



International Bodyguard & Security Services Association

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NEWS

ACTION STAR

By John Dora

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Since my last visit to Budapest and the 2004 IBSSA Congress, I've finally managed to catch-up with Tony SCHIENA. The first topic of conversation, as always, was when would we be returning to Budapest for another trip. Tony attended the 2003 IBSSA Congress and was overwhelmed by our Hungarian hospitality.

Well! It has been difficult sitting him down, as he has been really busy this past year. Martial arts wise, he returned to competition one last time, October 2003 in England. The US Karate team asked him to compete one on the Kumite team, as one of the members suffered a training injury and Tony happened to be in London preparing for a movie project. Tony responded to the invitation from the US coach with a negative answer as the year before he had an accident resulting in two broken ankles and surgery and as a result he was unable to defend his world titles. After some persuasion he gave in to the coach's request and without training and total restriction from kicking he entered the championship. For the first time in 20 years of competing, his nose was broken. It was an inspiration to see Tony continue to fight, equalise and win his remaining fights. After the championship, Tony commented on, perhaps, his unwise decision to fight, with "in general, in the street, a wounded prey is an easy prey". Tony SCHIENA was awarded WTKO Athlete of the year, which now completes his retirement from competition.

Five weeks after the competition Tony jetted-off to film *Wake of Death* with Jean-Claude Van Damme. Tony and Van Damme play best friends who are gangsters that have a conflict with the Chinese Triads. *Wake of Death* is being premiered and released in LA in August and will be screened at Cannes this year. Tony then travelled to Venice, Italy to film *Merchant of Venice* with Al Pacino, Jeremy Irons and Joseph Fiennes. Tony plays the part of Leonardo. The film is period and almost concise with Shakespeare's original play.

After *Merchant of Venice* Tony filmed *Action Star* in London with Vinnie Jones. It is an action movie spoof. Tony plays an action movie star that is invited to London to be a judge at a beauty pageant. His character falls in love with the wrong girl, causing a climatic series of fights at the end.

Tony has reflected on his speedy rise to leading man, having shot four movies in eight months. He said from filming the John Irvin film *Dot Kill* with Armand Assante, he got noticed and just kept working. His plan is now to take it a little slower and make the right choices. He has many offers to do an array of action martial arts movies and has declined on the offers as he does not want to be type-cast. He loves action movies and loves making them, however, he doesn't just want to make any movie.

He stated, "I'm an actor that does martial arts not a martial arts actor and I think that so far, the few movies I've done, already reflect this and therefore speak for themselves."

Tony's already completed movies will be released during this year. I hope to be reporting soon on more about our friend Tony Schiena, very soon.