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Fists of fury fest kicks up a storm

By SARA STEWART

Martial arts are all the rage lately, with films like "Unleashed" and "Kung Fu Hustle" kicking up a storm at the box office.

This weekend, you can check out the real deal at a star-studded expo.

The First Annual Budo International Magazine Gala Hall of Fame, at the Marriott La Guardia Hotel, will feature celebrity guests such as Chuck Norris and Chuck "Oz" Zito — as well as fists of fury from all over the globe.

"Grand masters of all different styles will be there — akido, judo, tae kwon do, karate," says co-producer Maurice Elmalem, editor of Budo, a worldwide martial-arts magazine available in seven languages.

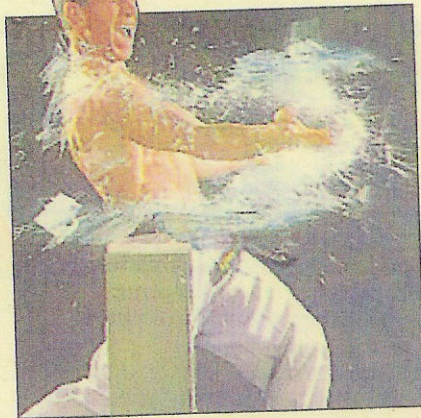
"From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., we'll be giving demonstrations on self-defense — and audience members are welcome to participate as they watch, or possibly be invited to practice their moves onstage."

Elmalem isn't just the organizer — he's also a seven-time world champion known for his ability to karate-chop through 50 sheets of glass, or leap through a ring of fire to break a stack of boards with a flying kick.

"It's not for everyone," he admits, "and it takes a lot of training. But so far I haven't injured myself."

Don't count on seeing Elmalem perform today, though; as the event's organizer, the martial-arts pro may be too busy to give a live demonstration.

"If I have time, I'd love to," says Elmalem, who's expecting anywhere from 1,000 to 2,000 attendees during the day. "But I also have a special DVD that we made — if I can't squeeze in the time, we'll just play that."



Busting up bricks and flipping people over your shoulder works up quite an appetite — so the day's events and autograph-signings will be followed by a banquet (open to those who buy an all-inclusive ticket), where diners can feast their eyes on Spanish dancing, belly dancers and gymnastics.

While you're honing your karate-

kid moves, keep an eye out for two very special guests: superstars Jet Li and Jackie Chan have both said they'll show up if their schedules permit.

For tickets and information, go to budointernational.com.

two dog days of summer, but only hounds are about to get their shot at stardom.

Authors Rick Smolan and David Elliot Cohen ("America 24/7") are inviting New York's 250,000 dog owners to be immortalized in



the largest canine group portrait ever taken, tomorrow at 10:30 a.m. at Bryant Park's Fountain Terrace.

Magnum photographer Elliot Erwit will photograph owners and their cherished pooches from atop a cherry picker.

The group photo kicks off the "Dogs 24/7" and "Cats 24/7" outdoor exhibit that captures the bond between people and their furry, four-legged pals. Culled from 100,000 online submissions, 100 large-format photos will be displayed on the fences surrounding Bryant Park through June 11.

— Maxine Shen