

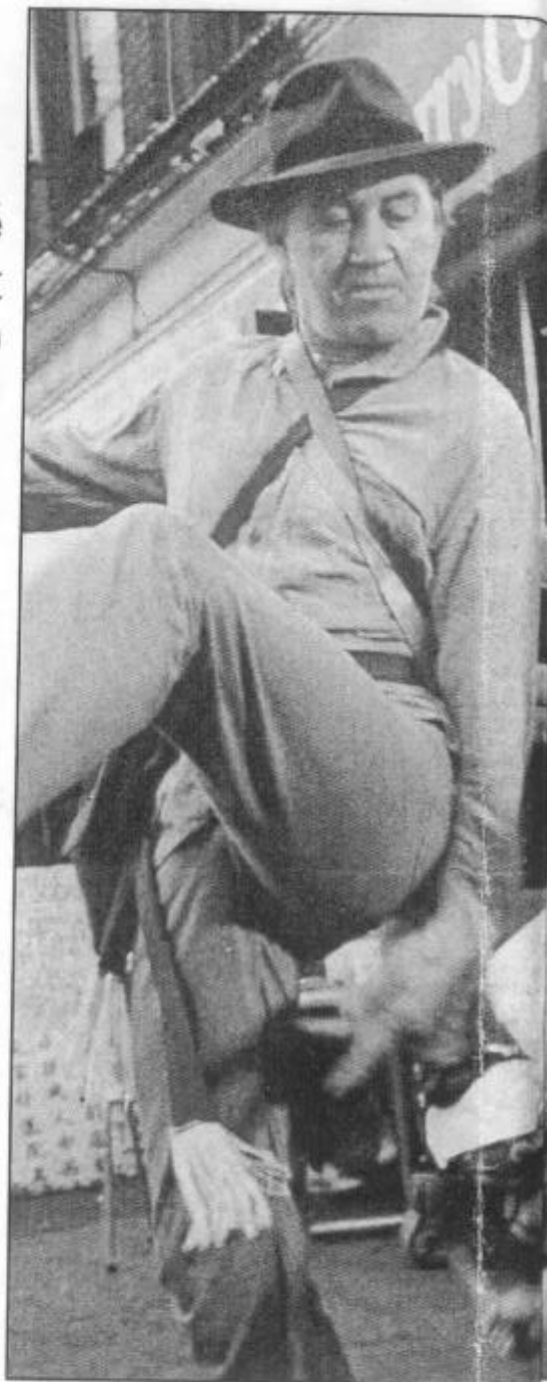
MIKE VENDRELL FIGHT COORDINATOR

Mike Vendrell, 40, has studied kung-fu since he was three years old. He's also been a fight choreographer and stunt coordinator for 20 years, working with such stars as Arnold Schwarzenegger and Brandon Lee. His enormous experience brings a new kind of martial finesse to *Kung Fu: The Legend Continues*.

Interview by Dwight Brown



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Inside Kung-Fu Presents: What are your functions on the show?

Mike Vendrell: Fight choreographer, technical advisor...

IKFP: Are you the advisor for the philosophy of kung-fu, too?

Vendrell: That's it.

IKFP: What is your martial arts background?

Vendrell: I have studied kung-fu since I was three years old. I learned from a friend of my father's. So I've been studying my whole life. I also studied with [martial arts veteran] Gene LeBell for about four years and learned judo from him.

I've also been in the motion picture business for twenty years as a martial arts choreographer. I train actors like Arnold Schwarzenegger. Brandon

Lee [Bruce Lee's son] has been a student of mine for nine years. So all the stuff that Brandon does is what I gave to him.

I've worked with David [Carradine] on and off for eighteen years. I don't work consistently with David because I do other shows and stuff. I'm also a stunt coordinator.

IKFP: Were you with David in the original show at all?

Vendrell: I worked with David in *Kung Fu: The Movie* [see feature in this issue]. I'm a little young to have worked with him in the original. I'm forty years old. I was a senior in high school when it first came on the air. At the time, I don't even know if people knew what kung-fu was. Most people didn't do kung-fu back then.

IKFP: So exactly what is kung-fu to you?

Vendrell: It's my life. I've made a living at it my entire life. I've taught since I was 16 and I've studied all over the world. I was a professional streetfighter for three years. I never lost a fight. In all the fights I choreograph, I try to use moves that I used when I was a streetfighter.

IKFP: How would you explain kung-fu to someone who knows absolutely nothing about it?

Vendrell: Love, peace and harmony. That's how I approach it. And that's how the show's gonna be done.

My job is to make sure that Caine is always a pacifist and not an aggressor. So all the fights that we do involving David, they're all from pacifistic point of view. He never throws the first punch, and he does a minimal amount of damage — instead of breaking legs and/or