tip leading cuts, cutting, trapping, controlling and all Dumog, Arnis and pressure point control...:The Gunting Family of knives have won various acclaim and awards here and abroad and are featured in many magazines over the past decade.

- Gunting: Historic Event Award: A Historic event in Knives
- Gunting: Most Innovative Edged Weapon
- Gunting: Tactical Knife of the Millennium
- Lapu Lapu Corto: IWA's Tactical Knife of the Year
- Abaniko: Tactical Knife of the Year
- Abaniko: Most Innovative Tactical Knife of the Year



## Let's look at a basic definition of a "Gunting Family Knife"

All Gunting style knives have the easy to recognize ramp and indexing, whether they are fixed blades or folders. the ramp is a multi function tool: guard, control piece, hand grip, balance point and leverage point to allow access and use of the tip. All have ergonomic handles designed to fit in one's hands as if doing locking, trapping, holding a Filipino weapon properly or a firearm: the bottom three fingers are the control and stabilization of the tool. All gunting style knives whether fixed blade or folders have grabbing teeth on various points, such as on the ramp, butt, back of blade, and inside the choil area and can be used for trapping, locking or control.

All Gunting folding knives are Kinetic Openers. They possess the ability to utilize stored energy and energy in motion to open within use. There is no need to utilize the Thumb hole to open the blade, all it needs is contact: just like a turnstile, the faster you push the lever the faster it spins, the faster you hit the Kinetic Ramp the faster the knife opens.

A scissoring action between the object and the knife ramp or "a gunting motion" opens the knife. The knife attacks the limbs or does limb destruction and escalates in force from non lethal, to less than lethal to lethal and back down again further fulfilling the connotations of the name "Gunting".

All Gunting knives possess Indexing: the ability to go from forward grip to reverse grip and back without taking one's hands or fingers off of the knife. There are actual indexing points to capture one's thumb and fingers to allow

for circular rotation of the blade within one's grip. These points can be bearings, indents, spoon clips, and holes through and through, post in a hole or any variation on the theme.

All Gunting knives are designed to be used closed. They trap, lock, control and can be used like a ball peen hammer or a mini tomahawk or envision a mini war hammer like those used by medieval knights in armour. Like a Filipino warrior one can either rake to cut or hammer for impact with a Gunting style knife.

All Gunting knives have dual liners and open backs for ease of cleaning & strength. The newest versions are all "jimiped" proud liners extending past the edge of the scales.

All Gunting knives can escalate and deescalate within the force continuum: non lethal, to less than lethal to lethal and back down again to non lethal. As with all forms of Arnis the "Gunting family" of knives allows for judicious use of force and the ability to use proportional force responsibly.

Ok that is a basic definition of species of the Gunting knives.

## Family Tree

*Varieties of the Gunting species*

**Escalator:** the Escalator was the first Gunting member: it was to be called the Gunting but the manufacturer thought it a dumb name and asked what it meant. I chose the connotation of the word Gunting: Escalation in Force hence the name Eescalator.

This was the world's first Kinetic opening knife and the first knife to have a matching trainer Drone: identical to the live blade knife ever made. The first Impact tool the CRM IPT- Close Range Medium Impact Tool was an Escalator.

**Gunting:** this is the variety of the



**Escalator:** the first Kinetic Opening edged tool (top)  
 The original 356 model Gunting: the second version of the Kinetic Opening tool (middle)  
 The first 911 model Gunting LLC: Lapu Lapu Corto: The current version (bottom)  
 The 979 model; ergonomics and utility to the MAXX.  
 The Gunting family of knives is similar and the changes are not just cosmetic. Like Porsche the changes are all for a reason and done to enhance use, control and utility function.

species sporting the actual name. It was bigger, faster and more like a folding Randall 1 on steroids. The Gunting sports a Fighting Bowie style blade and its thick, massive and strong...It's the 427 AC Shelby Cobra of the Gunting Family of Tactical Folders. It accomplished much on power and ability to apply its techniques. This is still my favourite knife. The Gunting2 is on its way shortly.

**Gunting: LLC-Lapu Lapu**

**Corto:** it's clearly a member of the Gunting family but its handle is more pistol like and it's the first Gunting to possess proud liners and my newest lock the puzzle lock. It is named after the legendary Filipino Chieftain Lapu Lapu. It has proud liners which are all jimped with grabbing teeth, bronze phosphor washers and great lines. It's the first with the VILL system. It comes in three sizes: mini, standard and Magnum.

**Gunting - Desangut:** The original Kerambit - Karambit of the Philippines. There is no such knife as the Karambit-Kerambit in the Philippines, it is the SANGUT... capable of forward cutting as well as reverse. Our Desangut can change from forward to reverse grip and back Its named after the Sangut Master Edessa Ramos hence the full name Desangut.

**Gunting - Tusok:** the basic Gunting-LLC-Desangut modified to fit a woman's hand. It's a useful tool that has a piercing tip, cleaning finger nails, getting a splinter out, catching a thread...non cutting front edge and a wicked reverses curved mini blade. A complete useful Kinetic Opening EDC. A "little poke" as Professor Presas used to call it; and sure enough it's a little poke with big results. It's

the long awaited "women's answer to knives

**The Abaniko:** The fixed blade Gunting on steroids and the Head of the Family tree of "Gunting Fixed blade" knives, The Abaniko is the premier tactical fixed blade for Military and LE. It cuts deeply, thrusts through steel and vest plates and doors, and traps with the best of the Gunting family

of knives. This is my way to pay respect to the Filipino Blade arts and the Randall family and their Model 1.

The Abaniko comes in three sizes: 7inch, 5 inch and 4 inch blades.

**The MAXX:** a small very flat KinOP knife to replace the old mouse.. MAXX catches mice...



**The Siko:** a deep bellied Bowie version of the gunting. It is a Heavy hitter like an elbow strike and just as cutting, a serious cousin of the original Gunting.

**The Eskrimador:** a big bladed Tactical fighter with homage to the Presas Bolo Knife

**The Guro:** a Filipino Bowie blade matched with a Espada / bolo of the same beep belly bowie: a modern style Espada y Daga set.

**The Rnd11:** a special homage to Bo Randall and his famous Model 1 fighter...Bo Randall did Filipino knife work and loved Sumbrada.

**The Gunt-a-Song:** a Balisong with KinOP features, indexing and twirl points

**The Gunt-a -Neck:** a very small Gunting for reserve... a Gunt-a-stub a very tiny Gunting neck knife slicer designed by Florian. A Gunting derivative fixed blade by Florian.. the Gunting Everyday fixed blade: a small carry knife by

Flo and of course a Gunting cousin family: the SNAGS by Dr Louis Krudo.

There is no such animal as a Gunting without indexing and without a spoon clip... of course it goes without saying it must have a ramp. Unless someone has scales custom made without indexing or a spoon clip presentation... There is a current knock-off coming out of Thailand... It's a GREAT knock off... I use that term only because it's not authorized... It has a high hollow grind, G10 scales, a regular Spyderco clip, (yes they have copied the clip AND logo) no indexing and its NOT our blade steel, it's 440 not CPM S440V... the ramp is a bit different and the blade shape is a variation on a theme.. It has a regular liner lock NOT a compression lock, nor a puzzle lock... *(Another sure sign it's NOT really mine or one of my designs)*

I lost the Compression lock

to SPYDERCO but my newest lock the Puzzle lock is rocking: a lock designed for Filipino trapping!

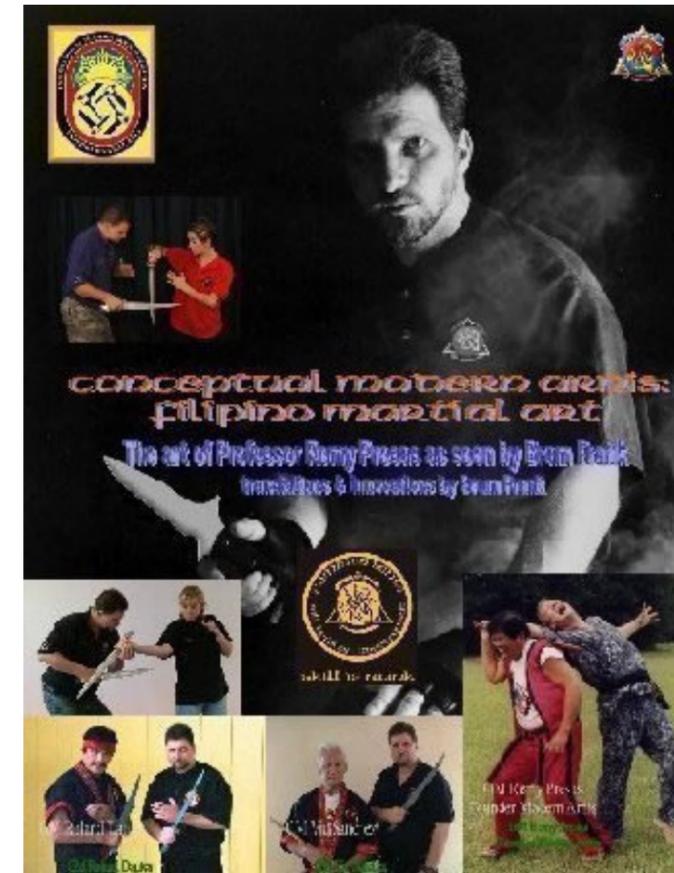
But back to most knockoffs and some of the current knock offs: it's/ they are INCREDIBLY well done. They were being sold on Ebay as real.. I had Ebay ask them to not say it's a REAL Gunting... but just a Gunting look like... Yes it says Spyderco on it. Yes it's got my logo... no it's not real: both logos are copies! What do you want? It's a good knock off.. I had a student actually buy me one in Thailand from the people posting on Ebay to add to my collection... I just saw my first knock offs of the Lapu Lapu Corto. Again a great copy!

Well let's go with the flow and say unless my knives weren't successful, weren't great designs, there would be no need to copy them. So copying them, knocking them off or the act of imitation is the most sincere form of flattery and acclaim. No worries!

Be Safe  
Bram



Photo by Mike Weissberg



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### ***School Submission***

The schools listed teach Filipino martial arts, either as the main curriculum or an added curriculum.

If you have a school that teaches Filipino martial arts, or you are an instructor that teaches, but does not have a school, list the school or style so individuals who wish to experience, learn and gain knowledge have the opportunity.

Be Professional; keep your contact information current. - **Click Here**



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Submit your event whether - Seminar, Workshop, Training Camp, tournament, or Gathering - **Click Here**



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Finished manuscripts should be accompanied by color or black and white photographs. Though we take care of materials, we can not be responsible for manuscripts/photographs and accept no liability for same. Every photograph or graphic must be accompanied by a caption Carefully key photos to caption information with a letter or number.

We reserve the right to use any photo(s) as cover material or additional compensation. We also reserve the right to edit material and to crop photographs.

We reserve the right to use articles or parts of articles that are given and approved from time to time as needed to promote the Filipino martial arts and the Culture of the Philippines.

Physical manuscripts should be typed in black, double spaced, and set to 1-1/2 margins (right and left).

Emailed manuscripts should be typed in Ariel or Times Roman, on programs such as Notepad, Wordpad, Microsoft Word, Word Perfect and can be sent as an attachment. Photo(s) can be sent as a .jpg, .gif, .bmp, or .tiff to [FMArticle@fmainformative.info](mailto:FMArticle@fmainformative.info)

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