

Lakewood thrives on the Martial Plan

The Cleveland Press, January 31, 1978

By Dick Wootten

It must have seemed peculiar to conventioners strolling down the hallway on the sixth floor of the Bond Court Hotel the other evening.

They idly peered inside one of the rooms there and saw a man viciously slugging a watermelon with his left fist.

Watermelons are not known for being offensive. They grow quietly basking in warm Georgia sunlight and mind their own business. Yet this man hollered as he attacked the watermelon. The shriek would have curdled Satan's blood. The blow turned the melon to sticky mush.

This unusual aggressive behavior was part of a preview for the media of "The Amazing Martial Arts Show," the complete version of which will be presented at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 3 and Saturday, Feb. 4 in Lakewood Civic Auditorium.

Bob Bushman, the young business manager of D. C. R. Productions, a new Lakewood producing company, views the show as "unique in terms of live theater entertainment."

I agree. I sat in the front row in the small room with my wife, Jay, as healthy black belt Karate and Kung-Fu experts moved about the room gracefully executing dangerous feats with Samurai swords, knives and sticks. We could feel the breeze of the swinging swords. One slip and that's it, pal, goodbye forever.

The show demonstrates ancient oriental fighting techniques, weaponry and examples of body and mind control. To break concrete tile with your bare hands takes a full measure of body and mind control. I'm not going to try it.

By the time the show was over the floor was littered with cucumber and carrot slices, melon mush and crumbly stone. And it was done to music — plinky, plinky oriental airs and Pink Floyd. It

"By the time the show was over the floor was littered with cucumber and carrot slices, melon mush and crumbly stone."

was indeed educational as well as scary. I was rivited to my chair throughout, either out of total absorption in the show or from fear, I'm not sure which.

After the show, we mingled with the performers. One champ, called Master Lion, (someone else called him Norm) said he had been committed to the discipline for 17 years.

"Hunger is unimportant," he said when asked about his diet. "I might eat every other day. I meditate two hours a day."

They asked questions of Jay. "You were sitting in the front row and didn't even blink," said one, who seemed amazed.

"I trusted you," she calmly replied.

As we left, I decided there was no way I was going to say anything bad about those guys.

I saw how they sock watermelons.



STOMACH ACHE CURE? — No, that's Master Lion with the Samurai sword whacking a watermelon in two but not Black Belt Bob Gaughan. Lion has trained for 17 years to do such feats. Don't try it.

Press photos
by Tim Culek

"I was rivited to my chair throughout, either out of total absorption in the show or from fear, I'm not sure which."

CONCRETE EXAMPLE — With a holler, Bob Gaughan breaks three concrete tiles with his right hand. He's part of "The Amazing Martial Arts Show" to be held in Lakewood Civic Auditorium Feb. 3 and 4.

