

Feet, fists will fly at martial-arts exhibition



Teacher Lorne Bernard (left) of the Shaolin White Crane Kung Fu School, one of the performers at tomorrow's martial-arts gala, demonstrates the "little-devil-topples-the-god" move to his student, Phillip Bilhete.

LIZ FERGUSON
THE GAZETTE

Fists and feet will fly at tomorrow's Gala d'Arts Martiaux Chinois, as about 80 martial-arts students and teachers demonstrate their skills.

The show will open at 7 p.m. at Ecole Primaire le Plateau, 3710 Calixa Lavallée Ave., with a lion dance, and go on to demonstrate more than 20 styles of kung fu, including tiger, crane and monkey styles, with kicks, punches and weapons like halberds, spears, broadswords, knives and canes.

Participants come from 21 schools in Montreal, Quebec City, Toronto and Vancouver. The youngest performer is 7, while the oldest is 81-year old master Xu Gong Wei. Xu has been practicing martial arts for 65 years and teaching for 50. He attributes his good health to constant training.

Teacher Lorne Bernard of the Shaolin White Crane Kung Fu School describes him as a "teacher's teacher." Another special guest is Philip Gelinas, world full-contact stick-fighting champion. One of the lesser-known styles to be demonstrated is Indonesian Kun Tao Silat. Teacher Randall Goodwin explained that after kung fu was brought to Indonesia from China, practitioners abandoned the use of long swords and spears and developed a system of close fighting because in Indonesia "everyone carries a knife."

Presented by the non-profit Eastern Canada China Martial Arts Federation, the event gives people the chance to see a variety of styles in one evening.

■ Admission \$28 for VIP seats, \$22 general, \$18 for balcony. Tickets at the door, through Admissions outlets (790-1245) and Centre du Cadeaux Oriental, 69 LaGauchetière St. W. in Chinatown (866-3209).