

MUM

MAGIC UNITY MIGHT

THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN MAGICIANS

JANUARY 2013



Dennis Loomis
Page 36

Secrets in Africa

AN EXCLUSIVE MAGICAL EXPERIENCE

“The safari adventure of a lifetime awaits ...”

~ SEPTEMBER 2013 ~

3 of magic's finest performers – a journey you'll never forget

Boris Wild ~ Banachek ~ Eric Jones

www.secretsinafrica.com





La Rock's Fun & Magic Outlet



LATEX BALLOON WARNING: Choking Hazard. Children under 8 years can choke or suffocate on uninflated or broken balloons. Adult supervision required. Keep uninflated balloons from children. Discard broken balloons at once.



260Q (2" x 60")
Traditional Assortment
Pink, Pale Blue, White, Onyx Black, Quartz Purple, Sapphire Blue, Emerald Green, Ruby Red, Citrine Yellow, & Mandarin Orange
#43915 160Q (100 ct.) \$4.90
#43956 260Q (100 ct.) \$5.50
#73062 260Q Pro Pack (250 ct.) \$13.40
#44047 350Q (100 ct.) \$8.95



Carnival Assortment
Dark Blue, Green, Red, Yellow, Orange, & Lime Green
#99320 160Q (100 ct.) \$4.90
#99321 260Q (100 ct.) \$5.50
#63006 260Q Pro Pack (250 ct.) \$13.40
#99322 350Q (100 ct.) \$8.95
#13797 646Q (50 ct.) \$9.50



Character Assortment
White, Blush, Mocha Brown, Chocolate Brown, Gray & Onyx Black
#13773 160Q (100 ct.) \$5.60
#13775 260Q (100 ct.) \$6.15
#13777 350Q (100 ct.) \$9.60
#13779 646Q (50 ct.) \$10.30



#47512
Qualatex
Pocket
Pump
\$5.95



Vibrant Assortment
Pink, Pale Blue, Robin's Egg Blue, Wintergreen, Goldenrod, Rose & Spring Lilac
#13767 160Q (100 ct.) \$5.60
#13769 260Q (100 ct.) \$6.15
#13771 350Q (100 ct.) \$9.60



260Q (2" x 60")
Entertainer Assortment
Mocha Brown, Wintergreen, Tropical Teal, Goldenrod, Rose, Spring Lilac, Gray, Jewel Magenta, & Diamond Clear
#43961 (100 ct.) \$5.50
#77565 Pro Pack (250 ct.) \$13.40



260Q (2" x 60")
Neon Assortment
Neon Blue, Neon Green, Neon Pink, Neon Orange, Neon Yellow, Neon Violet, & Neon Magenta
#73308 (100 ct.) \$6.80



#31095
Qualatex
Hand Air
Inflator
\$4.35



Smile Face
#39270 5" Yellow (100 ct.) \$9.40
#38968 5" Jewel Assortment (100 ct.) \$10.20
#39282 11" Yellow (100 ct.) \$17.95
#39044 11" Jewel Assortment (100 ct.) \$18.95



Google Eyes
#93651 5" Assorted Red, Yellow, Orange, Pink, & Pale Blue (100 ct.) \$9.40



Eyeball TopPrint
#84895 5" White (100 ct.) \$10.95



POLKA-DOT
26153 5" Red/Black (100 ct.) \$13.70



Cat Face
#97336 6" Pink (100 ct.) \$11.60
#97337 6" White (100 ct.) \$11.60
#69765 6" Black (100 ct.) \$11.60



SPIDERMAN
Spiderman Face
#21842 5" Red (100 ct.) \$11.60



Space Alien
#79711 5" Lime Green (100 ct.) \$10.20
#98601 5" Festive Assortment (100 ct.) \$10.20



#47509
Qualatex
Balloon
Pump
\$3.25



321Q (3" x 21")
Special Assortment
Red, Yellow, White, Onyx Black & Lime Green
#13717 (100 ct.) \$6.20



Jewel Assortment
Quartz Purple, Sapphire Blue, Emerald Green, Ruby Red, Citrine Yellow, Mandarin Orange, Jewel Magenta, & Diamond Clear
#43638 6" (100 ct.) \$7.50



Sweetheart Assortment
Red, White & Pink
#43644 6" (100 ct.) \$6.95
#43729 11" (100 ct.) \$15.50



Carnival Heart Assortment
Dark Blue, Green Red Yellow, Orange, Purple Violet & Lime Green
#13763 6" (100 ct.) \$6.95



321Q (3" x 21")
Bee Body Assortment
Red, Yellow & White
#44032 (100 ct.) \$6.20
321Q Single Color
#13578 Red (100 ct.) \$6.20
#13579 Yellow (100 ct.) \$6.20
#91704 White (100 ct.) \$6.20



The Mini Mac
Light weighs
4.5 lbs and
stands about
32 inches tall.
It can fill a 260
with one stroke.

#139001
Mini Mac
Pump
For 260's
\$105.00

FREE SHIPPING*
*Over \$150.00
Continental U.S.

SHIPPING CHARGES

\$89.50 or less, add\$8.95
 *W/Purchase of 150.00 or more.....**FREE**
 Over 89.50 add.....10%
 We airmail upon request at current postal rates NC Residents, add Sales Tax 7.75%

Foreign Orders, AK, HI, and Possessions
 Visit our web site www.larocks.com

Prices Subject to change without notice
FREE CATALOG WITH ORDER.
 While supplies last. Dealer inquiries invited!



Visit us on the web 24/7

www.Larocks.com

1511 S Industrail Park Rd • Lincolnton, NC 28092 • Order Number: 1-800-473-3425

Information Number: 1-704-735-8939 • Fax: 1-704-735-9932

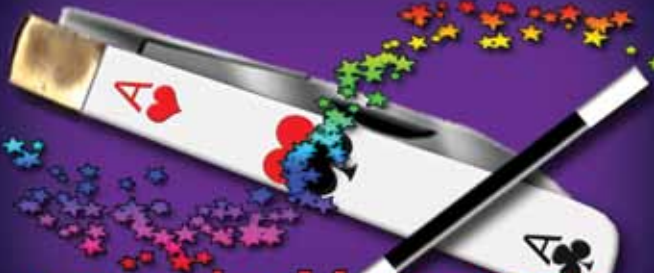


**The S.A.M.
is on
Twitter**

GO TO:
www.Twitter.com
and follow sammumnews



COLOR CHANGING KNIVES



WWW.JOEMOGAR.COM
MAGIC STARS STUDIO 856-358-3684

MAGIC - UNITY - MIGHT

Editor

Michael Close

Editor Emeritus

David Goodsell

Associate Editor

W.S. Duncan

Proofreader & Copy Editor

Lindsay Smith

Art Director

Lisa Close

Publisher

Society of American Magicians,
6838 N.Alpine Dr.
Parker, CO 80134
Copyright © 2012

Subscription is through membership in the Society and annual dues of \$65, of which \$40 is for 12 issues of M-U-M. All inquiries concerning membership, change of address, and missing or replacement issues should be addressed to:

Manon Rodriguez, National Administrator
P.O. Box 505, Parker, CO 80134
manon@magic.bz
Skype: manonadmin
Phone: 303-362-0575
Fax: 303-362-0424

Send assembly reports to:

assemblyreports@gmail.com

For advertising information, reservations, and placement contact:

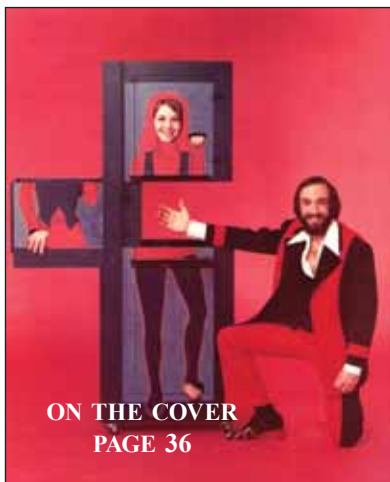
Mona S. Morrison,
M-U-M Advertising Manager
645 Darien Court, Hoffman Estates, IL 60169
Email: mona@monamorrison.com
Telephone/fax: (847) 519-9201

Editorial contributions and correspondence concerning all content and advertising should be addressed to the editor:
Michael Close - Email: mumeditor@gmail.com
Phone: 317-456-7234

Submissions for the magazine will **only** be accepted by email or fax.

VISIT THE S.A.M. WEB SITE
www.magicsam.com

To access "Members Only" pages:
Enter your **Name** and **Membership** number exactly as it appears on your membership card.



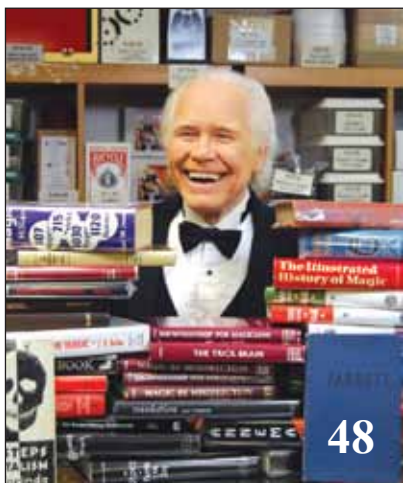
S.A.M. NEWS

- 6 From the Editor's Desk
- 8 From the President's Desk
- 11 M-U-M Assembly News
- 21 Broken Wands
- 21 Good Cheer List
- 22 National Council Meeting Minutes
- 45 Convention Contest Information
- 69 Our Advertisers



THIS MONTH'S FEATURES

- 24 Salon de Magie • by Ken Klosterman
- 25 Henning • by Dennis Loomis
- 28 Ebook Nook: The Collected Works of Alex Elmsley
- 32 The High Road • by Mick Ayres
- 34 Nielsen Gallery • by Tom Ewing
- 36 COVER STORY • by Michael Close
- 44 Building a Show • by Larry Hass
- 48 On the Shoulders of Giants • by Scott Alexander
- 52 El Roberto Enigmatico • by R.D. Michaels
- 58 Informed Opinion • New Product Reviews
- 68 Basil the Baffling • by Alan Wassilak



COLUMNISTS

- 42 Stage 101 • by Levent
- 46 Mental Breakdown • by Christian Painter
- 55 Tech Tricks • by Bruce Kalver
- 56 Unlimited Possibilities • by Roger Blakiston
- 68 The Dean's Diary • by George Schindler
- 69 Inside Straight • by Norman Beck
- 70 Confessions of a Paid Amateur • by Rod Danilewicz



Cover Photo by Ric Ewing

M-U-M (ISSN 00475300 USPS 323580) is published monthly for \$40 per year by The Society of American Magicians, 6838 N. Alpine Dr., Parker, CO 80134 . Periodical postage paid at Parker, CO and additional mailing offices.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to M-U-M, c/o Manon Rodriguez, P.O. Box 505, Parker, CO 80134.



Editor's Desk

Michael Close

This month Dennis Loomis finishes up his tenure as a regular columnist for *M-U-M*. Dennis joined the team when I took over as editor with the January 2009 issue. That gives him a total of forty-nine columns (and deadlines), several hundred photographs, and about 125K worth of words – a major accomplishment. In his final “The Skinny Kid with the Overbite” article, Dennis discusses a great little trick by Peter Tappan (a trick that Pete performed for me very late one night at the 1976 I.B.M. convention in Evansville, Indiana) and the circumstances that led to Doug Henning distancing himself from his old friends. In the cover story on page 36, Dennis and I chat about his life in magic, filling in a few of the details of his life as a “general practitioner” magician.

Also leaving us this month is Roger “Jolly Roger” Blakiston, whose “Unlimited Possibilities” column has appeared every other month for the past three years. As you’ll read, Roger is embarking on several new adventures, and we wish him much success. We’ll be featuring Roger on the cover of *M-U-M* later this year. On behalf of all compeers, I’d like to say thanks to Roger for his contribution.

As tough as it is to say goodbye to long-time contributors to the magazine, it is exciting (and challenging) to line up new content for *M-U-M*. I’m happy to report that you’ll discover some terrific new columns this month.

When Denny Haney, Scott Alexander, and I discussed the Haney cover story that appeared last August, I expressed my fervent desire that Denny’s repertoire (and the theory that drives it) be recorded for posterity. After some serious arm-twisting, Denny relented, and Scott (who is very familiar with this material) agreed to write it up. You’ll find the first installment of “On the Shoulders of Giants” on page 48. I am eager to read and study them all. Thank you, Denny, and thank you, Scott.

Mick Ayres was our cover subject last September. As you may recall from that article, Mick is passionate that magic performances be more than just a demonstration of tricks. His new monthly column, “The High Road: Script Writing, Character Development, and Act Construction for the Modern Conjuror,” will help those of you who strive to give your spectators a satisfying theatrical magic experience. Welcome, Mick; I’m very glad to have you on board.

Some months ago, I received a phone call from my old friend R.D. Michaels, whom I had not heard from in quite some time. He told me a fascinating story. R.D. had spent most of 2012 traveling through Europe; his wanderings eventually took him to the small coastal town of Jávea, Spain, where he settled for several weeks. One evening, he had dinner at a nondescript tapas bar hidden down a narrow side street off of Calle Juan Ramon Jimenez. Attached to the restaurant’s menu was a small card

promoting the tableside performances of a magician called “El Roberto Enigmatico.” R.D. told his waiter that he would like to see the magician after dinner.

As the plates were being cleared, a man with shoulder-length hair and a Pedro Armendáriz moustache approached the table and launched into a series of card tricks. The man seemed vaguely familiar, although R.D. could not immediately place him. Just then, the magician began a Wild Card effect, accompanied with patter that included the phrase “*hombres que cazan cabezas*” (a Babelfish-like translation of the word “headhunters”), and R.D. realized that the magician was none other than Bob Farmer.

R.D. learned that Bob, a Canadian, had left North America several years earlier in protest of the fact that the power-trio Rush had never been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. (Which reminds me: someone needs to track down Bob to let him know that this oversight has been corrected.) He had moved to Spain, and spent his days on the beach inventing cards tricks and his nights performing in local eateries.

The good news for *M-U-M* readers is that before Bob once again vanished for parts unknown, he gave R.D. a stack of tricks for the magazine. They were all in Spanish, but R.D. has translated and edited them, and has posed for the photographs. The initial offering, *The Casino Inspector*, requires a minimal amount of skill, but it will make your spectators believe you are the greatest card handler in the world. It is a really good trick; do not overlook it, or someone in your assembly will fool you with it. (Bob’s tricks will appear every other month, alternating with Steve Marshall’s “I Left My Cards at Home” column.)

Even though I’m a traditional book guy who grew up surrounded by books, I’ve embraced ebook technology. I love my Kindle; if I have the choice between an ebook and a hard copy version, I’ll take the ebook. One benefit for magicians is that many great books that are out of print (and very expensive on the secondary market) have become available as ebooks. Each month, “The Ebook Nook” will feature an excerpt from a great book you may have forgotten about. This month the book is volume one of *The Collected Works of Alex Elmsley*, written by Stephen Minch. My thanks to Louis Falanga for allowing these excerpts to appear in *M-U-M*.

Larry Hass, whose column “Theory and Art of Magic” ran for several years in *M-U-M*, is back with a new column, “Building a Show,” which will examine and analyze the structure of the acts of many well known magicians. There is much to be learned in such a study, and I am looking forward to Larry’s columns.

In his “Confessions of a Paid Amateur” column this month, Rod Danilewicz discusses dealing with hecklers. In addition to the suggestions Rod offers, I’d like to point you to what I think is the absolute best book on the subject, *How to Handle Hecklers* by Keith Fields. Although the cover of the book touts “with over 200 put-downs,” the heckler-stoppers are not the reason to buy the book. What makes this book important are the strategies Keith provides for avoiding the need to ever use a heckler-stopper. There are situations when bringing out the big smack-down is the wrong move, and Keith spends a lot of pages analyzing ways to defuse potentially disruptive situations. If you perform for real-world-audiences, this book should be in your library. It’s \$30 and you can find it on Keith’s website (www.keithfields.com). ★

SAVE \$100 NOW!

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MAGIC!

IBM/SAM 2014
COMBINED CONVENTION

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI
JULY 1-5, 2014



A FIVE DAY CONTEST OF MAGIC
AND EXCEPTIONAL SPECIAL EVENTS

REGISTRATION OPENS FEBRUARY 1, 2013 – FOR JUST 28 DAYS!

You've heard the buzz. Now it's official. The IBM and SAM invite you to five of the most exciting days of magic and special events since the IBM/SAM Combined Convention in 2008.

Starting February 1, and for the next 28 days only, registration will be open for the special Early-Bird, **all-inclusive price of \$295**. It's the same registration price for all IBM and SAM members and their immediate families. At the end of February, we will discontinue taking registrations until July 1, 2013, and at that time the registration price will be \$395.

HERE'S WHAT YOU GET

- Five days of stage and close-up contests with the winners having the opportunity to compete in the 2015 FISM World Championships of Magic in Rimini, Italy.
- An Opening Show, 3 Gala Stage Shows, a Close-Up Gala Show, Contest Awards Presentation, International Lecturers, Dealers from around the world – plus many of the regular IBM and SAM member events that you are used to attending.
- An elegant banquet - plus a 4th of July St. Louis fireworks extravaganza.

- Better reserved theater seats when registering early.

Convention headquarters will be at the downtown Renaissance Hotel where we have a guaranteed rate of \$115 (single or double) that includes *free parking!* The Renaissance will start accepting reservations July 1, 2013.

REGISTER NOW FOR THE BEST DEAL

- Online at **ibmsam.com**
 - Payment accepted by any major credit card or PayPal
 - Registration forms may be completed online or downloaded
- By mail with check (payable to: IBMSAM Convention) or credit card information, and completed registration form to:
**Anne Weidhaas, 15225 Pleasant View Dr.,
Colorado Springs, CO 80921**

Questions? Call 314-732-0301 or email
registrar@ibmsam.com



President's Desk

Chris Bontjes

PAY IT FORWARD

Last November, a question was raised to me about what, if anything, the S.A.M. does that could be considered benevolent. So many answers came to mind that I could not keep track of them all. We encourage all compeers to care for and give to those in need in many ways. Most notably, in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, the S.A.M. has the Houdini Fund to help with paying medical costs and the Disaster Relief Fund to help with recovery from physical losses. Both of these funds exist to benefit any magician or allied artist who is in need. Membership in the S.A.M. is not necessary to receive help.

If you know someone in need of assistance from either of these funds, please pass the word. All requests to and grants from both funds are confidential. Requests for aid from the Houdini Fund may be made via email to showbiz10@aol.com or via postal mail to Houdini Fund Trustees, 1735 East 26 Street, Brooklyn, NY 11229. Requests for aid from the Disaster Relief Fund may be made via email to samambassador@comcast.net or via postal mail to Disaster Relief Fund, 234 Towyn Ct., Lower Gwynedd, PA 19002.

Hurricane Sandy has placed quite a strain on the Houdini and Disaster Relief Funds. If you were not affected by the storm, and are looking for a way to help, please consider making a donation to one or both funds. You can do this via mail to National Administrator Manon Rodriguez, P.O. Box 505, Parker, CO 80134 or via the S.A.M. website (www.magicsam.com). To donate via the website: log in, go to the Members Home page, click "Renew Your Membership" in the menu on the left, scroll down and fill out the form for making an additional payment to the S.A.M. You can specify where you would like your donation to go at the bottom of the form.

Donating to a fund to help other magicians in need is a great way to "pay it forward" and help those in need, as our national chaplain, PNP Michael Douglass, asked us all to do. All donations are tax deductible.

ECHOES OF THE PAST

In the April 1972 issue of *M-U-M*, MI Gary Bontjes lists some of the "Advantages of S.A.M. Membership" (some for the individual member, and some for the benefit of magic and all magicians) including: membership in the world's oldest magic fraternity, *M-U-M* magazine, the membership card, the membership pin, assembly membership, the S.A.M. Library, the Houdini Fund, the S.A.M. Film Library, the S.A.M. Hall of Fame and Magic Museum, and the ability to share ideas and fellowship.

In the last forty-one years, we have expanded the above benefits and added many more including (but by no means limited to): the S.A.M. website (including new blogs and instructional videos), SAMtalk (our electronic bulletin board), two S.A.M.

Facebook pages, a new membership card that does a magic trick, performers' liability insurance, the Magic Endowment Fund, the Disaster Relief Fund, the Heroism and Patriot's Award, the Humanitarian Award, the online memorials page, the Paranormal Investigation Committee, the Spotlight program, and the Society of Young Magicians.

We have an incredible team working tirelessly to provide you with the best value possible for your dues investment – and the list of benefits continues to grow. I encourage you to take advantage of all the benefits we provide. They are there for you. If you saw something on the list that you did not know about, ask a compeer or look it up on our website.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION – BE A HERO

As we again turn the calendar to a new year, many people take the time to set goals and think about things they would like to accomplish in the year to come. Many of us set out after these goals by way of a New Year's resolution. As we move into 2013, I would like to tell you about a resolution of mine, and invite you to join me in adopting this idea as a goal for the new year: think about heroes.

I don't mean the kind that wear capes and masks. I am referring to your personal magic heroes.

I think we all have heroes in magic – those we look up to and try to emulate; those we are thankful to for the ways they have helped us to grow and improve. Some of these heroes may be famous magicians. Others may be family members, mentors, friends, and members of your assembly – the person who showed you your very first trick, a person who supported your interest in magic, someone who helped you take your performance to the next level, the person who invited you to join The Society of American Magicians. If you take a moment to reflect, you will likely find that many people in your life served as magic heroes to you.

Once you have your list complete, I have two suggestions for things to do with it. The first is to get in touch with all the people on the list. Tell them what they did for you and thank them. Really. The chances are that most, if not all of them, have no idea of the impact they had on your life. Regardless, I guarantee that they will enjoy hearing about it. If one of the people on your list is a famous performer you have never met, look up their contact information. Send them a letter or an email. You will make their day.

At the top of my own list are my parents. They introduced me to magic and to the S.A.M. They supported my every magical interest and gave me the opportunity to spend time with many incredible performers and creators of magic. "Thank you" hardly seems enough, but thank you just the same.

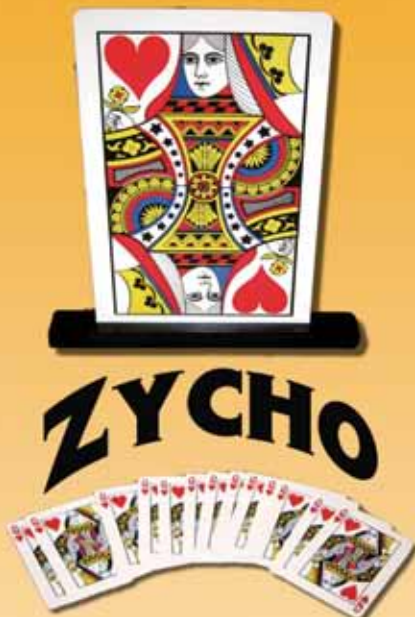
Right behind them is a list of very special friends who have given my time and involvement in the S.A.M. the feeling of family. This means the world to me.

I am also indebted to all the magicians who have helped me to develop and improve as a performer – especially those who were honest enough and kind enough to tell me quietly and tactfully about the things I was doing poorly and gave me suggestions for improvement.

My second suggestion for your list is to think about the things your heroes did for you and to try to do those things yourself. Throughout the year, try to do for others the things your magic

NEW FROM SHOW-BIZ

COMEDY MENTALISM AT ITS BEST!



The audience is in on all the fun. You show them the face of your Giant Prediction card (10"x14") unseen by your spectator, which is then set on a stand, a chair, or anywhere in full view, but with its back toward the audience. Next, you show them the faces of an extra large (3"x 4") one-way forcing deck (every card is the same as the prediction) with a wink to the audience. The "victim" who has not seen the faces of the deck is asked to choose any card.

NOW FOR THE FUN PART...

The spectator double crosses you! He or she names the **WRONG CARD**. Impossible? The prediction is turned around and it has changed to the selection. Everyone is confused - the audience has been double crossed - the laughs are built in. Concentrate on the presentation as there are no sleights - it is all self working! Complete with everything you need: the Giant Prediction Card, the special "Parlour" Force Deck, display stand, plus instructions and patter by George Schindler..... \$ 125.00.



SHOW-BIZ SERVICES
1735 East 26th Street
Brooklyn, New York 11229

Dealer Inquiries Invited • www.showbizmagic.net

heroes did for you. Teach someone their first trick. Show someone where to find magic books in the library. Help a compeer with their presentation of an effect. Invite a friend to join the S.A.M. Invite an associate member in your area to attend your assembly meetings. The possibilities are endless, and – who knows – you may become someone else's magic hero.

To me, this is more than a resolution. It is a great way to *Get Involved, and Pass It On!* ★

Tom Burgoon

MAGIC
JOKES
GAGS
FUN

Visit the online store at:
www.tomburgoon.com

The Timmy Toller Paper Image and routine are the sole property of Tom Burgoon and Tom Burgoon Magic Productions Limited, a division of Burgoon Entertainment LLC.

●

●

●

●

S.A.M. National Officers

Dean: George Schindler, 1735 East 26th St., Brooklyn, NY 11229, (718) 336-0605, Fax (718) 627-1397, showbiz10@aol.com

President: J. Christopher Bontjes, 2313 Atwood Ct., Danville, IL 61834 (217) 442-6244 christopher@magicalentertainer.net

President Elect: Dal Sanders, 3316 Northaven Rd, Dallas, TX 75229 (214) 902-9200, DalSanders@StagemMagic.com

First Vice President: Kenrick "ICE" McDonald, P.O. Box 341034, Los Angeles, CA 90034, (310) 559-8968 kenrickicemcdonald@yahoo.com

Second Vice President: David Bowers, (717) 414-7574, AMagicalExperience@live.com

Secretary: Marlene Clark, 274 Church Street, #6B Guilford, CT 06437, (203) 689-5730, Skype: marlene.clark@comcast.net

Treasurer: Eric Lampert, (215) 939-5555, eb100@aol.com

Regional Vice Presidents

New England: CT MA RI NH ME VT

Joseph Caulfield (603) 654-6022, josephcaulfield@josephcaulfield.com

North Atlantic: NY NJ

Eric DeCamps, (718) 896-5861, eric@ericdecamps.com

Mid Atlantic: PA DE MD VAWV DC

Phil Milstead, (703) 481-5271, plm6569sam@verison.com

South Atlantic: FL AL GA MS NC SC

Debbie Leifer (404) 630-1120 debbie@debbieleifer.com

Central Plains: KY TN OH IN MI

Jania Taylor, (231) 242-8242, magicjat@bright.net

Midwest: IL MN WI MO ND NE KS SD IA

Shaun Rivera, (618) 781-8621 shaun.rivera@gmail.com

South Cental States: TX AR OK NM LA

Jeff Lanes, (713) 850-1770, jeffie@texasfilm.net

Southwest: CA AZ NV HI

Ron Ishimaru, (808) 428-6019, aliali@hawaiiintel.net

Northwest: WA OR UT ID CO AK WY MT

Michael Roth, (503) 493-8316, mrsr@nwresources.com

Canada

Rod Chow (604) 669-7777 rod@jackchow.com

Society of Young Magicians Director

Jann Wherry Goodsell, 329 West 1750 North, Orem, Utah 84057 (801) 376-0353. bravesjann@comcast.net

Living Past National Presidents

Bradley M. Jacobs, Richard L. Gustafson, Roy A. Snyder, Bruce W. Fletcher, James E. Zachary, David R. Goodsell, Robert A. Steiner, Fr. Cyprian Murray, Michael D. Douglass, George Schindler, Dan Rodriguez, Dan Garrett, Donald F. Oltz Jr., Craig Dickson, Loren C. Lind, Gary D. Hughes, Harry Monti, Jann Wherry Goodsell, Warren J. Kaps, Ed Thomas, Jay Gorham, John Apperson, Richard M. Dooley, Andy Dallas, Maria Ibáñez, Bruce Kalver, Mike Miller, Mark Weidhaas, Vinny Grosso



NEW from AXTELL!

ANIMATRONIC TOUCAN

Imagine having this fully animated "TalkingToucan" in your show! He can even introduce you! As you perform he watches you! He's amazed at your tricks! He laughs at your jokes! He sings crazy songs! This Hands-Free Puppet is controlled by a tiny remote hidden in your hand!



MIC-MOUTH

a Microphone with a Big Mouth!

Make Anyone... Say Anything!

Check Out the Videos on Website

"One of the funniest sight gags ever!"
Jeff McBride

Creator of the Magic and Mystery School

HANDS - FREE MAGIC DRAWING BOARD!

Now the Axtell Magic Drawing Board can be programmed and operated Hands-Free! Customize your own routines and animation!



AXTELL EXPRESSIONS
2889 Bunsen Ave - H
Ventura, CA 93003
(805) 642-7282
order@axtell.com

WWW.AXTELL.COM

Call or Visit Our Website For More Great Products!



BALLOONS

to you

Your #1 Balloon Source

1-800-636-4887

Same Day Shipping

No Minimum



PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

PRICES CURRENT AS OF APRIL 2011

160Qs

Standard Solids \$4.35
Jeweltone/Fashiontone Solids \$4.95
Pearltone Solids \$5.25
Traditional/Carnival Assortments \$4.35
Vibrant/Character Assortments \$4.95

260Qs

Standard Solids \$4.85
Jeweltone/Fashiontone Solids \$5.35
Pearltone/Neons \$5.85
Traditional/Carnival/Entertainer Assort. \$4.85
Pro-Pack - 250 ct. bags \$11.70
Vibrant/Character Assortments \$5.40

350Qs

Standard Solids \$7.65
Jeweltone/Fashiontone Solids \$7.95
Traditional/Carnival Assortments \$7.65
Vibrant/Character Assortments \$7.95

321Q - No Black Tip

Standard Solids & Special Assort \$5.50
Jeweltone/Fashiontone Solids \$6.30
Bee Bodies - With Black Tip
Standard Solid and Assort. \$5.50
6" Hearts
Sweetheart Assortment \$6.40
Carnival Assortment \$6.40
Standard Solids \$6.40
Jeweltone/Fashiontone Solids \$6.70
Jeweltone & Love Assortments \$6.70
Jeweltone/Flower Assortments \$13.45
5" Smiley Face
Yellow \$8.60
Jeweltone Assortment \$9.35
5" Alien - Lime & Festive Assortment \$9.35
Wobbly Worm \$7.95



ASSEMBLY NEWS

Society of American Magicians Monthly News

JANUARY 2012 Volume 101, Number 8

1

AN OCTOBER TO REMEMBER

NEW YORK, NY— There's been lots of excitement since the October report. October ended with several members, including George Schindler, Bruce Lisch, Jordan Linker, and Joe Devlin, performing for the public as part of Magic Week. Albert Lascher's S.Y.M. kids taped performances for Mt. Sinai Hospital's Kid Zone.

Additional Magic Week performances were scheduled when, on October 29, Superstorm Sandy hit, causing mass devastation throughout the NY/NJ area. Communicating through Facebook, text, email etc., we had to cancel our monthly meeting, and the annual ceremony at the Houdini gravesite.

Many of our members were affected by the storm. Throwdini and Sal Perrotta sustained significant damage to their homes. Dr. Bruce Lisch's dental practice was damaged, and many members were without power for up to eleven days. In lower Manhattan Tom Klem had to climb up and down fourteen flights of stairs to a dark cold apartment; Lonnie Helfan in NJ was without power for nine days. Please consider giving to the S.A.M. Magic Endowment Disaster relief fund.

In a return to normalcy, Doug Edward's monthly workshop was

held on the 16th, with a dozen members showing up to share dinner and learn some new material. Ronnie Reckseit and his wife visited the magic table at the Edison Cafe. If you're visiting NYC Stop by the Edison cafe on Friday afternoon between 12:30 and 2.

Looking forward to Thanksgiving and the excitement of the Holidays; almost certain to be a calmer time than this past month. —Jordan Linker

Parent Assembly One meets at Mt Sinai Hospital East Bldg, Goldwurm Auditorium, 1425 Madison Avenue and 98th street NY, NY. Contact Jordan Linker Linker.Jordan@gmail.com (646) 670-7235 www.sampal.com for more details.

2

MAGICAL CRAFT'S LESSONS

SAN FRANCISCO, CA— Within several weeks, Assembly 2 mages and guests watched feats of wizardry by two masters of the magical craft: Daryl and Neil Foster. In October we hosted Daryl's 4FXII Lecture. Daryl performed with such ease and humor we were completely enchanted. He revealed the importance of presentation over showing off the latest gimmick. At November's gathering Tamaka provide a viewing of Neil Foster performing on Don Alan's *Magic Ranch* TV show. Foster presented routines ranging from eggs and card fans to

his marvelous version of Zombie. A master adept, Foster's manipulations were graceful and elegant. We all learned watching his performance.

The evening's entertainment centered on Corky LaVallee, who showcased new acquisitions interspersed among other mages' presentations. First, he deftly executed

Bob Solari's Ultimate Brain Wave. The three selected cards had blue backs while the remaining cards had red ones. Hippo Lau, with much amusement, demonstrated that not all props are worth owning. He exhibited a thumb tip too small to hold the large multi-colored streamer that was attached. Moral: test the equipment before buying. With Stu Bacon and Rich Seguire assisting, Corky revealed a Mark Mason coin-penetrating-scarf routine utilizing a recently developed prop that allowed even the assistant to pull the coin through. Jack Langdell, employing a cool style, produced many small scarves from a large red one. Rich enacted a delightful version of Paul Curry's Out of This World. Cynthia Yee, as assistant, affirmed her intuitive powers by assigning the correct placement of red and black cards. Corky returned with Mark Mason's X-Act. Cynthia, again assisting, chose the same card as the prediction. John Caris and Rich inspected the reality of Karl Fulves's Automatic Poker routine. Although Rich drew an Ace-high straight, he actually desired a flush. The force is not always available. Corky finished the evening's entertainment with Dick Steiner's Clued In, an engaging mystery who-done-it. The audience assisted in selecting location of crime, weapon used, and criminal. Mary Caris, Bill Langdell, and Rob Shapiro enjoyed the wondrous magic while vanishing many cookies. —John Caris

Golden Gate Assembly 2 meets first Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. at Community Room of Taraval Police Station, 2345 24th Avenue, San Francisco. Contact Tamaka Tamaka3715@aol.com (415) 531-9332 for more details.

4

MAGIC HISTORY LECTURE & STAGE CONTEST

PHILADELPHIA, PA— Our November meeting was a very

special evening that featured a most interesting lecture by National Historian Tom Ewing followed by our annual stage contest. The proceedings quickly got under way after an enthusiastic welcome by Assembly 4 President Donna Horn.

National Historian Tom Ewing captivated everyone with an amazing lecture about a long-forgotten magician, juggler, and prominent Philadelphia chiropractor named Robert Marshall, who emigrated to the United States in 1890 from Germany at the age of fourteen, appeared on the cover of *Mahatma* magazine by the age of seventeen, and made it to the top of his field before retiring in 1909 at the age of thirty-three. Tom explained how Marshall's papers and effects, including publicity posters and letters from such magic luminaries as T. Nelson Downs, were only recently found in a trunk in the attic of a home located in Wildwood Crest, New Jersey, where the magician had lived. The entire story told through documents found in that attic was simply fascinating.

Following Tom's lecture, we held our annual stage contest, which featured five excellent performances. Rob Malissa got things off to a great start with a very creative Miser's Dream routine assisted by the adorable Sydney Matthews. After Rob, first place winner Helene Schad mesmerized the crowd with a beautiful classic dove act set



PAI member Masa Tsuchiya performs Rakugo magic for the T.A.M.C. in Tokyo!



Helene Schad takes a bow after her First Place performance in the Stage Contest

GO TO:

WWW.MUM-MAGAZINE.COM

and use the easy submission form to file your report

to music, which culminated in a flash bird cage vanish. Next, second place winner Al Lloyd wowed everyone by flawlessly executing Pavel's Super Walking Knot. Third place winner Reba Strong then delighted everyone with a candy cane themed Professor's Nightmare routine. Sue McElvenney and her husband Bill then closed the show with a most colorful routine in which an endless array of silks were made to appear, knot, and unknot before transforming into a beautiful rainbow streamer. A hearty round of applause was given to all the acts for a job well done. After the meeting, approximately thirty members and their guests visited our favorite diner where the fun continued. —Peter Cuddihy

James Wobensmith Assembly 4 meets the third Thursday at 7:00 p.m. at the Bustleton Memorial Post, 810 (American Legion), 9151 Old Newtown Road. For more information: www.sam4.org/ for more details.

7

THE MAGIC EXCHANGE

OMAHA, NE— This month was the month that many await for the opportunity to set up a table and sell unused magic to other magicians selling unused magic – the garage sale. It seems prudent to have it in November so that spouses can fulfill their shopping lists by buying magic for their performer(s) at the best prices. There was some bustle and hustle and there were a lot of smiling faces; one might wonder why the sellers or buyers were smiling. Hopefully, they all got something they always wanted. Here a list of the folks who “exchanged the magic”: Tom Zepf, R. J. Thomas, Bob Buczkowski, Bob and Lea Pitlor, Walt Graham, Thomas and Jo Neddo, Jeff Sikora, Charlie Gross, and Pete Petrashek.

This month also nailed down the election of officers. I can proudly say that for next year the officers will be Bob Gehringer – President, Professor Emeritus Tom Zepf – Vice President, Dean Walter Graham – Treasurer, Secretary – Jerry Golmanavich, and Sergeant-at-Arms – Scott Klinger. Scott will be serving his first term while all of the other officers will be serving the same positions as last year.



Buyers or Sellers?

To end the year we will have our annual Christmas party on our regularly scheduled meeting night at our regularly scheduled meeting place, except now that Hooters has closed it's not so easy to find. January will bring our Wizard's Banquet, where we don our gay apparel (clean clothes) and get all “gussied up.” —Jerry Golmanavich

The Omaha Magical Society meets usually on the third Monday of the month at the Southwest Church of Christ near 124th St. and West Center Road, right across from where Hooters used to be. Contact Jerry Golmanavich golubki@cox.net (402) 390-9834 omahamagicalsociety.com for more details.

13

FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT PART 2

DALLAS, TX— President Mark Jensen welcomed the members of the Dallas Magic Clubs to the newly renovated Theater 166 at Crosspointe, and started off with a few announcements. Guests included David Brucener, Lydia Pluscht, and returning visitor Kendal Kane with friend Jason.

Mark then invited up visitor David to assist in a card effect, using a book called *Little Bunny's Card Trick*. After Mark and David mixed the cards thoroughly in a number of ways, they consulted the book to find that their mixed-up cards perfectly matched the text of the book. Mark went on to explain that the book was a version of Simon Aronson's Shuffle Bored, wrapped in a children's presentation.

Dal Sanders recapped the S.A.M. National Magic Week, which took place the last week of October, and was proud to announce that eleven Dallas members were sent certificates of appreciation from the S.A.M. Club members and affiliates so recognized included

Ian Richards, Mike Squires, Dal Sanders, Reade Quinton, Derrel Allen, Hal Hudgins, Chuck Lehr, Aaron Maynard, and John Kline. Chad Edwards and Danny Matijosaistis of the Dallas Young Magicians Club were also recognized for participating in National Magic Week.

Next was a panel discussion about family entertainment, which included Dan Estep, Derrel Allen, and Cinde Sanders. The three talked about booking events, marketing your show, and performing for children. Cinde also briefly addressed the differences between performing as a magician versus performing as a clown.

David Wall took the stage to perform a coin routine with the assistance of Cinde Sanders. Derrel Allen then performed a routine about his favorite soft drink, dis-



Reade Quinton, Dal Sanders, and Derrel Allen display National Magic Week certificates

playing large cards with pictures of his beverage of choice and its number one competitor. He followed this up with a knotted silks routine.

Finally, Dan Estep took the stage to perform a brief children's magic show, wrapping up the theme over the last two months. Dan started by conditioning his audience with his “applause flower,” which reacted to great amounts of applause. He then performed a rope routine with one white rope and one red rope, culminating with the red rope absorbing a segment of the white. He then went on to Chinese Pom-Poms, and wrapped up with a Monte-like card routine.

The Dallas Magic Clubs meet the third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 at Crosspointe Community Center in Carrollton, Texas (see www.dallasmagic.org for directions) Contact Reade Quinton reade.quinton@gmail.com (972) 4000195 www.dallasmagic.org for more details.

17

ALL DECKED OUT

SPRINGFIELD, MA— This month's meeting was dubbed Card Night, and our members came ready to show off their chops! After a brief business meeting during which we set the stage for our annual get-together, we settled in for a variety of card magic from just about everyone who came out.

Our Dean, Tom Gentile, got us started with a very funny routine from Cody Fisher in which he seemed to be able to predict everything his helper would say, right down to his thought-of card.

Butch took the stage next and did a very clean revelation of a named Ace after allowing his volunteer to cut and mix the cards. He doesn't perform often, but when he does it's worth the wait!

Joe Bednar was next with a three-phase routine he's been working on involving a Spectator Cuts the Aces effect, Vernon's Twisting the Aces, and ending with a paperclip jumping from a selected card onto the Aces. Conrad McIntyre joined us, performing Get Sharkey and Eddie Fechter's Be Honest – What is It?

Peter Liennes shared three pieces of magic tonight that had us all intrigued: Industrial Revolution, Die of Destiny, and Devastation, one of the cleanest card revelations I've ever seen. Rich Pinsonnault, who hosts the meetings, performed two sleight-of-hand routines: Brother John Hamman's 2 Shuffle Harry and Between Your Points of Departure by Earl Nelson.

Our newest member, Sky, offered an Ace production with a story hook. The trick was a reenactment of a robbery, which was funny and fast paced. PJ performed Martin Nash's Ovation with a “game of war” presentation. Finally, Joe Bongiovanni performed two pieces: a five-card transformation by Frank Garcia and Roy Walton's Card Warp. —PJ Pinsonnault

Dr. I.R. Calkins Assembly 17 meets the first Friday of every month at 7 pm at Pinsonnault Moto-X-Equipment, 69 East Street, Ludlow, MA Contact Rich Gilbert rgilbetmagic@yahoo.com (413) 210-5725 www.assembly17.org for more details.

19

HOUDINI SÉANCE

HOUSTON, TX— The November meeting was enriched by a fine presentation by Scott Wells on the Houdini séance that he hosted in Ft. Worth on Halloween. This was the first time that the séance was open to the public. Scott wove an interesting story, giving the background history of the event and his view from behind the scenes. The presence of Houdini himself may have even been manifested. We will never know for sure. It was both entertaining and educational. We want to thank our magical performers for November. They were Dick Olson, Stephen Smith, Randy Stulken, Scott Wells, Gene Protas, and Shane Wilson.

Carroll Baker will be in town to lecture on November 13. This will be the last lecture for the year for us. Our annual magic auction will be held on Sunday, December 2 this year. Doug Kornegay is in charge of the event, as usual, so it is going to be a very special event. Doug promises that there will be plenty of magic available. —Miles Root

Assembly 19 meets the first Monday of every month at the IATSE Local 51 Meeting Hall, 3030 North Freeway, Houston, TX. A teaching lecture begins at 7:30 pm with the meeting beginning at 8:00 pm.

21

DAVID CORSARO LECTURE

HARTFORD, CT— David Corsaro returned to Hartford with another great lecture. This one was his marketing lecture, *The Business of Being Awesome*. Marketing is David's business, so this lecture was full of proven facts for marketing your magic career. The major points raised were: Creating Your Brand, Building Your Brand, and Monitoring Your Brand's Health. This



Corsaro presents

was information we all could put to use immediately.

He also threw in some great tricks. The highlight was A Damn Good Trick, which got a phenomenal reaction. (You'll have to ask someone who was there to tell you about it.) Again, David set aside a portion of his notes/material sales as a donation to our David Oliver Fund. A great lecture by a great guy. —Dana Ring

Assembly 21 meets at Angelo's On Main, 289 South Main Street, West Hartford CT 06107 Contact Dana Ring dana@danaring.com (860) 523-9888 www.ctmagic.org for more details.

22

COMEDY PREVAILS

LOS ANGELES, CA— A very large group of members and guests gathered for the November 19, 2012, meeting of the Southern California Assembly. Before launching into the entertainment program for the evening, our genial president, Jim Callen, had some official business to attend to. Second readings were conducted by PNP Ed Thomas for Gregorio Quioan, Bob Altman, and John Jacobson. All three were then unanimously elected into assembly membership. Congratulations and welcome to Greg, Bob, and John.

The program for the evening was comedy magic with a generous showing of the allied art of ventriloquism. Producing the program and acting as emcee for the show was Kim Hallinger, who also performed bits of magic between acts. The opening act was Kim's dad, Don Hallinger; he has been taking lessons at the Magic Castle and it showed in his confidence and polish as a performer. Don did a nice three-effect card routine. Fresh home from a clown convention was Toni Perrine, using a large "Chester the Jester" clown doll to assist in the performance of magic. Our third act was Michael Mezmer, a very busy Los Angeles area professional performer. Michael reached back thirty years into his repertoire to perform a very funny vent act with a mind reading rat hand puppet. Assembly Secretary Ed Thomas was the next performer, assisted by a grumpy sounding, mind reading, formally-dressed vent figure. Both Ed and

Michael did great jobs as ventriloquists; they had very funny routines and you couldn't even see their lips move.

Bill Pearce entered as act five with a paper bag over his head, still able to navigate. Bill did a short comedy monolog and then went to his "bucket list," in a real bucket, to perform some nice magic. John Richmond, up next, pulled out a long heavy green rope but was unable to perform the Hindu Rope Trick because there was no small Hindu boy present to assist. Instead, John performed Marvelous Marbles, a Dick Barry effect. Closing the show was Assembly President Jim Callen, always with the unique, unusual, or obscure props to perform with. Jim used his "third eye" to locate a selected card and then, using a small bottle of spirits, brought back to life a wilted "potted plant." It was a very humorous routine.

As always, our intermission during the show was enjoyed with the ample amounts of foods and treats provided by Corinne Murphy. —Steven L. Jennings
Southern California Assembly 22 meets the third Monday each month at 8:00 PM, St. Thomas Moore Parish Hall, 2510 South Fremont Avenue, Alhambra, California Contact Ed Thomas magicmred@earthlink.net (213) 3828054 for more details.

31

BUSY WEEK IN INDIANAPOLIS

INDIANAPOLIS, IN— The first full week in November was a busy and exciting week for the Harry Riser Assembly 31. At the beginning of the week we had our regular assembly meeting with the theme of parlor magic. At the end of the week we had the pleasure of hosting the S.A.M.'s National Executive Council meeting.

The parlor magic evening began with Barry Rice, otherwise known as The Amazing Barry, performing a lively and very humorous rendition of Cards Across. Mike Kohrmann broke out his Kamillion Koins and checked out the moods of several of the volunteers. George Notarus astounded us all when his five ones became five tens, and then most astounding of all, the five tens became five one-hundreds! He said it was all in the hands. There were a number of

comments about how a magician could afford such an effect!

Taylor Martin brought his Troublewit and demonstrated some of the designs he is developing. Taylor also shared his copy of William Pinchbeck's *The Expositor*. Published in 1805 it is reputed to be the first American book on the art of magic. Significantly, in relation to the theme of the evening, the book includes a complete parlor act.



Amazing Barry performs Cards Across assisted by Robin Myers and Mike Kohrmann

Jim Croop produced a half dollar and an English penny and did the Copper-Silver Transposition. Finally, Phil Dubbs demonstrated a clever version of the sliding knot. The story had to do with difficulty in tying one's shoes.

For the educational portion of the evening, Don Miller taught us two effects: a beautiful version of the torn and restored dollar bill that he has been doing for twenty years and Half and Half from *Tarbell Volume Three*.

On Saturday, six of our assembly members had the privilege of performing for the National Executive Council. Our President, Steve Spence, was the master of ceremonies. The other performers were Daniel Lee, Barry Rice, Don Miller, and Christian and Katalina Painter. The show included much good magic and many laughs. —Dale Benson

Assembly 31 meets the first Monday of the month at 7:00 pm. If the first Monday conflicts with a holiday weekend, we postpone the meeting by one week. Unless otherwise announced, the meeting location is the Irvington United Methodist Church, 30 Audubon Road on the east side of the city. See our website for details. Contact Steve Spence sspence@mediationalternative.com (317) 507-4534 www.sam31.com for more details.

35

TERRY'S ADVENTURES IN MAGICLAND

POUGHKEEPSIE, NY—

Following a discussion about a variety of magic happenings in the area, the twenty members attending our November meeting enjoyed a lecture from one of our own. Terry Morgan has been an assembly member for four decades and has been instructed by a virtual "who's who" of magical greats from the modern era. Many years ago Terry often found himself heading to Walter Gibson's house to meet the evening's "mystery guest" – undoubtedly a magician of note. Over the years, Terry had the opportunity to meet many legendary magicians and often Terry was able to learn from these tremendous talents.

Terry's first piece was the Beer Glass Transposition taught to him by John Scarne. Frank Monaco assisted with one of Terry's favorite effects by Dai Vernon, which is virtually a self-working effect. An EZ Card to Wallet effect developed by Terry was presented next. Terry told us about Harry Lorayne teaching him a trick for a princely sum (which Terry could have learned in a book for 10% of the cost)! Ultimately the special instruction from Harry paid incredible dividends because it got Terry a great-paying gig years later! Ron Levine, Joe Que, Gale Alexander, Andy Weintraub, and a number of other members assisted Terry throughout the evening. Terry ultimately taught us nearly a dozen favorite effects from his many years of work in the trenches. Following the meeting, he graciously held a teach-in to go over some of the more challenging moves and subtleties in the evening's incredible assortment of effects. Thanks Terry for a terrific lecture and for providing lecture notes that were priced right! —Craig Kunaschk

Al Baker Assembly No. 35 (usually) meets at 7:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month at the Milanese Italian Restaurant, 115 Main Street, Poughkeepsie, NY. Contact www.compumagic.com/sam35 for more details.

52

TURKEY MAGIC

SAN ANTONIO, TX— November 1, 2012, Brother John Hamman Assembly 52 held its monthly meeting at LaMadeleine Restaurant. President Paul Amerson called the meeting to order. We had thirteen in attendance, including members, wives, and guests. Many thanks to all of the magicians who participated in Magic Week throughout the community. Also, thanks to Dwayne Stanton for organizing the kick-off at the Magic Time Machine, as well as all of the performers and the different venues for this yearly event. It was a great success, and we look forward to next year.

Tonight's theme was Turkey Magic; starting off the open performances was President Paul Amerson, who did a very clever Invisible Deck routine. Ed Solomon showed us an interesting effect he called Sunrise, Sunset, and Sal Manfredo shared with us two pop-up figures, one a clown and one a rabbit. John Dahlinger performed a coin routine, and Michael Tallon entertained with a card effect called Second Chance. Ray Adams entertained us with an assortment of comedy props, and Doug Gorman did a Three Card Monte routine called the Corner of Picadilly. John Murphy ended the performances with the Poor Man's Monkey Bar.

Paul Mims did a great job at our Teaching Table. He performed and then taught a no-sleight Cups and Balls routine. Thanks, Paul. [Brother John Hamman Assembly 52 meets at 7:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month at La Madeleine Restaurant, located at 722 N.W. Loop 410. The restaurant is inside Loop 410 on the access road between Blanco Rd. and San Pedro. For more information, contact \[douggorman@att.net\]\(mailto:douggorman@att.net\).](#)

56

NOVEMBER MEETING

DAYTON, OH— Our November meeting was held at the Fairborn City Building; our thanks to club member Carl Day for providing the meeting location. Our theme for the month was our annual magic flea market. There were plenty of great items and bargains to be had. Refreshments were provided by Pat Griswald; in addition to refreshments she secretly passed

out kazoo. At the conclusion of the business meeting, Executive Officer Paul Burnham announced that it was compeer Marvin Griswald's birthday; in unison everyone surprised him with a rendition of Happy Birthday on the kazoo. Marvin was surprised and delighted and fun was had by all. —Matthew David Stanley

[Assembly 56 meet monthly at members' homes. Contact \[barbara.pfeifer@att.net\]\(mailto:barbara.pfeifer@att.net\) for more details.](#)

59

CLOSE-UP NIGHT

PORTLAND, OR— The October meeting of Assembly 59 hosted the annual Desmond Close-up Competition. This night we unlock the doors of our hosts, the Beaverton Elks Lodge, and invite members of the public in to be both audience and judge.

This year the event was produced by Tom Cramer, who not only was a suave master of ceremonies, but organized a lineup of top class competitors. Over the last few years the club has experimented with the close-up format. This year Tom put the audience across a low stage and placed a table surrounded by a few chairs in front for performers and their spectators.

The first performer was Randy Stumman. Randy is known for his mentalism routines, but this evening he performed a number of effects with a variety of props, including a set of eyeballs that had the audience giggling. The next performer was Larry Seymore. Larry's magic effect led the audience to believe that David Copperfield would be appearing. And he did, in a manner of speaking.

Next was Professor DR Schreiber, master of natural philosophy and current president of Assembly 59. The Professor hails from the early 19th century and wears clothing not often seen in the streets of our fair city. He performed a set of magic involving linked finger rings.

Bob (Don't-Vote-Vote-For-Me) Eaton was next. Before the show Bob privately told me that he never spent much time studying magic. Instead he watched the masters of comedy: Skelton, Benny, and the rest. Bob's timing and audience rapport is unmatched.

Glen Bledsoe was the final

performer for the evening. He performed his minimalist ambitious card routine which, incredibly, has no double lifts.

Randy Stumman won the competition with his well practiced and clever routine.

I don't usually report about S.Y.M. events in this column, but recently I performed with a group of S.Y.M. kids at a retirement center. Following the performance I heard, "Thank you for taking the time to teach these young people magic." I hear that after every performance by the S.Y.M. Not some performances, but every performance. I always say, "It's my pleasure." These people are not just being complimentary. They sincerely appreciate what we do for the upcoming generation, which means they ultimately respect magic. I know we magicians often underrate ourselves as "just performers," but we do have a finer purpose. —Glen L. Bledsoe

[Assembly 59 meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month except July and Aug at The Beaverton Elks 3500 SW 104th Beaverton, OR 97005. Details at <http://www.sam59portland.org>. Contact Glen L. Bledsoe \[glenbledsoe@mac.com\]\(mailto:glenbledsoe@mac.com\) \(503\) 581-2795 \[www.sam59portland.org/\]\(http://www.sam59portland.org/\) for more details.](#)

95

MAGIC OF 8

VANCOUVER, CANADA—

Juan Garcia's spacious condo party room was the setting for the November, 2012, meeting. After some tasty snacks prepared by Juan's wife Marcia, the evening of "Magic with the Number 8" began. Starting off was Juan Garcia with his Grandma's Necklace routine with a catch or no-catch finger bet involving the necklace, which was placed down in the form of a figure 8. Lon Mandrake followed with a Lie Detector test with Shawn Farquhar. Dennis Hewson took a rope and rolled it up into his hand; upon lifting the rope back out of his hand, he showed it to magically contain eight knots. After undoing the knots, Dennis tied them up again. He then stretched the rope and, to everyone's surprise, all eight knots physically popped off the rope.

Jens Henriksen locked his engineer's ring on a brass lock. After



Meeting host Juan Garcia challenges Dennis Hewson (L) and Jens Henriksen (R) with his Grandma's Necklace shaped in the form of an 8

demonstrating that it was a legitimate lock, Jens was somehow able to get Dennis to determine the correct combination of 1988 to open the lock. Rod Chow said that the number 8 represents wealth in Chinese numerology, and then proceeded to perform Mark Mason's Orient Express with colored Chinese coins. Shawn Farquhar was able to locate the four Eights in a deck shuffled by Tony Chris. Tony performed a Three Card Monte type effect with a pair of Eights and a Joker, with a kicker ending of all the cards turning into Jokers. Rick Mearns discovered two Eights in a shuffled deck, and then magically separated the deck into two colors. Closing off the show was Anthony Young who had Dennis select a card; after showing a jumbo frame that contained the wrong card, he magically changed that card into a jumbo of the selected card, which appropriately for this evening was the Eight of Clubs! —Rod Chow
The Carl Hemeon Assembly No. 95 meets the first Tuesday of each month at members' homes. Contact Rod Chow rod@rodchow.com (604) 669-7777 www.sam95.com for more details.

104

DOGGED BY STORMY WEATHER

WITCH CITY, SALEM, MA— It was a dark and stormy night. It was the best of meetings. It was the worst of meetings. In fact, there was no November meeting in Salem for Assembly 104. The dark and stormy weather that fueled so many of Snoopy's opening chapters caused President Bill Jensen to sensibly err on the

side of caution and cancel our monthly gathering.

Our good news for November, however, was very good and very magical. SAMCON XI took place as scheduled, November 3, at the Peabody Marriott, in Peabody, Massachusetts. Attendance was strong. Our stars presented great lectures by day and some of our best performances ever by night.

An amazingly energetic Norm Barnhart lectured on entertainment geared for the younger crowd. It was a creative, balloon-filled session from a pro worth taking notes from. Many did.

Vegas-seasoned Scott Alexander's more relaxed humor focused on many original ideas. Among them: Hanky Panky, Scott's outstanding take on the 21st Century Silks and his and Puck's Needles. Levent, familiar from his monthly *M-U-M* contributions, offered his ideas on The Miser's Dream, among others, and a sample of his exhaustive research on the Linking Rings.

By night, local favorite Danny Hustle shined just as brightly as the stars he served, smoothly segueing the acts and magically filling the spaces with the polish of a perfect emcee. Norm Barnhart burst into character as his hilarious creation "Normando," a fictional egotist for whom taking an aspirin would deserve a standing ovation. He couldn't have been funnier.

Scott Alexander dazzled and, in the end, demonstrated what he had earlier preached in leaving the audience with a gentle moment to the tune of "What a Wonderful World." It was quite effective.

Lastly, Levent, the calm, contemplative lecturer of the morning, unleashed a funny, highly animated series of routines that left us breathless. By the time he had demonstrated the endless ways to gaff a stuffed bunny, tears of laughter were falling in torrents.



Recognition for teacher Len Lazar

SAMCON XI owes its success to many. The efforts of first year producers Doug Rickenback and Evan Buso-Jarnis were particularly outstanding. They were rewarded, by President Jensen, with certificates as "Unsung Magicians of the Year," followed by Len Lazar's well-deserved award as "Magician of the Year," for conducting the School of Magic and for mentoring S.Y.M. 124. —Bob Forrest

Information on SAMCON and Witch City Assembly 104 can be found at the website. S.A.M. 104 meets the first Wednesday of each month, September-June, 7 p.m., at the First Baptist Church of Salem, 292 Lafayette Street, Salem Massachusetts. Contact Bob Forrest captainalbrightsq1@comcast.net (339) 227-0797 sam104.com for more details.

110

OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER WERE BUSY

NEW CUMBERLAND, PA

In October we held our close-up competition. There were four competitors. Frank Bianco performed a money-changing effect, Gary Oulette's A Dream of Aces, and a variation of Simon Aronson's Shuffle Bored. Al Bienstock began with a finger print identification effect using a pocket mirror to collect a sample of a helper's prints so that Al might identify which card the helper handled. Unfortunately, Al's next effect could not be completed due to lack of the proper deck. Lou Abbotiello showed skill and originality in a multi-phase dice stacking (six dice) routine that ended with a double load at the end, similar to a chop cup finish. Almar was the closing act with a version of Further than That and a routine involving a borrowed ring, a canister that burst into flames, and a rattle box. The voting resulted in Frank being in first place, Almar second, and Lou third.

The next event was a lecture by Scott Alexander and Puck. The lecture was to demonstrate how many platform-style effects can be transformed into full stage effects. Scott presented a Twentieth Century Silk routine, a killer Chop Cup routine, an Egg Bag routine with a filled shot glass ending, and an effect called Shoe Business.

Puck did a Dancing Hank routine and a Needle Threading routine that has many new details that make the effect easier and safer to do. They then suggested that a set be closed with a "warm" or "feel-good" type effect providing an emotional hook. Possible choices could be Gypsy Thread or Professor's Nightmare. Overall, this was a well designed and useful lecture.

The final event for November was our stage contest. Steve Smith assisted his daughter and son Susanna and Hunter, both elementary school age, perform a very fine sword basket with a costume change. Well done. Next was Mike Snyder doing a disappearing hankie using an audience helper. Mike also did Shoe Business with a borrowed shoe: both very professionally done. Almar converted three silks to three plumes in a clear tube; he also performed a large card effect and a refilling glass effect. John Stover provided much merriment with sponge ball swallowing, a color changing silk, and a large coin die box. After a bottle in bag gag, he finished with an audience-helper-assisted Miser's Dream that had many laughing and helping to toss coins. The winner of the stage contest was John Stover.

Joe Homecheck, SAM Assembly 110 Meets 2nd Thursdays, 7:00pm, Doc Holiday's Restaurant, Limekiln Road, New Cumberland, PA Email: Secretary@SAM110.com

112

FLEA MARKET

CONCORD, CA— With a turnout that was better than last year's, our annual flea market this October had seven presenters and a variety of magical items for sale.

In addition to our assembly presenters, this year Daryl joined us with a booth that featured many of his commercial effects. Others manning booths included President Doug Kovacich. Some of the most arcane items (donated to the S.Y.M. from magician friends and the estates of former magicians) showed up in the S.Y.M. booth (which raises money for that organization), run by Loren Lind and Jerry Barrilleaux.

If you were looking for younger, hip magic items, the booth to visit was the one manned by Timothy James and Raymond Andrew.



Loren Lind, the Grand Old Man of Magic, showing off his many items at the annual Flea Market as Jerry Barrilleaux examines some of them

And Bob Holdridge presented his usual assortment of “playing it flat” tricks – with his Halloween friend, Red Skeleton, overlooking his booth.

Lance Snead had quite a collection of classic magic items. But possibly the most captivating booth of all was that run by Zappo, mainly because he had a plethora of classic props to sell.

By the way, this year we had a new wave of youngsters attending the event. Just like the adults, they found that even items they did not purchase were educational. The great part of the evening for them was seeing items demonstrated up close, something they and the adults rarely get a chance to see these days with the demise of the brick-and-mortar magic shops. —Dave Anderson

Diablo Assembly 112 meets on the third Wednesday of every month at the Round Table Pizza in Concord. Contact Doug Kovacich douglassthemagicman@hotmail.com (925) 435-4824 <http://sam112.com/> for more details.

115

NOVEMBER MEETING

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA— Attending our meeting on Friday, November 9 were members David Clauss (President), Nathan Clauss, Dan Rowen, and Mark Davis, and guests Landon Allan, Brian Allan, and Katinka Allan

The meeting began with a terrific youth presentation/teaching session led by David Clauss. David taught the Dissolving Knot, The Knot Through Arm, and Coins Across, all from *Mark Wilson's Complete Course in Magic*. We then proceeded to focus on the theme of the evening, Book Reviews. There was a great

assortment of books discussed including: *Mark Wilson's Complete Course in Magic*, *Magic Digest* by George Allan, *Bill Spooner's Journal of Magic Research*, *Fooling Houdini* by Alex Stone, and *Scripting Magic* by Pete McCabe. Dan Rowen presented some interesting observations concerning the theory behind the Magic Square. Mark Davis presented White Bikes and Assorted Affair – two card items from Elmwood Magic – and Mark Mason's Exact Match. David Clauss performed a Cameron Francis effect Nothing but the Truth, a lie detector routine with



Mark Davis performs Coins Across for guests Landon and Brain Allan

jumbo cards. In addition, there was an assortment of magical ideas shared by the members using coins, cards, and silks.

Assembly 115 holds monthly meetings at Forest Lakes North Pavilion, 1828 Pavilion Circle, Charlottesville, Virginia 22911. Contact Mark Davis mark@great-magic.com (434) 962-3019 Hocus-Pocus Club of Charlottesville on Facebook for more details.

118

MAGIC IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

NASHUA, NH— Assembly 118 continues to keep busy performing for local charities and community events. Members of the assembly performed at the Southern New Hampshire Expo on October 18. We gave our annual performance at the Nashua Library on November 24 as part of the Nashua Holiday Stroll. And our annual performance to help Merrimack Crimeline has been booked for April 13 of next year.

Assembly 118 meets on the third Wednesday of each month at



Josh Heinzl demonstrating card flourishes at the Nashua Fairy Tale Festival

7:00 p.m. at the Nashua Church of Christ, 97 Farley Rd., Nashua, NH. Our venue rotates, so contact us first. Contact Robert Granville sam.nashua@gmail.com (603) 505 8749 <http://sam118.com> for more details.

120

OCTOBER MEETING

CHAMPAIGN, IL— We had a small gathering in October; we met at the Italian Patio across the street from Dallas Magic and Costumes. I have to retract my remark about slow service from last month's newsletter, because the service was outstanding and very fast. Discussion included the 2013 Get-Together, which we will be hosting at the SoDo Theater on Neil Street in Champaign. We will also be doing a Joint Fundraiser with PACE on 4/13/13 at 2 p.m. Prices for the show will be \$10 for adults and \$8 for kids.

We will also be doing a club show for the Cunningham Children's Home on 1/20/13.

Ken Started off the magic with a coin production and vanish and a large color changing knife. Jim jumped in with Shattered and POP (Perfect Open Prediction).

The food was good and the company better. See ya at the meeting. —Ken Barham

Assembly 120, Andy Dallas Assembly meets the third Wed. at 7pm, (except Nov. and Dec.) For location call Jim Percy at 217-494-2222 or Ken Barham Sec, 2318 Winchester Dr, Champaign, IL 61821. 217-841-5616 email: Kebram@aol.com

127

MENTAL NIGHT

WALLINGFORD, CT— The November meeting of Assembly

127 was opened by Jeff Doskos and he displayed a pipe and drape bought by the assembly for use during our meetings. Approved was a motion to buy magic bookmarks that have our contact information. The bookmarks will be given to area libraries.

Our magic for the evening was started off by Dave Wyskiel, who, with the help of Jeff, Chick, Sol, and Bob, performed a great rendition of Max Maven's Centrifugal. Next up was Sol Levine with The Great Cola Heist, in which the secret recipe for a cola gets stolen and appears in a sealed Coke bottle. Jeff Doskos was up last with mental card effect called Book of Facts; each fact in a book led to a surprise ending and card reveal. —Tony Martin

Assembly 127 meets at the First United Methodist Church 941 Old Rock Rd. Wallingford, CT. Contact Tony Martin tonymartin@snet.net (203) 287-0805 for more details.

129

AWARDS BANQUET 2012

PENSACOLA, FL— The annual awards banquet was held in November, beginning with a delicious dinner of fried chicken and covered dishes along with goodies for desert.

After everyone had satisfied their hunger pains, a raffle was held with a lot of neat prizes going to the lucky winners.

Then it was time for the awards. The highlight was “Magician of the Year,” which was present to Gene Burrell for his service to the Guild. Other recipients of various awards went to Betty Broomall, Isaac Brady, Bill Mikulas, Bill Metsch, Dave Kloman, Perry Vath, Al Grimm, and Beau Broomall. The magician of the year was Gene Burrell.

We finished off the evening with a treat from President Nate Nickerson of some old videos of famous magicians. The presentation began with a stage performance of Howard Thurston followed by Dai Vernon doing his famous cups and balls routine. Last up was Cardini who gave the very humorous and very skilled routine he is noted for. Nate filled in between the videos with some trivia about each magician. It was enjoyed by all.

The Gulf Coast Magician's Guild Assembly 129 meets at

6:45 p.m. on the third Thursday every month at the Bayview Senior Center, 2000 E. Lloyd St. Pensacola, FL. Contact Beau Broomall at beaumagic@bellsouth.net 850-994-1060 or www.gulfcoastmagiciansguild.com for more information

131

A GREAT YEAR FOR ASSEMBLY 131

DANBURY, CT— There must have been some magic in that old top hat they found...and by the old "top hat" I mean the Danbury Top Hatter's in Danbury CT! President Mo breathes new life into Assembly 131! We began 2012 with our annual dinner in January, which the members love, and it was all uphill from there.

2012 highlights included a lecture by Justin Miller and a second lecture by David Stone. Both were well received and free to club members. Rumor has it we'll see more lectures in 2013. We also had a visit and presentation by New England RVP Joseph Caulfield. There was a fantastic newspaper article about our club, complete with photos that appeared in several local papers, which helped to bring in some new members. Our summer picnic was also a great success with lots of food, lots of magic; North Atlantic RVP Eric DeCamps even made an appearance.

But that's not all. The club has also provided entertainment for local organizations. Most recently was the Pumpkin Festival for the church where we hold our monthly meetings. Performers included Des, Mo, Magic Marty, and Bongo. This is one of the annual events our club is involved in.

When we're not having a special event, we're performing and sharing magic at our meetings. At the October meeting, Des Desmond reveled he had a skeleton in his closet. The skeleton was comprised of three blocks with skeleton parts painted on them. No matter how Des arranges the blocks, the mischievous skeleton was always mis-made when uncovered. That was, until, Des vanished the skull only to have it reappear in its rightful place atop the shoulders of the skeleton.

With his rope routine, Walter Burrows took us back circa 1940s and the Gilbert Mysto Magic sets, while Chris Pratt not only

read someone's mind, but also predicted the future in the process.

Magic Marty Steinberg was in the Halloween spirit with some bizarre magic. First, he bit the head off a quarter, and then did a comedy bit with a small monster arm emerging from his closed hands stealing away his well-earned coinage. Rounding out the lot was Tony Spero who performed several rope effects and Dick Kolfield with a series of card effects and surprise endings. —Tony Spero

Assembly 131 meets at Danbury United Methodist Church, 5 Clapboard Ridge Road, Danbury, CT, 06811. www.DanburyTopHatters.com

136

TURKEY MAGIC!

TUCSON, AZ— What a fun meeting this turned out to be; there were twenty of us in attendance and we were pleased to have a couple of guests present as well. We extended a warm welcome to Johathan Katz and Shirley Rainwater.

President DeSchalit called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and reminded everyone that the close-up contest and parlor contest will be held at the F.O.E. on Saturday, November 17. Both contests are open to the public and everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend; there will be food and drink available and there is no cover charge!

Our annual banquet will be held on January 5, 2013, at the F.O.E. and will be catered by El Molonito



Mike Bekedam wins Turkey Magic as "Milosh"

— great Mexican food! Tickets will go on sale in December and will only cost \$20 per person; what a great deal! Dress code for the banquet is "Uptown Casual," meaning no shorts or tank tops. You will want to look nice but you

don't have to go all out with the formal wear. Our entertainment for the banquet will be Robert Banks, and as usual he will be conducting a lecture the following day.

Producer/Director Aly Graham has been working on a documentary of our magic and the twenty-fifth *Stars of Magic* show. He has announced that he hopes to have a rough cut of the program completed and ready for viewing by the January meeting. —Gary Husson

John E. Alexander Assembly 136 meets at 7:00 p.m. on the first Monday of each month at the Fraternal Order of Eagles, 1530 N Stone Ave Tucson, AZ

138

FORT WORTH REPORT

FORT WORTH, TX— The November 2012 meeting of Bruce Chadwick Assembly 138 was called to order by newly-elected club president Larry Heil. After club announcements, Larry showed a curious relic – a bell from the school he attended in Topeka, Kansas, which had been destroyed by a tornado. The bell had belonged to his teacher, Miss Collins. He put the bell aside.

Next came a discussion of the events of the previous evening – the Houdini Séance. Members who had attended discussed the séance and the lecture that had preceded it. Vice President Michael Stein worked at the event and didn't see any occurrences, but according to other attendees, those who missed the evening missed out on very strange happenings. Appearances were made and objects were displaced in space. Was the séance successful? Perhaps only Houdini knows...

After the discussion, Arthur Moses, local Houdini collector, expert, and advisor, spoke about his history with Houdini memorabilia and the events leading up to hosting the séance in Fort Worth this year. This fascinating and informative history rounded out the first half of the meeting.

After the break, Matt Martin gave us a Houdini-themed presentation. He asked for volunteers to assist with a very humorous chain and handcuff escape. Following this was time for our totem performance in which selected members must perform their best

material. This month it was Mike Reiche. As he began to set up to perform, Miss Collins's bell rang. After a moment of silence, Mike continued with a delightful presentation of his A-material.

Next came a qualification performance by Brandon Sharpe who became the club's newest member.

Michael Stein rounded out the meeting with a discussion inspired by Eugene Burger in which he addressed bad magic and how to avoid it. The meeting closed with a brief discussion of the Christmas party next month. —Libby
Assembly 138 meets as the Fort Worth Magicians Club on the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 P.M. at the Tarrant County College Trinity River Campus in downtown Fort Worth. We gather at P.F. Chang's China Bistro at 5:30 for dinner and socializing before the meeting. Go to www.fortworthmagiciansclub.org for more information.

148

INCORPORATING CORPORATE MAGIC

ELMHURST, IL— Our November meeting featured a lecture by one of the country's top trade show performers, Danny Orleans, who immediately got down to business by holding up a standard DVD that eerily floated between his hands. The reaction consisted of stunned silence followed by audible gasps. Then Danny handed each attendee a DVD so everyone could get the feel of the routine as he taught it. Wasting no time, Danny segued into one of his signature items, the matchbox penetration, which, if you'll pardon the pun, demonstrated genuine "outside the box" thinking. Danny changed the effect into a piece of medieval alchemy in which a solid gold block magically appears in an empty match box. Eliminating the penetration is a perfect example of a psychological device that neatly removes the heat from the only problem area of the original presentation.

The heart of the lecture consisted of Danny performing his entire trade show act, including typical product tie-ins that relate the magic to the corporate client's interests. However, each item in the routine was also a strong stand-alone magical effect that would

work well for any type of general audience. After a break, Danny returned to teach the methods and explain the presentations of the act he had just demonstrated, including his sure-fire method of writing a corporate script. Along the way, he included some great performance tips. For example, in a situation where spectators arrive in the middle of a signed card routine, Danny has them add their own signatures to the card so they feel as much a part of the show as those experiencing it from the beginning. And his torn corner subtlety with Greg Wilson's transformation of one-dollar bills to hundred-dollar bills (called Hundy 500) was a knockout; the accidentally missing corner on one of the one-dollar bills appeared



Danny Orleans wows the crowd

in the same place on the newly minted hundred. The climax of the trade show act consisted of a short ambitious card effect in which the signed card finally vanished and appeared inside a small globe that had been hanging from a chain in full view throughout. When the lecture was over, Danny generously hung around for another forty-five minutes answering questions about the business end of corporate performing.

A brief business meeting preceded the lecture with the election of the 2013 slate of officers and a mouthwatering description of the Christmas party to come next month. —Tony Noice
Assembly 148 meets in the basement of the Epiphany Evangelical Lutheran Church on the corner of Spring Road and Vallette. Elmhurst, IL Contact Tony Noice noicea@net.elmhurst.edu (630) 993-3740 www.SAM148.com for more details.

174

SPOOKY MAGIC & COLOMBINI EFFECTS

AUGUSTA, ME— November's meeting had a lively atten-

dance of ten attendees. The theme was dual: Spooky Magic, and members performing Colombini magic. Bob Rand, aka Professor Foggy Bottom, was presented a certificate recognizing him for his outstanding work on the October public show.

Scot Grassetto started the on-topic presentations performing an effect with ESP cards. Bob performed next, and did a nice Colombini effect involving birthdays and predictions. Next, his assistant, Mary Rand, allowed Bob to vanish her head! First it was transformed into a skull, then it vanished completely, and then it reappeared! Carroll Chapman went next and performed the Colombini effect Draw a Blank.

In the off-theme portion of the meeting, Scot performed B'Wave. Newcomer Ethan, who recently moved to Maine from the Kansas area, presented a nice chosen card effect and a dice effect, wherein he predicted a total rolled in secret. Portland magician Phil Smith was a welcome sight at our little gathering! He did a nice chosen card effect and explained that in order to use a flourish, one should have a reason for doing it. His example was a very pretty butterfly cut.

Alan Drew continued the fun with an effect highlighting the importance of being different, or "Making the magic your own." Wes Booth followed up with a string through finger effect that Jeff McBride had used in his 49 Franklin lecture. After the meeting we all enjoyed Lisa's restaurant, down the street on the circle. —Carroll Chapman
Assembly 174 meets the second Sunday of each month at the



Spooky Magic by Professor Foggy Bottom

Kennebec Community Church on Glenridge Drive in Augusta behind the Rite Aid. Contact Carroll Chapman magic@conjuringcarroll.com (207) 635-3133 for more details.

181

A COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO HUNGER

HIGHTSTOWN, NJ—

Society of American Magicians members Les Baird, Ralph Candelori, Mike Dziubas, Dennis Eleuteri, and Bill and Sue McElvenney, thank you for volunteering your time and talent at the Mercer Street Friends Food Bank Twenty-fifth Anniversary Celebration on October 5, and for joining with us to mark this milestone occasion. It was a fabulous evening, much of it due to the entertainment provided by you and your fellow magicians.

For two and a half decades, the Mercer Street Friends Food Bank has led the community response to hunger in Mercer County; yet at no time in our history have we seen so many people, especially children, pushed into poverty and experiencing food hardships – a consequence of the prolonged economic downturn and accompanying unemployment.

Your participation in our Twenty-fifth Anniversary Celebration helped make it a huge success. The funds raised will help us to channel food and link other hunger prevention resources to



Magic Mike, Les the Mentalist and Bill McElvenney at the FoodBank

people who experience the pain and indignity of hunger.

Thank you again for adding to the "magic" of the evening and being part of the community response to hunger.

Our regularly schedule November meeting was cancelled due to power outages caused by Superstorm Sandy. —Phyllis Stoolmacher

Society of American Magicians Assembly 181 of Hightstown meets the first Thursday of every month, September thru June at the First United Methodist Church , 187 Stockton Street, Hightstown, NJ 08520. Doors open at 7:00PM. Contact Stephan Sloan lands10@optonline.com (732) 757-5337 http://www.magicsam181.com for more details.

188

DIAMOND JIM TYLER LECTURE

OREM, UT— President Brian South opened the November meeting with a report about the successful Diamond Jim Tyler lecture held at Utah's "Magic Castle." Secretary Al Lampkin was playing hooky again, so Brian asked Bob Christensen to take a few notes.

The theme for the month was card magic or "magic you are thankful for." Curtis Hickman got the magic rolling, performing Garrett Thomas's Stand-up Monte to great effect. Walter Webb had Connie Carrasco select a card by dealing cards until she had an urge to stop. Walter correctly predicted the card stopped at. He then showed a video of Max Maven performing an interactive magic effect, one that Walter was thankful for inspiring him. Ron Carrasco performed several effects with cards in which no matter how the cards were mixed, only one complete suit in numerical order was produced. He was also able to determine cards mentally thought of by five different spectators.

Dane the Great performed an unusual Ambitious Card routine. Steve Dawson offered his "skill" with several shuffles and cuts... the Jewish Cut, Russian Shuffle, Obama Shuffle, cow-pasture shuffle, and the cockroach pass, among others. Bob Christensen attempted a work-in-progress: a



Diamond Jim Tyler

selected card-to-card box effect with a less than positive result. A group discussion followed, with Curtis Hickman offering some ideas on apparently producing a card from a card box and others offering constructive criticism.

Kerry Summers began by performing Bill Abbott's Smart Ass, in which he asked Brian to throw cards over his shoulder until one card remained; that card matched a prediction that Brian was sitting on. Kerry explained it was done using "hindsight." Kerry then had Bob select a card that was then mixed in with several other cards that were spread face-down across the table. Bob was then asked to pass a light bulb in a clear plastic baggy over the row of cards. The bulb shattered when it passed over the selected card. Kerry closed out the evening's magic by performing a four-Ace routine. Several members stuck around to help Brian film some "bubble-ideas," a new product that Brian is helping a friend market. —Bob Christensen

The Assembly meets every second Thursday at 7:00pm at The Courtyard at Jamestown, 3352 North 100 East, Provo, Utah. Guests are welcome. Contact Brian Daniel South Brian@teachbymagic.com (801) 916-2442 at www.utahmagicclub.org for more details.

194

ERIC DECAMPS LECTURE

YONKERS, NY— At our November meeting we were delighted to welcome Eric DeCamps, now a member of our assembly, who presented a truly outstanding lecture. While showing several effects that were not only fine magic but also very entertaining, his deportment, his warmth, his creativity, and his thorough professionalism all revealed why he is held in high esteem in the magic community. There was much more than "tricks" to be learned from this lecture.

Calling his lecture, "Composi-

tions on Conjuring," he showed his own interpretation of several classics of magic, illustrating that we don't always have to be doing "what's new." We should study the "classics," with the emphasis on studying how the pros present them, and then giving them your personal stamp. He also said that the Art of Magic is communication; he then proceeded to demonstrate exactly what he meant.

Eric began with a really fine Cups and Balls routine using just two cups; he stressed the idea of engaging the audience. "If they are not engaged, then they really don't care what you're doing!" He emphasized that the focus should be on the balls, not the final loads (which were a plum, a kiwi, and a lemon!) and opined that this would make a fine opening effect since it involves every phase of magic.

Showing the results of many public performances, he offered his version of the Multiplying Cigars, a wonderful Ring on Rope routine, Four Flying Jacks (a card routine), the production of four coins from an Okito Box and their one-at-a-time return to the box, the Ball and Tube (yes, that old thing!) with a new presentation, and Three Coins and a Ring.

His explanations were very clear and underlined the principles on which he based the lecture. I personally have known Eric for more years than he or I care to count, and it was a joy to see the enormous progress he has made in those years. He is still striving to improve, even though he is now a top-flight performer. If you want a really fine, instructive, and entertaining lecture for your assembly, you won't do better than Eric DeCamps. —Fr. Dermot Brennan

Assembly 194 meets every third Wednesday at 7:30 PM at the Catholic Slovak Club on Lockwood Avenue, Yonkers,



Dennis Barlotta, 194 President James Stranges, Eric DeCamps, Michael Piacente, and Monsignor Brennan

NY. Contact James Stranges
magicjim1@optonline.net (914)
478-1473 for more details

medimagic@cs.com (812)
633-7875 for more details.

215

DR. BOB ESCHER COMPETITION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

LOUISVILLE, KY— In November, the Mac King Assembly 215, Louisville Magic Club, held its annual Dr. Bob Escher close-up and parlor competition and the election of officers for the upcoming year. Our competition was judged by David Garrard, Pete Miller, and Rick Thurston.

This year we had three juniors compete for the first place prize. Ten-year-old James McKnight presented a Cups and Balls routine and What's Next. Eleven-year-old Jonathan Fletcher found a chosen card and produced the four Aces from his pocket. The first place prize winner of the junior competition was eleven-year-old Edward Streeter who showed us a Three Card Monte routine and Strat-o-Spheres.

Six people entered the adult competition. President-elect Jim Harris started the program with a ball using a cone routine. Cody Clark produced a silk streamer and a silver coin and followed that with a presentation of the Wonderbag. Second place competition winner and Treasurer-elect Wally Bell and his daughter Stephanie presented a card routine themed to time travel. "Magic" Ray Adams was this year's third place competition winner; he performed his version of Three Card Monte, ending with the entire deck turning into a block of plastic. Lion Fludd presented a cut and restored tie routine. The last competitor was our competition's first place winner, first vice president-elect Steve Haffner who performed a three-way prediction. The People's Choice award went to ten year old James McKnight.

The officers for 2013 of the Louisville Magic club are as follows: Jim Harris – President; Steve Haffner, Mike Blankart, and Bill Alexander – first through third Vice Presidents; Wally Bell – Treasurer; and Tom Crecelius – Secretary. —Tom Crecelius

Assembly 215 usually meets the second Tuesday of the month at the St. Matthews Baptist Church. Contact Tom Crecelius

226

MAGIC AUCTION

WILLIAMSBURG, VA— We met at the James City County Library in Norge, where Harold Wood conducted an auction of video tapes, CDs, and close-up effects belonging to long-time and treasured member Jerry Blount. For those of you who didn't attend, you missed an opportunity to buy special items at bargain prices. Among those attending were: Tom and Mary Armentrout, Bill Baber, Jerry Harrell, Michael Heckenberger, Ken Hicks, Watt Hyer, Howard and Jackie Karnes, Alexander Goldberg, Benjamin Goldberg, Cameron Konitzer and his twin brother Ian, Laurence Lessner, Sonny Narvaez, Adam Queen, Penn Russell, Roger Sherman, Phil Thorp, and Harold Wood.



Harold Wood Auctioneer Extraordinaire

It was great to see Harold in action again after a long absence due to illness. Thank you Harold for all that you do for the assembly. Many thanks are also due to Jackie and Howard Karnes for keeping track of buyers' purchases and payments. Sales were over \$400.

November 28 marks the highlight of our year, The Friends and Family Magic Show. Harold Wood will be the emcee. Amy Goldberg will prepare her groaning board of tasty desserts. —Phil Thorp

Assembly 226 meetings are generally held at 7:00p.m. on the 4th Wednesday of each month and are in room 009 (basement) of the Williamsburg Presbyterian Church at 215 Richmond Road, Williamsburg, VA 23185. Contact Phil Thorp pthorp@widomaker.com (757) 229-2329 http://sites.google.com/site/samassembly226/Home/ for more details.

266

THANKFUL MAGUC

LAKELAND, FL— With Thanksgiving only a week away, the Lakeland magi met for another night full of fun and magic. Rick Shapter gave an update on his work in starting up an S.Y.M. chapter for Lakeland. In addition to provide some mentorship for budding magicians, we hope this will bring in some fresh blood to our meetings that will help us grow into the future. We discussed the recent Daytona convention, which is a Central Florida fall tradition and made plans for our annual Christmas party next month. President Jerry Kardos presented us with a sign to post in front of the meeting room so IHOP guests would know magic was brewing in the back room.

The magic portion of the night was kicked off by Beverly Kenemuth, who explained the origins of Thanksgiving with her magical story about the first Thanksgiving harvest. Al D'Alfonso experimented with a Martin Lewis prediction effect in which three colored envelopes

Florida living by demonstrating how he reads the local paper in the pool.

Jerry showed us that his son's handiwork is just as good as his when he demonstrated a handmade set of shackles, which he escaped from with supernatural speed. Our final performer, Ed McGowan, showed off his pasteboards skills by doing an unusual effect in which the cards became a clock face that defined a card selected by Jerry. He then demonstrated how a lie detector works to the amusement of all.

Junior member Jack Norman-Chapler closed the show by revealing a number that Ed only thought of, bringing to a close another amazing night of magic that all were thankful for. At holiday time (and year round), the place to be on the second Monday is with the friendly magi of Lakeland – come visit with us. —Al D'Alfonso

Jim Zachary Assembly 266 meets the second Monday of the month at 7PM at the Lakeland I-HOP, I-4 & US 98. Contact Al D'Alfonso keeper0499@embarqmail.com (321) 347-3814 for more details.

274

LECTURE BY MARK MASON

BOCA RATON, FL— Our assembly enjoyed a great evening learning and laughing with master magician Mark Mason, showing our members many of the magical tricks he created.

In explaining his magic at our lecture, we discovered that Mark's tricks are easy to learn (one of his specialties). Some of the tricks he brought were his Solo, his new X-Act, Stuck Up Monte, Coin Flux, his exciting Word in a Million (which fooled many of the members), and the No Tear Torn and Restored Newspaper.

Our Boca Raton Magic Club has now passed a new milestone with



Mark Mason with Arnold Rosen, President

a total of 91 members so far for 2012. —Arnold Rosen

The Sam Schwartz Assembly 274 meet at the JCC in Boca Raton, FL on the first Monday of each month at 7:00 P.M. Contact Arnold Rosen, President Arnold205@aol.com (561) 212-2575 for more details.

292

LOOKIN' SHARP

GREELEY, CO— During a brief business meeting over lunch, Jim Pope graciously agreed to become our next vice president. Announcements included that this winter our young professional, Derek McKee, will be taking his show out on weekend tours of cities in the area.

Ed "Mr. Magic" Hurtubis is an experienced and very knowledgeable performer. He led a lively discussion of stagecraft and presentation, based on the things he looks for when serving as a judge or when asked to critique an act.

"Dr. Roaming Numeral" entertained us by giving a reading to our waitress. She turned out to have a very unusual and difficult numerology profile, so it was fun to see how he used cold reading to save the day and send her away delighted.

Our program theme was "Be Sharp." Ed Hurtubis opened by passing around an early Abbott Disecto, which was in very good condition for a prop he has been

using since he was in high school. He got a big laugh recounting that the very first time he used it, he slammed the knife down too quickly and the girl screamed. He thought she really had the right spirit until she continued screaming, "I'm bleeding!"

Paul Noffsinger's "cut" effect involved using a nail file to make one-side strippers for a cut-to-the-Aces work in progress. After the first two Aces, he has a spectator find the third Ace (by using a cross-cut force). He asked for ideas for making finding the fourth Ace entertaining.

President-elect Lloyd Worley smoothly performed and then taught Dis-Armed, using Mak Magic's attractive version of the arm-slicer illusion.

We had a rave book review (and handout) on David Seebach's *So You Want to be an Illusionist*. Ron Dutton enthused that the performance ideas and detailed "real work" in it would benefit any magician; he promised that if you were even dreaming of adding an illusion to your act, the book would pay for itself at least a hundred times over.

Then Ron demonstrated and passed around a vintage Box of Bagdad by Clint Riedel (crafted by the House of Enchantment). This is a colorful sword-box for the hand, using spikes. The original directions were reproduced on a handout.

Paul Noffsinger ended both the meeting and his very successful presidency by recommending a fantasy novel he loves: *The Night Circus* by Erin Morgenstern. —Ron Dutton

The Dr. Ronald P. Dutton Assembly 292 meets at Kenny's Steak House, 3502 West 10th Street (corner of 35th Avenue), at 11:00 A.M. (lunch optional), on the second Saturday of the month. Contact Dr. Lloyd Worley lloyd@worleythewizard.com (970) 356-3002 www.SAM292.com for more details. ★



Bob Macey shows off his zombie cat to the group

foretold what would happen.

Dean Bob Macey showed off his zombie cat that was used in his theater company's Halloween haunt. He then proceeded to wow us with a card effect in which destiny combined with magic to foretell the future. Rick then showed us how he's adjusted to

GO TO:

WWW.MUM-MAGAZINE.COM

and use the easy submission form to file your report

DALE RUMSMOKE

(October 29, 1933 – December 6, 2012)

Dale Conrad Rumsmoke, 79, of Lynchburg, Virginia, died Thursday, December 6, 2012. He was the husband of Jacqueline (Jackie) Rumsmoke. Dale honorably served his country in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. He was active in the Blue Ridge Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, was a past-president of the local union of the International Alliance of Theatrical & Stage Employees, and was a member of the Church of the Nazarene.

Dale was a long-serving member of the Hersy Basham/Hill City Magicos Assembly 32, having held the office of Secretary/Treasurer for more than a decade while providing assembly reports to the M-U-M. More recently, Dale was Assembly 32's V.P./Program Chairman and had been elected Assembly 32 president shortly before passing on.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by his son David J. Rumsmoke and his wife Kim of Evington, his daughter Rebecca Rumsmoke of Lynchburg, his brother Garth L. Rumsmoke of Elmira, NY, five grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

A Broken Wand ceremony was performed by Assembly 32 compeers on Sunday, December 9, 2012. – John Jennings (Assembly 32 secretary-elect)

WILLIAM JACK HARTLEY

(August 14, 1927 – November 7, 2012)

The S.A.M. mourns the loss of William Jack Hartley, a thirty-four-year member of S.A.M. National and member of Assembly 88 serving the Ann Arbor area. A life member of the Ann Arbor Magic Club and longtime member of the I.B.M., Jack was a regular at the Abbott's Get-Together, performed as a clown magician with the Shrine Circus as a member of the Masons, and appeared at the Redford (Michigan) Theater, in addition to many performances throughout the country during his lifetime. Jack was a U.S. Air Force veteran, and received military honors to celebrate his service to his country. Local compeers honored him with the Broken Wand ceremony in recognition of his dedication to the art of magic.

(With thanks to Randy Smith, Assembly 88)
—Rev. Michael Douglass

Good Cheer List

Please take a minute to spread a few words of cheer with a card or note to one of our less fortunate members. Send additions, changes, or deletions to: Anthony Antonelly, Chairman, Sick and Convalescent Committee, (215) 820-3192 ext. 1512. magicforfun60@aol.com

David Ball
40 Sandy Lodge Way
Northwood, Middlesex
HA6 2AS UK

Roger Barr
883 B Liverpool Circle,
Manchester, NJ 08759

Tony Corrao
100 Daly Blvd. #2804
Oceanside, NY 11572

Daniel Cudennec
"Dany Trick"
225, Stang-ar-Veil-
d'an-Traon, Mellac-29300,
Quimperle, France

Dan A. Dorsey
98 Woodvalley Dr.
Fayetteville, GA 30215

Joseph H. (Ben) Grant
400 Commonwealth Ave, Unit 9
Warwick, RI 02886

Charlie Gross
16745 Gertrude Street,
Omaha, NE 68136-3023

Roy Horn
c/o Siegfried & Roy
1639 N Valley Drive,
Las Vegas, NV 89108

Bob King
304 Suburban Court,
Rochester, NY 14620

Robert D. Knigge
PO Box 5,
Jones Borough, TN 3765

Stanley R. Kramien
11205 SW Summerfield Dr.
Apt 161
Tigard, OR 97224-3391

Richard Laneau
4020 55th St. N.
St. Petersburg, FL 33709

George Gilbert Lott
1725 Great Hill Rd.
Guilford, CT 06437

Frank J. McNaughton, Sr
1926 Apple Street,
Williamsport, PA 17701

James J. Morrissey
24 Grove St.
Wayland, MA 01788

Anthony Murphy
11 Angel Rd.,
North Reading, MA 01864

Nahmen Nissen
PO Box 1856
Colfax, CA 95713-1856

David Oliver
41 Norman St.
Rockland, MA 02370

Larry Poague
34221 West 90 Circle
Desota, KS 66108

Jim Relyea
241 W. Lakeshore
Rockaway, NJ 07866

Harry Riser
8505 Woodfield Crossing
The Forum
Indianapolis, IN 46240

Pat Ryan
43 Fairbanks Rd.
Churchville, NY 14428

Matt Savin
P.O. Box 7693
Alhambra, CA 91802-7533

Grant Schofield
(The Great Granzini)
9303 Quailbrook Ct.
Bakersfield, CA 93312

Sybill Simons
65 West 95 St. Apt 3A
New York, NY 10025

Bob Steiner
c/o San Miguel Villa
1050 San Miguel Blvd.
Concord, CA 94518

Hank Strasser
46 Bordentown-Chesterfield Rd.
Chesterfield, NJ 08515

Mario Susi
6 Bristol Rd.
W. Peabody, MA 01960

Larry Taverner
805 LaPaz Ct.
Bakersfield, CA 93312

Jack White
4288 Arguello St.
San Diego, CA 92103

SOCIETY OF AMERICAN MAGICIANS

NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING NOVEMBER 10, 2012
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA (DRAFT)

Most Illustrious Chris Bontjes called the Fall Council Meeting of The Society of American Magicians to order according to ritual at 9:11 a.m. PNP Jann Goodsell gave the invocation. MI Bontjes welcomed PNPs Ed Thomas, Brad Jacobs, Mark Weidhaas, John Apperson, Jann Goodsell.

Minutes of July 23, 2012 meeting:

Motion: PNP John Apperson moved the minutes be approved as posted.

Discussion: none. **Vote:** motion passed.

REPORTS

Note: full reports are in the Blue Book except those listed as live reports. The Blue Book is available electronically from National Secretary Marlene Clark, as hard copy from National Administrator Manon Rodriguez, or online in the member-only section at www.magicsam.com.

NATIONAL OFFICERS (*all present with reports in the Blue Book*)

Most Illustrious Chris Bontjes said he was honored and humbled to represent the society and has received an incredible reception from members.

President-elect Dal Sanders said he enjoyed representing the S.A.M. at activities of other organizations and is amazed at the interest they have in the S.A.M.

First VP Kenrick "Ice" McDonald referred to his Blue Book report.

Second VP Dave Bowers thanked the RVPs for working with him so well; they have made his job easier.

National Secretary Marlene Clark said her report is the Blue Book.

National Treasurer Eric Lampert referred to his Blue Book report. He added that it is a four-month report; not all expenses or revenues are in: it is a cash basis report which reflects income and expenses, only. The good news is receipts are about \$7,900 more than what we spent, but we are behind income projections.

REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS

The following RVPs were not present but had submitted reports for the Blue Book: New England – Joseph Caulfield; North Atlantic – Eric Decamps; South Atlantic – Debbie Leifer; Central Plains – Jania Taylor. The following RVPs were not present and had not submitted reports: South Central – Jeff Lanes.

Mid-Atlantic States – Phil Milstead reported that his deputies are working as a team. Lynchburg VA assembly is collecting money to send to the S.A.M. disaster fund. Visited the Scranton Assembly, where former members and a potential S.Y.M. member expressed interest in joining the S.A.M. Unfortunately, the Mountaintop Assembly is closing its doors, but members will transfer to nearby assemblies, so we're not losing members.

Midwestern States – Shaun Rivera said that since he took over as RVP he visited two assemblies, where he performed two effects from *M-U-M* and one from the iPhone app, which he hopes will encourage members to open the magazine and app and learn from them. He will visit Chicago soon.

Northwest States – Michael Roth said that the Alaska assembly had a fantastic Magic Week program, including five shows and other events. Don Russell has replaced Jeff Brown as Alaska Deputy, who has Multiple Sclerosis. Jeff has received a lifetime achievement award from the Alaska arts council and the governor. He would like the S.A.M. to honor Jeff, as he is a great advocate of the S.A.M. Members of the S.Y.M. assemblies in Oregon continue perform at community events and are having fun doing it. The mentors are doing a great job.

Southwest States – Ron Ishimaru said that Assembly #291 will host the PCAM 2013 Convention in Burbank California in August.

Canada – Rod Chow congratulated MI Chris Bontjes for becoming the only president in the history of the S.A.M. whose father, also, served as president. He also thanked Second VP Dave Bowers for his help.

ADMINISTRATIVE

The following were not present but had submitted reports for the Blue Book: Craig Schwarz, Gifts and Insignia; Richard Dooley, Investments. The following were not present and had not submitted reports: Michael Douglass, Chaplain; Michael Piacente, Insurance; Stu Schneider, Legal Counsel; Jeff Lanes, Member Services; Michael Close, M-U-M Editor; Dick Bowman, Roles & Responsibilities; Michael Raymer, SYMbol Editor Michael Raymer.

National Administrator Manon Rodriguez said Gifts and Insignia will have new items for sale at the 2013 convention. MI Bontjes noted that G&I has surpassed \$3,000 in sales this year. He and Ms. Rodriguez credited Craig Schwarz for getting the word out to members.

COMMITTEES

The following were absent but had reports in the Blue Book: Kyle Peron, Assembly Contact; Eric DeCamps, FaceBook; Anthony Antonelly, Good and Welfare; John Engman, Hall of Fame and Magic Museum; Dan Sclare, Life Membership; Mark Jensen, Media Library Curator; Les Cooper, New Assembly Coordinator; Andy Dallas, Paranormal Investigation; Bruce Kalver, SAMtalk, Technology; Barbara Dallas, *M-U-M* Spotlight.

The following were absent and had not submitted reports: Simon Carmel, Deaf Magicians Deputy; Dean George Schindler, Houdini Fund, International Deputy Coordinator, Public Relations; Marc DeSouza, Ethics; Harry & Trudy Monti, Magic for Special Education; Member Promotions, Steve Marshall; Tom Ewing, Historian; Sharing Awareness Mentoring Program; Scott Hollingsworth, Veterans Program/Military Membership.

Ambassador of Magic, FISM (in Blue Book), Magic Endowment Fund (live): Brad Jacobs received a thank you letter Avi Littky, a scholarship recipient to the Sorcerer's Safari Magic Camp. The Weekend of Wonder broke even, thanks to a supreme effort by S.Y.M. Executive Director Jann Goodsell, PNP Bruce Kalver, and many other officers and PNPs. The S.A.M. has three new life members, and the National Disaster Fund is in place for victims of Hurricane Sandy.

Despite the market drop, as of November 7, the MEF portfolio is at its highest: \$803,069, but the checking account is at an all-time low: \$18,608. To make grants in the coming year, the fund will have to tap into its money market accounts. All bills have been paid, and the tax return for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2011, has been filed.

Conference Executive John Apperson (live report). The S.A.M. cleared about \$30,000 from the Las Vegas Convention and didn't have to turn to the National Council to fund the Life Member Breakfast. The convention committee will continue the breakfast as long as the money is there. The March S.A.M. National Council meeting will be held March 15 & 16, 2013, at the Denver Marriott Tech Center.

Future Conventions:

2013 S.A.M. National Convention: Washington, DC, July 3, 4, 5, 6: Marriott Crystal Gateway Hotel, Arlington, VA; room rates \$114, a night, single or double.

2014 IBM-SAM Combined Convention: St.

Louis, Missouri, July 2, 3, 4 5, 2014; Marriott Renaissance Hotel, \$115 a night, single or double.

2015 S.A.M. National Convention: July 1,2,3,4, Philadelphia Marriott Downtown; \$115 a night, single or double.

He is exploring Indianapolis in 2016, an IBM/SAM joint convention in 2017, and Las Vegas in 2018.

Hall of Fame and Magic Museum (*live report by Ed Thomas*). The Hall of Fame has a temporary exhibit at the Whittier Museum through July 2013. MI Bontjes and Julie visited the museum for the ribbon cutting ceremony and attended a magic week program. The museum will have other programs at the museum. Coincidentally, Chris's father cut the ribbon during the original opening during Magic Week in 1971.

Heroism and Patriots Committee – William Gleason said the committee now has a sponsor for the award.

I.B.M./S.A.M. 2014 Combined Convention Co-chair Mark Weidhaas said the registration will open for one month in February at a greatly reduced rate. Registration will then close until July 2013, so as not to conflict with the 2013 IBM or S.A.M. conventions. When registration reopens, the rate will increase by \$100.

Motion by Weidhaas: Due to the potential success of the 2014 Combined Convention and in the interest of cooperation between both organizations in their effort to elevate the art of magic, the S.A.M. National Council encourages its convention chair to seek mutually agreeable terms with the I.B.M. in planning for a 2017 Combined Convention. **Discussion:** none. **Vote:** motion passed.

Marketing – Advertising – Dal Sanders discussed funnel@magicsam.com. In the spirit of consistency, all communications that represent the S.A.M. to the public should be addressed to that email address – a “consistency funnel, composed of Marketing Committee members. He encouraged all to use it because it will help with a consistent message and image for the S.A.M.

National Magic Week – Jeff Sikora said there has been an increase in participation and activities, and not only during Magic Week. “DO Magic for David Oliver,” an effort to raise money for Compeer David Oliver, who is seriously ill, is a good example. The following superstar assemblies take the spirit of Magic Week to heart: Parent Assembly 1 – even though members knew Hurricane Sandy was coming, they honored their obligations; Philadelphia Assembly #4; and Dallas Assembly #13; and Anchorage Alaska Assembly #163.

Sikora sent more than 50 certificates for magic week activities and added that we still need to make members aware of and to use the submission form on the S.A.M. website – he can't send certificates if he doesn't get the information. He asked the RVPs to get the information to him. He also has received many worthy candidates for the 2013 S.A.M. Humanitarian Award.

M-U-M Spotlight Program: MI Bontjes reminded council members that Spotlight is an opportunity to give attention to folks who do great work on a local level, and we need to do more to educate our members. Please contact Chair Barbara Dallas at adallas123@hotmail.com with your nominations.

Technology: MI Bontjes noted that we have been having some difficulties with the new website, due to the fact the designers would not input member information until it went live. As a result, mistakes could not be fixed until it went live. The problem now is, members have been unable to log on to the site. He apologized for the inconvenience and asked for members' patience; it is being dealt with one at a time. He urged those who are having problems to contact Technology Chairman Bruce Kalver, and it will be fixed easily and quickly.

Young Members Program Director PNP Jann Goodsell thanked all who supported WOW. She reiterated that the S.Y.M. needs leaders. New S.A.M. Ambassador Joshua Jay is working on a project for the S.Y.M.: he is compiling magic essays that are important to budding magicians. Jay contacted the author of each piece and got permission from all but one to reproduce the writing in an eBook he is compiling and will make available for free to all S.Y.M. members. She is seeking help on the project. She is seeking ideas on how to better communicate with assemblies and is evaluating the effectiveness of the SYMBol.

Old business

None

Society Business (Items from caucus)

Insurance Committee Chairman Michael Piacente has resigned. MI Bontjes appointed RVP New England Joseph Caulfield as new chair. MI Bontjes commended Piacente on the job he did putting together a new liability policy, which will go into effect in February.

In the near future, MI Bontjes will appoint two committees to work on magic education, including a program for senior citizens and one for college students.

National Administrator Rodriguez discussed the decrease in renewals, despite the excellent job Kelly Peron is doing. We send renewals in *M-U-M* but members don't

always see the invoice. She asked the council to approve \$1,200 for postage to send renewal notices; 1 and 2 would be postcards.

Motion: Eric Lampert moved to add \$1,200 to the administrator's budget **Discussion:** none. **Vote:** motion passed.

Website difficulties. Administrator Rodriguez said that 457 members have not renewed because they cannot get online to pay dues and asked that the S.A.M. adopt an amnesty program for those who had dropped due to login problems. She thanked PNP Bruce Kalver for his help on the new website.

Motion: PNP Ed Thomas moved that the S.A.M. adopt an amnesty program until the end of the year and offer 15 months of membership at the 12-month paperless membership rate for those who dropped their membership due to login problems. **Discussion:** MI Bontjes will send a letter explaining the situation to those members. **Vote:** motion passed.

Society business (other)

MI Bontjes will appoint a committee to explore ways to improve communication with S.Y.M. assemblies and S.Y.M. members.

Good & Welfare: MI Bontjes thanked Steve Spence for setting up activities for the council visit, including an afternoon walking show, an assembly show, and an on-your-own evening show. He also set up the benefit show that council members performed at a local hospital.

Mark Weidhaas discussed the monthly Facebook photo contest that displays members displaying their S.A.M. merchandise. Each monthly winner receives special signed certificate. He presented a certificate RVP Shawn Rivera. October's winner was Michal Tallon; September's winner was Randy Kalin; August, Mark Paulson. The November theme is Thanksgiving.

MI Bontjes confessed that he referred to the merchandise as “SAM gear” during a Skype call instead of “S.A.M. gear.” He owed \$1 to the M.E.F. for each person on the call and paid his debt during the council meeting.

National Secretary Marlene Clark was selling purple “DO Magic for David Oliver” wrist bands.

Benediction by PNP Jann Goodsell.

Adjourn:

Meeting adjourned according to ritual at 10:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marlene Clark,
National Secretary



TREASURES FROM THE SALON DE MAGIE

BY KEN KLOSTERMAN

HOUDINI'S LITTLE MESSENGER



Houdini's Little Messenger
now resides at the Salon de Magie

Certainly one of the oldest magic props (in terms of its mystical origins) is a simple wooden doll. The trick of vanishing a doll was first illustrated and described in English in *Hocus Pocus Junior*, *The Anatomie of Legerdemain* in 1634. It was called Bonus Genus, and very frequently, the Little Wanderer or Traveler. For the first column of the new year, we feature Houdini's hand-carved version.

In this effect the performer introduces the bare doll to the audience; he then invites a boy and a girl on stage to assist with the trick. The magician then places a small cape or cloak that has a hole in the top over the doll, allowing the doll's head to stick out the top. He then explains to the children that the doll can speak, but only he can understand him. With the children standing on either side of him, the performer listens to the doll and reports that the doll has asked to take a trip to Europe. The doll also asks for some spending money to take on its travels.

While the children hold on to the magician's wrists, he

reaches into his pocket and brings out imaginary coins, which he places beneath the cloak. Dipping the doll's head under the cloak for a moment, and upon the count of three (with his wrists still held firmly), the doll vanishes and the cape is shown empty. The doll is miraculously reproduced from a nest of boxes, from a spectator's coat, or even from the pocket of the boy called up to assist with the trick.

In an article on favorite tricks of the world's greatest magicians, magic historian John Mulholland reported that Houdini's choice was his Little Messenger. Writing of the effect, Houdini said, "In my very early shows the Little Messenger was one of my feature tricks. I performed it thousands of times before I ever heard that it was a very old piece of magic."



Young Houdini

Houdini's figure, which he carved himself, is nearly 4 inches long and 1¼ inches wide at the shoulders. It is gimmicked to separate at the neck, with the body being palmed away. The head is hidden under the cloak and held in place by a magnet. The trick also involves a duplicate figure that is used for later reproduction. The Houdini-made Bonus Genus set of dolls and cape passed from him to Mulholland, to Charles Kalish, and then to the Salon de Magie. ★



DOUG AND DENNIS AND PETE BY DENNIS LOOMIS



In the February 2009 *M-U-M*, I wrote an article titled “Doug and Dennis and Walter and Jack.” It was about Walter Blaney’s amazing Stepladder Suspension and the captivation it held for Doug and me. Another effect that Doug and I saw performed several times in Colon over the years that deceived and enchanted us was Pete Tappan’s miniature levitation of a tiny doll that was small enough to pass through a finger ring. Photo 1 shows Pete performing the illusion.

Doug and I first saw it in the home of Jerry and Shirley Conklin in Colon, Michigan, during the Abbott Get-Together of 1972. Pete borrowed a finger ring from one of us, hung it from a golden cord, and proceeded to blow us away. He removed the cover from a little stage setting. At the back was a compartment that Pete called a dressing room. Peeking out of the top of the dressing room was a little plastic doll. Pete hung the borrowed finger ring from a golden cord. He took the little doll out of the dressing room and placed her on the tiny couch at the center of the stage. Then, with appropriate hand gestures, the little doll floated up off the couch. This was no mere suspension; the doll actually ascended into the air a short distance, perhaps a quarter of an inch. Pete then gently removed the couch and placed it aside. We just couldn’t believe our eyes. A couple of us were no more than two feet away. The room was brightly lit.

He picked up the golden cord and passed the borrowed finger

ring over the floating doll. He repeated the pass a second time, and returned the ring to its owner. He replaced the couch under the floating doll, repeated the hand gestures, and the little doll visibly floated back down to the couch. He put her back in the dressing room, covered up the stage, and took his exceedingly well deserved applause. This was one of the most astonishing things I had seen in my life; it remains so to this day. I saw Pete do this effect at least three more times. Once was at the American Legion Hall in Colon late one night after one of the Abbott’s evening shows. Another time I saw it at the St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Colon after we had one of the dinners the ladies of the church prepared. The final time was at a convention in Las Vegas, probably one of Stan Allen’s *MAGIC* Live gatherings.

When we first saw it, Doug and I were badly fooled. We each had a theory as to the method. I won’t divulge the method in this article, but our theories were different, and we had no idea which of us was right (or if either of us was right). Pete demonstrated the effect several times at that Abbott’s Get-Together and later at other conventions. It became legendary; everyone who saw it was mystified. Pete was well known for the illusion and many folks asked him to build one for him. Pete decided to make some; he started putting names on a waiting list. In 1999, Pete reported that there were about eighty names on the list.

Pete’s best friend for many years was Phil Willmarth, a well respected magician, editor of magic books and magazines, and an all-around great guy. Phil had the job of cataloging Pete’s magic after his death, by which time the list had mushroomed to 130 names. I’ve had a series of phone conversations with Phil, who I’m proud to count as one of my magic friends. We tried to piece together how many of the Tappan Levitations were made. We believe it was just nine: Pete’s own (Photo 1), and one each for



Ralph Erlewine (now owned by Dick Oslund), Bruce Jensen, Ron Urban (who was his first customer), Charles Rulfs, Harold Martin, Henry Bihari, John Kaiser, and Mike Stollar.

Harry Blackstone Jr. was one of the people on the list, but he asked Pete to build him a larger version. Phil Willmarth found it with Pete's belongings after Pete left us. Phil believes that Harry died before it was finished. Phil also believes that after Pete had made the units mentioned above, he decided that making them for others wasn't worth the effort.

After Pete died, Phil came across Pete's personal Levi among his possessions. I would have thought that as Pete's best friend he would have known how it worked. But Pete had never told him, and Phil, always the perfect gentleman, had never asked. One day Phil called. He told me that he had found Pete's little Levi and that even with it in his hands, he couldn't figure it out. He asked me to explain to him how it worked. Below you will read about how I got mine. I was happy to be able to explain the secret to Phil and to coach him on the performance details.

There were two more built, and that's where I came into the story. I was way down on Pete's waiting list and eager to have one. I closed my full evening show, *Magic-Capades*, with an Aga Levitation. While booking sponsors, I wanted to be able to do Pete's close-up Levi. I contacted Pete and asked him if I could purchase the rights to make one of them for my own use, rather than waiting to get one from him. We were pretty good friends, but still I was amazed when he agreed. I sent Pete a check and he shipped me drawings,



Photo 2

photographs, and even an audio tape with details of the construction and performance. He even sent two of the plastic dolls. They were from a novelty shop item called The Blonde in the Bath Tub (Photo 2).

I knew who could make mine, and do it right: Bob Williams. He ran the Magic 'n Things magic shop in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. I first met Bob at one of the Abbott Get-Togethers. He was an art professor at a college in Manitowoc, and one year he produced a show at the college. He booked Gene Anderson, Jack Pyle, and Dennis Loomis and Bonnie. As a result, Bob and I became friends, and we remain so to this day. As an artist, Bob has a marvelous eye for color and line, but he also has skills in woodworking, metal work, and even plastics. He made several special items for me over the years and they were all exquisite in form and function. In the interim Bob and his lovely wife Linda had moved to Wellsboro, Pennsylvania. I was thrilled when he agreed to tackle the Tappan Levi. I sent him the plans and pictures, and he made an absolutely exquisite one for me. I was thrilled at the craftsmanship; it's a thing of beauty to behold and functions perfectly. Bob made the basic stage, a cover to go over the stage (which was beautifully decorated and included my name), an absolutely gorgeous little doll, and a wooden packing box with luxurious red padding (Photo 3). It's one of my prized possessions. Out of respect for Pete, I have never performed it for magicians, with one exception

that I'll tell you about later.

I had the idea of getting one made as a present for Doug Henning. I contacted Pete and he graciously gave me the rights to have two made without any extra fee. As it turned out, this was an ill-fated project. Bob made the second unit for Doug Henning and it was, of course, an equally exquisite piece of equipment. It was painted in different colors, and on the cover it said "Henning" where mine said "Loomis." He shipped it to me, and it got lost in the mail! The Post Office never recovered it, and Bob had to make a second one. That one arrived safely, but that's not the end of the story.



Photo 3

At this point I must tell you about Doug's obsession with Transcendental Meditation. I do not use the word "obsession" lightly, and I consider it accurate here. Doug's sister Nancy said that TM was essentially Doug's religion. Doug always insisted that it wasn't a religion, but for him it served as the kind of guiding force that a religion would serve for many. While at McMaster University, Doug first became involved with TM when a friend suggested he attend a seminar about it as a potential cure for the hypertension that Doug was feeling in conjunction with the preparations for his first big illusion show, *Spellbound*. Doug paid \$45 to register for the first series of TM lectures. Doug took to TM immediately and it became his life-long passion.

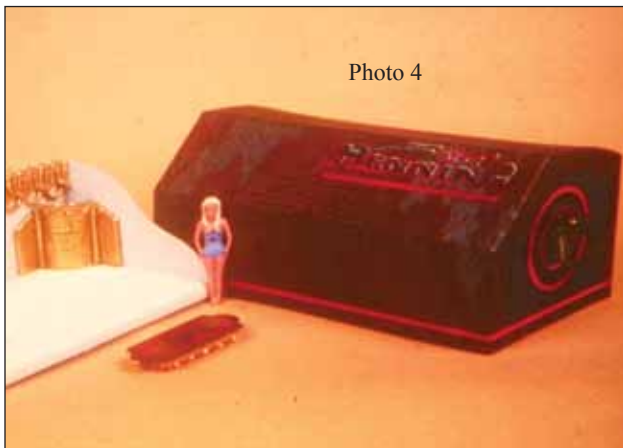
Even earlier, Doug had flirted with the concept of meditation. I recall that on one of my visits with him in Toronto we went out to a show together. About thirty minutes before the show, Doug put a sign up on his dressing room door: "Do Not Disturb. I'm meditating. D.H." In fact, Doug and I were inside chatting away as he set up the Gene Anderson Newspaper Tear. Working with the newspaper and rubber cement was his preshow ritual; I don't think that he ever let anyone else set the paper tear for him. This was one of the three effects that Doug did in virtually every live show for most of his life: the Vernon Linking Ring routine, Houdini's Metamorphosis, and the Anderson Torn and Restored Newspaper.

Over the years, Doug repeatedly tried to get me to study TM, and I always declined. I thought it was a cult or an out-and-out scam, although I didn't say that to Doug. He never put heavy pressure on me about it, and I didn't resent it. I knew that Doug believed that TM was responsible for his creativity and for his success and he wanted to share it with me. I believe that my skepticism about TM is what caused him to slowly draw away from

me. The same thing happened with many of his other friends as well. Doug really preferred to work with other TM practitioners and would hire them whenever possible.

I had the two Tappan Levis and knew that Doug was scheduled to perform at Caesar's Tahoe, not far from my home in Camino, California. I believe this was Doug's last appearance in a casino, because the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, the founder and leader of Transcendental Meditation, told Doug that he should not perform or even step foot in a casino. Doug did whatever the Maharishi told him. The casino bookings were quite lucrative, and Doug's manager, Jerry Goldstein, wasn't happy about it.

Doug had performed at Caesar's Tahoe two or three times before and had always given me complimentary seats. This time I would have two surprises for him after the show. I would do the Tappan Levi for him with my unit. And then I would give him the one with his name on it (Photo 4). I could point out that we were both right about the method since the secret combined our two different theories.



What follows is an abridged version of what happened as told by John Harrison in his book about Doug, *Spellbound*. I started calling Doug's dressing room the day before the show opened. I talked to several of Doug's staff and they all promised to have Doug call me. After several attempts, I gave up. I knew that Doug was disappointed that I never got into TM and was sure that this was responsible for the schism between us. It was clear that Doug didn't want to see me. I never saw him or talked to him again. He moved to India, then Holland, back to Toronto, and finally to L.A. When I received word of his death from liver cancer in February of 2000 I cried...for quite some time.

A few weeks after the Tahoe incident with Doug, I found out that another good friend was going to perform in Tahoe. I had a brass plaque made with his name engraved on it and glued it over Doug's name on the Tappan Levi. When he arrived, I called his dressing room and we spoke. He left comp tickets for me at the box office. After I saw his marvelous show, I went backstage. I performed my version of the Tappan Levi for him and then brought out the second one and presented it to him. He was thrilled, and we spent about thirty minutes working with them as I explained how it worked and went over the performance details. The name on the plaque is...David Copperfield.

Since this is my last article, I want to thank a few folks. My old

Colon pals, Gene Anderson, Dick Oslund, Phil Willmarth, and Jim Robertson were always there to prod my memory about the early days. You can see Doug, me, Gene, and Jim in the photo below, which was taken at Doug's first wedding. Dick and Phil provided some of the photos for this article. Jim was a valuable research assistant on several articles; Gene taught me as much as I could absorb about photography, so that I could take many of the pictures you've seen in these pages. My good pal Chuck Mignosa, a fine magician and my computer guru, was always there to help when I needed him. He took a lot of pictures of my hands, especially for my articles on the Kelly Bottom Placement. My pal Ric Ewing took the picture you see on the cover of this issue. Bob Williams was very helpful in the writing of this article. Brian Lumley, one of Doug's close friends who became a trusted assistant and confidant to Doug, provided me with a lot of information about Doug.



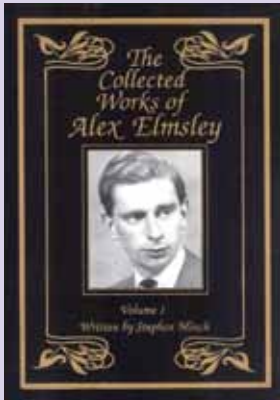
Clockwise from left: Dennis Loomis, Gene Anderson, unknown, Jim Robertson, and Doug Henning

Lindsay Smith has had the task of proofreading not just my scribbles, but the entire magazine. Lisa Close, as *M-U-M's* art director, has edited all of the photos I've sent in, performing her digital magic to clean up some pretty horrific images, and integrating them with my words every month to make a pleasing layout. And finally, there's Michael Close. What can I say about him? After all, he saddled me with this job. But, he also had to pore over my words every month and massage them into something readable. He is largely responsible for making me sound like I knew what I was talking about. Thank you for urging me to do this, Mike. You were a pal before, and I will always cherish the four-plus years we've worked together.

Finally, my earnest thanks to the readers of this magazine. My little efforts have taken up quite a bit of your valuable time, especially if you've read all forty-nine of these offerings over the past four years. Quite a few of you have taken the time to contact me, to occasionally thank me, and to discuss some of my writings.

As I write this, the day after tomorrow is Thanksgiving. I will eat turkey, watch football, and in my heart, I'll be thanking all of you. —Denny

© 2012 by Dennis Loomis

**Excerpt From:**

The Collected Works of Alex Elmsley, Volume 1

Written By: Stephen Minch

Description:

Ebook, 428 pages

Available From:

www.llepub.com

For many magicians, the name Alex Elmsley is associated with the now-famous, four-card, false-counting procedure. But Mr. Elmsley's extensive and eclectic creative output goes far beyond that one move. In 1991, Volume One of *The Collected Works of Alex Elmsley* appeared; Volume Two was published three years later. Although these large books are a treasure trove for card enthusiasts, they are also a joy for anyone who appreciates ingenious magic tricks.

The first excerpt below is part of the first essay of Volume One. It provides a useful and practical way to evaluate and improve his or her presentations. In addition to the complete essay, Volume One also includes *The Automatic Producer*, a step-by-step procedure for analyzing the problems in an act and discovering solutions for them.

Following the essay are two brief tricks that may be unfamiliar to you. They use objects other than cards. The first is a quick trick that will appear impromptu to your audience. The other is more of a puzzle than a trick, but I have found it useful as a "thought-stimulator" in corporate situations.

The Collected Works of Alex Elmsley Volumes One and Two are classics; they should be in your library. My thanks to Louis Falanga and L&L Publishing for allowing these excerpts to appear in *M-U-M*. —Michael Close

ALEX ELMSLEY: ON THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF MAGIC

I think of myself as an inventor, not as a performer. It is possible, I suppose, to invent without performing at all; it is possible to compose music without playing any instrument. But it is a very great handicap, so I feel I must do some performing.

I didn't set my standards very high. I tried to attain competence. To be in the first rank of performers, you need not only talent and hard work, you also need luck. But anybody ought to be able to attain competent performance, and that competence is what a lay audience does have the right to demand.

So I started thinking about presentation. I read Fitzkee, I read Edward Maurice, I read the lesson in *Tarbell*, I read the chapter in *Greater Magic*, I read Henning Nelms; and the total result was that I was frightened and confused. There was so much there, I didn't know what to do or where to start. I retired, wounded from the fray, and decided to think things over again. I came to the conclusion that it wasn't the fault of the books. It was my fault. I was trying to approach the books in the wrong way.

As I now perceive them, those books are collections of cures for things that could be wrong with an act or a trick – and a doctor doesn't start with a book of cures and then go hunting a disease. He starts with somebody who has got something wrong with him, he diagnoses the disease and then he looks for the cure.

You will remember Victor Borge's story of his uncle, the doctor, who invented the cure for which there was no known disease – and his wife caught the cure and died of it. I think some magicians have caught Fitzkee and died of it, in the sense that they have read Fitzkee and have been so intimidated that they have given up all hope of applying any showmanship or presentation to their acts. I am not suggesting you not read these books. But, in the beginning, you should read them quickly for general ideas and background.

Then take a trick or an entire act, go through it and criticize it. When you find a particular fault, often its solution will be obvious. If it isn't obvious, here the books can be handy. Try to make the criticisms specific and concentrate on one problem at a time. When you approach these books with a particular problem in mind they are far more helpful. If you come with just vagueness in mind, you will reap only vagueness from them.

Ideally, you should get somebody else to do the criticism for you; preferably somebody whose job is theatrical direction or production. Failing that, find an ordinary human being. Failing a human being, try a magician.

As a last resort you have to be able to criticize yourself. This is not easy, but I finally found that self criticism could be boiled down to going through my act and asking myself repeatedly just two questions, two questions that sound trivial, but they seem to hold within themselves practically everything in the way of presentation and showmanship. These questions are:

- 1) Is something of interest happening all the time?
- 2) Can the audience appreciate the effect?

I am going to expand on these questions and show how they can be applied to an act or to a trick. I shall also try to show you how other things, everything you can think of in the way of presentation, flow from these questions. I shall give examples of how the questions can be applied. I shall also give some of the answers and suggestions that I use myself – but your answers should be your own. When you discover a problem or a fault in your act, the answer to the problem is closely tied to style. This style is your own, not mine nor anyone else's. So my answers may not solve your problems. But I hope to suggest to you a method of finding the faults in your act so that you will know where to aim your efforts.

Let's examine our first question: is something of interest happening all the time? Apply this to a trick. Some tricks, like the Ambitious Card, have magic happening constantly. I shall not argue whether magic is interesting. I consider it to be of interest or I wouldn't be involved with it. But there are effects, like four-Ace tricks, that are divided into a preparatory phase – when you are setting out the Aces and three cards on each – and then the climax.

The climax is magical, so that is of interest. But there is no good reason a lay audience should have any interest in the preparatory phase. If they have seen you perform in the past, they may know your magic is so good it is worth waiting for. But there is

nothing intrinsically interesting in putting down four Aces and shoving three cards on top of them. You have to make an effort to keep interest somehow during that preparatory phase.

One method I use to create interest during periods of preparation is the patter theme or story. Audience participation can also be used to liven up the initial procedures. Or certain elements known to raise interest can be integrated into the procedure. A list of these is given in Chapter Four of Fitzkee's *Showmanship for Magicians*.

But if all else fails, I am a great believer in telling the audience beforehand what the effect will be. Some say this is injurious to misdirection, because it tends to make people look for the method. But it is fairly easy to tell people what you are going to do in such a way that you don't expose the method. You can even tell them what you are going to do in such a way that it will misdirect them from the method. John Ramsay used to do this.

Even if telling the audience what you are going to do can sometimes be considered bad to misdirection, I think it is good presentation, for if they are watching somebody do something that seems without rhyme or reason it will be boring. Somebody doing something for a purpose is much more interesting than somebody doing something for no known purpose.

You should go through your act or tricks, looking for dead spots or dull spots, those times when nothing of interest is happening. When you look through the pack to remove the Aces; when some spectator must count how far down in the pack his card is from the top; these are all points of low interest for most of the audience.

Each trick will dictate the solution to the problem; but once you have isolated the problem, there is nearly always something you can do about it. You can speed up slow actions, or you can break lengthy procedures into smaller segments, giving the impression that you are working faster. You can attach the boring procedure to the action or theme of the story being told, to make the one an illustration of the other, thus lending it more interest. You can sometimes have a spectator carry out the procedure while you do something else. You can even develop interesting ways of handling the cards while counting them, etc.

Procedures in which a spectator must perform some task, such as counting cards, can create dead spots. Sometimes these periods can be used to relax the audience. But often they are simply points of low interest. They can be remedied by making the spectator's actions visible and, in some way, interesting; or by doing something interesting yourself as the spectator completes his task. Once you recognize the problem, there is usually a way to solve it.

One problem found in close-up magic is maintaining interest between tricks. Of course, this does not apply to the performance of a single trick; but if you are doing an act, keeping interest between the tricks can be difficult. If you have an audience that will applaud at the end of a trick, this lessens the problem. When an audience applauds they lean back, they relax, but their attention is still on you.

But there are working conditions where the spectators do not readily applaud. If they are a small group they often are embarrassed to applaud; or they may be in a restaurant where they don't want to make noise that will disturb other diners. In such circumstances, at the end of a successful trick, they tend instead to comment on it to each other: "Oh, isn't that good!" "Wasn't that great!" "I saw someone on television, but he wasn't as good as you." This response sounds marvelous – but you have lost control of the audience in the meantime. You either have to stop this from

happening, or you have to use some technique to regain their attention.

This is quite a thorny problem, which I haven't really solved to my own satisfaction. Several techniques that seem to help are these: Always maintain eye contact with the audience, unless it is imperative that you look away. Resume the patter and action just as applause starts to fall. If applause is not forthcoming in the situation, employ relaxed linking patter to hold interest.

It has been suggested that the use of interesting props can be a great help in keeping attention between tricks.

Another strategy is the use of layouts. There are many card tricks that end with interesting layouts. This can be very effective; but you will lose the audience if it then takes you thirty seconds, with your head down, to pick up the cards. A layout at the end of an act is not a problem. You can get up and walk away from it. However, when a layout occurs in the middle of an act, the method used to pick it up can require as much thought and rehearsal as the trick that produces the layout. If you don't rehearse it you will spoil your next trick. In the interval necessary to gather the cards you can lose the interest of the audience, and then have to regain it.

Of course, for a layout to capture and hold interest, it must be seen. The same applies to any cards that are placed on the table. When I am working with a card table, I carry a couple of little braces that I can put under the rear legs so that they are raised about an inch. Even an inch will make a surprising difference in the visibility of the table surface.

Rival distractions in the room where you are working can be a distinct problem. If noise, light, movement, or audience discomfort is part of the performing conditions, you must consider how you can increase interest in your magic to compete with these factors.

I make an analogy between controlling interest during an act and fishing. At the start of the act you have to hook the fish – catch the interest of the audience. Then you have to play the fish. This means not only making the tension of the line tighter, but also relaxing it at the right times. Finally you have to give a last jerk to land the fish.

When playing the fish, if you try to keep the tension of the line tight all the time, it will break and the fish will get away. If you try to keep an audience at their highest intensity of interest all the time, they will tire and their interest will diminish. It will wander at the moment they tire, which will quite likely be at an important moment to your effect. Therefore, you must plan points of relaxation, as well as of intensity, in an act of more than two minutes. These points of relaxation are periods when nothing of great importance is happening. An example might be when a spectator is counting cards. This can be a point where you can let the audience relax a bit, while you lean back and chat more informally. If you don't do this, the audience's attention will wander anyway – but at the wrong moment.

Magicians should be familiar with techniques for controlling intensity of interest. Points of tension are used to bring the audience to the highest pitch of interest, when you want them to remember something; for example, the climax of a trick. Slydini's technique of misdirection is designed to increase the intensity of interest at the right times. You tighten yourself up, perhaps sit up or lean forward. You act more efficiently. You move or look or talk. Doing only one of these things at a time increases interest.

Patter should be rehearsed and edited to avoid irrelevancies and muddled expressions. Actions should come under a similar

scrutiny: they should be planned for efficiency, clarity and speed. Fumbling must be omitted.

Avoid the use of spectators when intensity is required. Or, failing that, plan and control their use so that they do not become distractions. One common error is to neglect clarity in your instructions to a spectator. Misunderstandings and corrections will destroy a point of tension.

To relax tension, you yourself must relax and act more informally. Lean back and smile. Combine casual actions, moving and chatting at the same time, to appear unrehearsed and spontaneous. Use audience participation. Laughter is always a point of relaxation. So is applause.

Increasing tension is one of the main techniques for pointing your effects. Relaxing tension is one of the main techniques of misdirection. But neither will work without the other to provide the contrast.

I remember listening once to a radio discussion on the topic of boredom. It was remarked that the most common reason for boredom is that somebody feels he has no influence over what is happening at the moment, that he is being left out, or that he is ignored.

This, I fear, applies to the way many magicians do their acts. They ignore the audience. I have had a bad effect here, I am afraid. There is a certain count of mine you may have come across that tends to lead magicians to do their tricks to themselves, paying no attention to their audience whatsoever. There are certain sleights that by their nature are a temptation for personal performance. It needs a definite effort to do moves of this kind in an open way, so you are outgoing and people feel involved.

I try to make it a rule always to look at the audience, unless I have a definite reason, a reason I can actually write down, for looking elsewhere. I have had to do this because I have always been more an introvert than an extrovert. While working out new tricks I tend to do them for myself. It has required a great effort on my part to rehearse tricks in a more open and outgoing manner, making the audience feel, I hope, that they are a part of what is happening.

This is probably the most important thing of all in keeping interest in an act. It is not a method of getting interest. It is almost a precondition to getting it. One must include the audience in what is going on – and at the very least look at them.

One should strive to appear interested in the audience. By ignoring their reactions to you and your magic, you are ignoring them. Be responsive; communicate. Recognize that they are interested in you as a personality, as well as in the magic you do. Make an effort to reveal your character throughout the act, but particularly at the start.

RING AND PAPER CLIP

Effect: The performer removes his finger ring and holds it in one hand. In the other hand he holds a common wire paper clip. He throws the ring into the opposite hand; a metallic click is heard and the hand is opened to show the paper clip now linked to the ring.

The linking is instantaneous and cannot have been accomplished by normal means, because there is no surreptitious finger motion and the time is too short for covert manipulation.

Method: While theocracies will not be built on this stunt, it is a mysterious little effect that has the advantage of being impromptu.

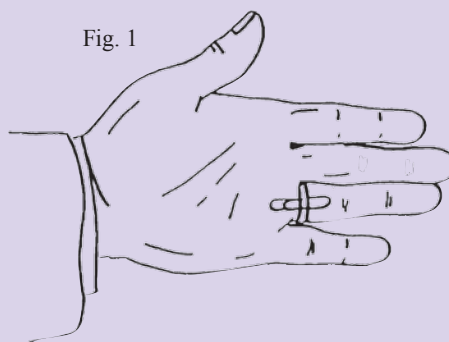


Fig. 1

You must be wearing a finger ring that can be easily slipped off. You will also require two identical paper clips of the trombone sort. These must be large enough to fit easily onto the band of your ring. Two such clips are certainly no trouble to carry;

or you may find them available in many places.

Before commencing the trick, secretly slip one of the paper clips onto the band of your ring, on the palm side of the hand. The clip is not linked through the ring at this time, but grips the band between the large and small loops. The ends of these loops should point inward toward the palm (Figure 1). This minor bit of preparation is quickly and easily done; it can, in fact, be accomplished in your pocket with one hand.

For this description, it will be assumed you are wearing the ring on the third finger of the left hand. Should the ring be worn on another finger, the small changes necessary in handling will become obvious. You must be seated when performing this – though, with one simple change, standing performance is possible.

We will return to this point at the proper time.

When ready to perform, show the second paper clip at your right fingertips; then transfer it to your left hand, taking it between the

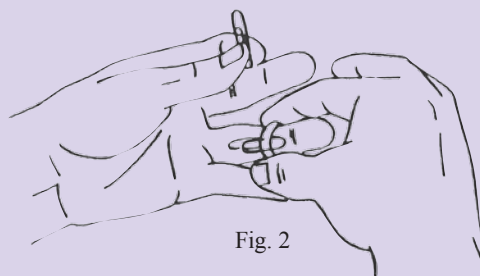


Fig. 2

thumb and first two fingers. Only half of the clip should be visible above these fingers.

Do not give any importance to the passing of the clip from hand to hand. It is done purely to free the right hand, so that you can remove your ring. Grasp the ring by its sides, between your right forefinger and thumb, and pull it from the left finger (Figure 2). Gently press the band of the ring against the inside of the left finger as you pull, forcing the hidden clip to drag against the finger. By retarding its motion, you force the clip to link through the ring. As the ring comes free of the left finger, the clip will hang from it, but is hidden from the spectators by the right fingers (Figure 3).

Exhibit the ring without exposing the attached paper clip. This is not difficult; the ring can be held at the very tips of the right fingers while the clip is concealed.

As you raise the right hand to display the ring, simultaneously drop the left hand casually to the edge of the table. While attention is focused on the ring,

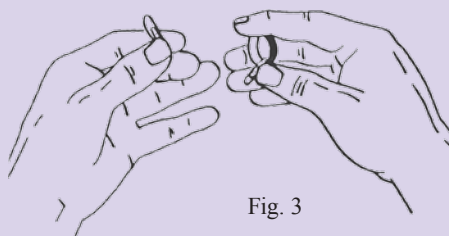


Fig. 3

lap the paper clip. Then raise the left hand, pressing the thumb to the fingertips, as if still holding the clip.

Hold your hands up before you, about two feet apart, and, as you do so, let the ring sink almost out of sight behind the right fingers. There is a sound psychological reason behind this: if the ring is now held too much in view, its prominence draws unwelcome attention to the fact that no part of the paper clip is visible in the left hand.

From as great a distance as you can accurately manage it, forcefully throw the ring from the right hand to the left. The speed of the toss and the largeness of the ring make it impossible to perceive the clip during its flight.

Catch the ring and clip in the left hand. They will naturally click against one another when caught, giving the impression that the ring has hit the left hand's paper clip. In the minds of the spectators, this is interpreted as proof that the two items were separate until the moment of impact.

Hold the closed left hand absolutely still for about two seconds. Then slowly open the fingers and reveal the linked ring and clip. Drop them onto the table and, if the spectators desire it, let them be examined.

As mentioned earlier, with one minor change this trick can be performed standing. Instead of lapping the left hand's paper clip, sleeve it.

THE TWISTER (A PUZZLE)

This stunt, Mr. Elmsley recalls, was the product of a dull afternoon at the office. As the title indicates, this is not a trick but a puzzle. It is a clever topological problem, which can be easily, almost magically, solved by its perpetrator, but is impossible for his victim. Mr. Elmsley suggests this puzzle as a palliative for ruffled egos, when there is in the audience that occasional individual who, no matter how entertainingly the magic is presented, perceives it as an intellectual combat zone in which he or she has been taken unfair advantage of. In such circumstances, one can present this little mystery, and then reveal its solution, to relax the vexed individual – all without endangering any magical principles.

The only prop needed is a broad rubber band measuring two to three inches in un-stretched length. For your own satisfaction and amusement, find one now and follow the moves as they are explained.

Hold the band vertically (taut but not stretched) between the palm-down hands, pinched at its top and bottom between the thumbs and forefingers. The right hand pinches the top of the band, with the thumb inside the loop, and the left hand pinches the bottom, with the forefinger in the loop (Figure 1).

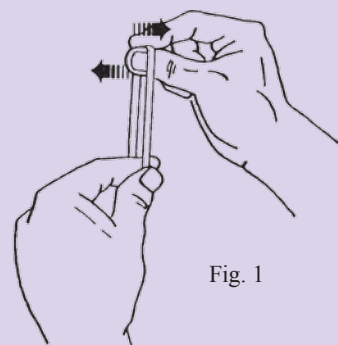


Fig. 1

Now give the band two twists by pushing the right thumb leftward while retracting the right forefinger. The arrows in Figure 1 show the movement of the fingers, and Figure 2 depicts the configuration of the band afterward.

Your audience has watched all this. Nothing is hidden. Now ask someone to take the band into his own hands, grasping it

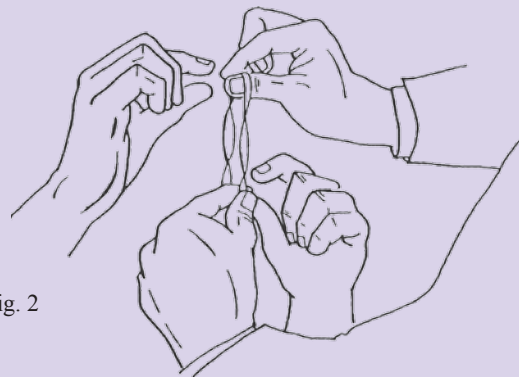


Fig. 2

exactly as you are, and without disturbing its twisted condition. Where your right finger and thumb hold the top of the band, his right finger and thumb grasp it; likewise, he grips the bottom of the band exactly as you have been. In Figure 2, the spectator's hands are shown poised, about to take the band from you.

Once the twisted band is in his own hands, the problem is posed: Without twisting the band between his fingers, as you did to install the twists, and without releasing his grip on the band with either hand, he is to remove the twists and make the band straight again. He can twist and turn his hands in any way he wishes; he can even stretch the band and step through it if he thinks that will help him; but he must not let go or shift grips.

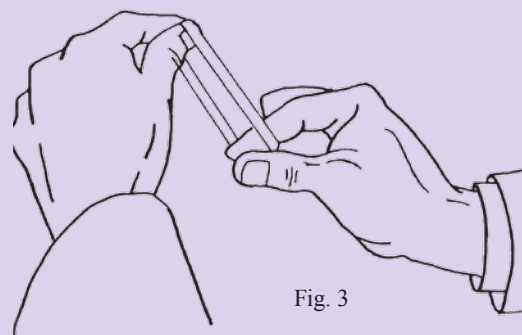


Fig. 3

You may let him struggle with the problem for as long as his patience persists or your conscience permits. Suffice it to say, the problem, as posed, is im-

possible. Yet, when you take the band back from him, holding it just as he has been, you cause the twists to melt away with one slow simple movement.

To do this, hold the twisted band as shown in Figure 2. Now rotate your hands, moving the right hand toward you and down, and the left hand away from you and up. Figure 3 shows the position of the hands at the end of their slow revolution. As the hands trade places, the twists disappear in an almost magical fashion.

By reversing your actions, the twists will reappear. The spectator may take back the band again and imitate your movements, but the twists remain. There are no hidden actions. The solution relies purely on topology.

Why does it work? Martin Gardner analyzed the topological principle in his *Mathematics, Magic and Mystery* (p. 94). Though your helper holds the band exactly as you do, because you are facing one another as the band is transferred to him, a subtle left-right change occurs in the direction of the twists in relation to your bodies. The band, your hands and your arms form a topological whole, and when the spectator duplicates your untwisting actions, he only twists the band more tightly.

In the end, expose the swindle and give the fellow the rubber band so that he can torment his friends. ★



THE HIGH ROAD

SCRIPT WRITING, CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT, AND ACT CONSTRUCTION FOR THE MODERN CONJUROR

BY MICK AYRES

THE FIVE OBLIGATIONS OF CONJURING

When travelers speak of “the high road,” they are referring to the more difficult path – the one that climbs and wraps across the tops of the mountains. It may be a struggle, but the traveler is always rewarded by sights and experiences that are completely missed by those who prefer the path of least resistance. By choosing the high road, the traveler becomes stronger and more confident each time he sets foot on a new path. Such an approach is also required of the professional conjurer.

To entertain well requires hours of study, disciplined practice, eloquent scripting, diligent rehearsal, and a passionate performance. Drop one and you’re done. Every musician, dancer, singer, or actor of merit in the theatrical arts has been required to make friends at one time or another with each of these salient points. To become a better, more professional entertainer, these points then are not just good ideas, they are necessary steps that must be taken over and over while learning new effects or creating an act. For our purposes as magicians or mentalists, let us refer to them as the Five Obligations of Conjuring.

In truth, these obligations can be cumbersome and frustrating friends who demand constant attention. But the good news is that they return the favor by guiding you confidently through the minefield of onstage hazards, such as forgotten lines, uncooperative volunteers, and misplaced props. Yes, the price of professionalism in conjuring is hard work and much of it. However, the reward is immediate and can be felt and witnessed by you and your guests every time you step on any stage.

Please follow this scenario: An effect is purchased. The instructions are read. A mirror is found, and practice begins until the props feel comfortable. All is ready. You fantasize about the enthusi-

astic response your amazed friends will deliver when they witness this miracle. You look for the first opportunity to perform. Finally, at a party or a meeting, the mystery is presented. When finished, you beam at the gathered friends, but your hopeful smile soon fades to disappointment. The crowd’s reaction is lackluster. The applause is polite at best. You wonder why you didn’t notice the crickets earlier.

Be honest; you are familiar with this little drama, aren’t you? All of us are. When the bug first bites, the thrill of our “inside” knowledge makes us eager to show it off. Somewhere in the back of our mind, we instinctively know of the Five Obligations of Conjuring, but our impatience convinces us to sidestep one and make excuses for the other – and so our audiences are forced to merely *tolerate* our performances while we rollercoaster along the learning curve.

Sadly, after one of these less-than-stellar experiences, the average magician thinks, “Hey, at least I tried; I’m sure things will get better as long as I keep at it.” Welcome to the definition of insanity. Every magic convention hosts legions of attendees and performers who have decided mediocrity is acceptable. The truth is, things do get better when you keep at it – but only if you understand the mistakes and take steps to correct them.

In the above scenario, our enthusiast barely studied, practiced a little, ignored the requirements of scripting and rehearsal, and jumped right to performance. In conjuring, *scripting* and *rehearsal* are the two obligations that separate the good from the bad and the ugly. There is an inherent thrill in the discovery of new knowledge that drives magicians to cheerfully study and practice. However, an uncomfortable majority of us draw a line in the sand there and refuse to step over it into the realm of scripting. Why? Perhaps the work involved is perceived as too daunting, or the mere issue of “not knowing where to begin” makes it easy to procrastinate until there’s no time left to do anything except to wing it on stage. When a magician takes the latter approach, the result is mindless babble. Here is why: Through study and practice

the performer has trained the brain to recall the physical motions and choreography required for the hands to accomplish the effect. Now the brain must also create words that are appropriate to the effect and do so on the spot. Spontaneous multitasking on this level is extremely difficult; to do it coherently is nearly impossible. So the brain takes the path of least resistance and simply describes the events taking place. “*The coin goes in this hand; it disappears; now it’s over here; next it travels under these cards in the classic T-formation; and, hey, it’s a jumbo coin; but now it’s gone; amazing, huh, now pick a card.*” This verbal gumbo is “procedure patter.” There is no plot; there is no conflict; there is no tension; there is no drama. None of these theatrical elements can exist unless the performer dialogues with the audience verbally or visually.

The obligation of *rehearsal* is often ignored by magicians who wrongly assume it and *practice* are the same. It is not so. Practice and rehearsal are vastly different, yet singularly important.

Consider the Five Obligations as a path laid with a series of stepping stones. The first step is *study*; the performer learns the method and history of the effect. Next is *practice*; the performer repeats the studied material until every motion is done with confidence. We now move to *scripting*; the performer finds a quiet spot with no distractions and considers the relevance of the effect, any emotional goal that may be achieved using the effect, and how that should (or should not) be dramatically communicated through words or music. The script, through much trial and error, is written and memorized. Now comes rehearsal; the performer takes all that has been practiced and blends it with the memorized script, choreographing it together into a finished drama. Again, trial and error come into play while the performer tweaks and re-tweaks the effect until it becomes, as Michael Skinner describes, “...a polished gem to be treasured and shared.” The conjurer and the carefully prepared effect are now ready, and a *performance* is arranged.

As described, the Five Obligations provide the means to create a single crafted effect. Arranging a collection of favorite effects into a complete act requires far more than just making a list and presenting them in random order (though many magicians do just that). Act construction is a topic to be covered in a later column.

For now, let us focus on an example of scripting by examining the classic effect *The Wizard*. A phone call is made to a stranger, who somehow reveals information known only to the guests in the room. The implementation of clever codes make this effect an unforgettable miracle, so much so that it was the first routine evaluated in Henning Nelms' book *Magic & Showmanship*. However, the effect has three inherent weaknesses. First, the credit for the demonstration goes to the stranger on the phone rather than the performer in the room. Second, of all the guests in the room, only the one on the phone gets the most out of the revelation. Third, relying on the memory and cooperation of friends can be nerve-racking. Will they remain available for the call? Will they remember the code? Truly, a more public revelation and a reliable wizard are needed. Fortunately, one has been found that will travel with you and perform at your beck and, well...call.

CRANK CALL

At a gathering of friends, the subject of the supernatural is breached (with all the television shows about paranormal investigation teams lately, this is a cakewalk). You say, *"I have a confession. Over the past week, I've been participating in something that might be considered supernatural. Would anyone like to see?"* Of course they would. A deck of cards is brought out and one is removed by a guest; the card is not shown to anyone else, nor is it returned to the deck.

You say, *"If I were to name the card you just chose, then you will immediately write this off as just a clever trick. After all, I watched you carefully – maybe enough to make a good guess."*

"However, I'd like to bring in a little 'outside' help and introduce you to a friend of mine. Her name is Miss Josephine. She's an old lady who lives nearby and, in her neighborhood, people believe she has, well...a 'gift.' She just knows things. They ask her for advice and knowledge and she tells them things that are amazingly

accurate.

"Her phone number is unlisted, but I managed to track it down a week ago. I've called her hundreds of times and have asked her a gazillion questions – she's really good at this stuff. I've called her so much we're like family now. You know what? I'll call her right now. I bet she'd love to get in on this tonight."

A cell phone is borrowed and a call is made.

*"Miss Josephine? Hi, it's me! Yes, ma'am...again. Wait – don't hang up, Miss Jo. Listen, a friend has removed a playing card from a deck and she's the only one who has seen it. But **you** can tell us what the card is, right? Come on, Miss Josephine, your dinner won't get too cold. This will only take a second. Here – I'll put you on the speaker phone."*

You press a button on the cell phone and the irritated and angry voice of an elderly woman is heard in mid-rant, "...believe you called me again! Your friend is thinking of a one-eyed Jack – it's a black one, I believe. Now don't you call no more! You hear me?!"

Everything goes quiet; it is obvious Miss Josephine has hung up. You turn off the phone and say, *"I told you she knows me. Anyway, she said it was a one-eyed Jack and it was black, right? I think that would be...the Spade? Is your card the Jack of Spades?"*

The guest turns over her card to show that Miss Josephine's gift is still spot on. Say, *"See? Isn't that amazing? Later on I'll call Miss Josephine back and tell her she got it right."*

The comic and startling drama you have created is over.

Bear in mind, this script was written specifically for the Disney character B'lou (pronounced 'blue') that I portray. The language reflects not only the character's attitude and mannerisms, but also the root culture of the area in which he performs. With adjustments, the script can easily be adapted to suit your purposes.

Miss Josephine's voice actually comes from a hidden device called 'Build-A-Sound' (available for eight dollars from your local shopping mall in a store called Build-A-Bear Workshop.) Normally, you record a personal message and stuff it inside a plush animal so your voice is heard with every squeeze from your child. The device is white, about one-inch thick, and is the diameter of a silver dollar. It can be palmed easily. Best of all, it can hold

a fourteen-second message that is surprisingly clear and audible. After all, it was designed to be heard from inside a plush toy.

Using the script provided, record yourself pretending to be a frustrated old lady. Here's a tip: don't hold your mouth too close to the microphone; you want the recording to be clear. The device is pocketed. It is important to silence your own phone before you present this drama.

During the performance, any cell phone will do, but if possible try to borrow one from the person in the room with the most authority. Briefly familiarize yourself with the phone and then place it in your pocket next to the device. The Jack of Spades is forced. Any force will do, but the criss-cross force or Balducci's cut-deeper force is preferred because of their "hands-off" construction.

Later, when you retrieve the cell phone, the device is finger palmed at the same time with the phone itself providing additional cover. For the sake of authenticity, dial your own cell phone number and then cancel the call. Pretend to talk to Miss Josephine. When you "put her on the speaker," you pretend to press another button. Simultaneously squeeze the device against the back of the phone to turn it on.

You now get humorously berated and the card is nearly revealed. The sound-illusion is perfect. Look confused, hold the phone up to your ear for a second, and then stare at the phone briefly. Look at your guests, shrug your shoulders, and say, *"I told you she knows me."* It's a funny moment. Put everything back in your pocket.

You now draw attention back to yourself by using Miss Josephine's clues to identify the card as, *"a Spade...the Jack of Spades, I believe."* Don't forget to return the borrowed phone.

There you have it – an anytime, anywhere, telephone miracle. As a bonus, the phone number of the important guest is now listed as a missed call on your own phone. Give it a week or two and then call him and have a nice chat about what happened. Don't forget to offer to entertain with similar mysteries at his next event. You never know.

Crank Call was originally published in *Bamboozlings* in 2006. For performance use only. ★

Copyright 2012 by Mick Ayres

The Nielsen Gallery

Marshall the Mystic and His Hats: Dimensions: Half-sheet – 21" x 29"
Lithographer: Atelier Conrad Ernst, Berlin • Date: Circa 1900 • Nielsen Rating: Uncommon

We begin the new year with a poster that shouldn't exist for three reasons. First, it almost didn't survive the creation process in the studios of the German lithographer Conrad Ernst in 1905. Second, this poster and eleven others sat in various attics and storage rooms in New Jersey for 107 years before being discovered again, just as they were on the verge of being thrown out. Finally, this poster barely escaped the devastation of Hurricane Sandy in November. It is, however, a surviving illustration of a performer at the turn of the last century who amazed and amused audiences worldwide as Marshall the Mystic.

For the majority of his life, Robert Marshall (originally spelled Marschall) operated his own health clinic and chiropractic office in Philadelphia in the early decades of the twentieth century. He developed a system for improving health called "phylaxiology," and treated patients with homeopathic approaches like diet and massage when that science was also new.

However, from the mid 1890s to about 1906, he performed sleight of hand, parlor, and stage magic on the top vaudeville stages. He also juggled hats, an act for which he became famous.

The only reason we know of his existence is because a lifetime accumulation of his publicity, correspondence, and promotional material was discovered in Wildwood Crest, New Jersey, earlier this year. The gentleman who had stored it in his garage attic needed to get it out. He contacted the talented illusionist Michael Grasso and turned the material over to him. He in turn, contacted me, and here's what I discovered.

Marshall was born in Langesalza, Germany, on May 18, 1876. He immigrated with his family to the United States in 1890. The first time he appears on the magic scene in any fashion is when he appears on the front cover of *Mahatma*, America's first magic magazine in 1899. He's described as an expert at palming balls, silks, cards, and coins.

In his early years Marshall devoted himself primarily to magic, including such effects as the Organ Pipes; from empty tubes he produced a complete banquet with food, plates, silverware, flowers, and much more. He produced flowers from an empty paper cone, magically grew a rosebush, produced cards, silks, and purses from a top hat, and swallowed his walking stick.

Marshall was proud of his coin work and palming ability; he wrote to T. Nelson Downs, the King of Coins, informing him that he was doing coins as well and asking whether he had heard of him. In a three-page return letter Downs attacked him and anyone else doing his act. Marshall stopped doing coins and focused on comedy hat juggling.

From 1899 through about 1906, Marshall appeared to positive reviews at amusement parks, trolley parks, and zoos in the United States and at major vaudeville theaters in this country, England, Germany, France, Denmark, and elsewhere in Europe.

The reason the poster almost didn't exist is that Marshall and the lithographer got into a disagreement over how the artists depicted him. Ernst wanted Marshall to purchase a large quantity



and sent him an example. Marshall thought the images didn't look like him and asked Ernst why he should be expected to buy more copies of a poster that didn't do him justice. Eventually, Ernst and Marshall called off the printing job and the lithographer sent Marshall the only twelve he printed. This is why this poster is so rare.

Marshall also had a great sense of humor with his comedy juggling. His stationery noted, "Entertained the crowned heads of Europe and the bald heads of America." This line was not just hyperbole; while in Europe he entertained the King of Greece and his court.

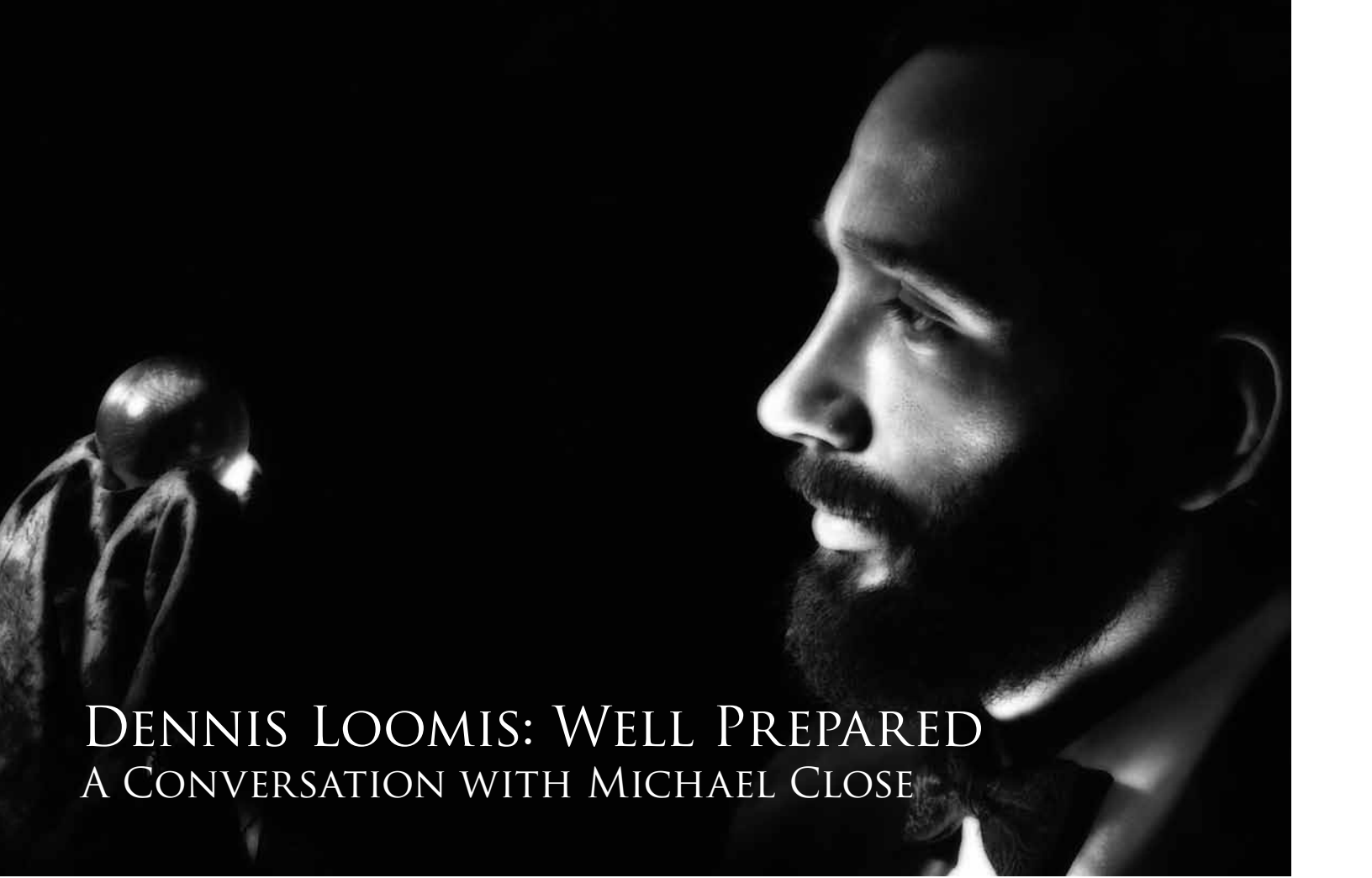
By 1909 he left show business and began dispensing medical advice and treatments according to his health plans. Marshall passed away on January 17, 1943, at sixty-seven years of age.

It is indeed lucky we have the archive of Marshall ephemera, with dozens of cabinet cards, tricks, postcards, letters, flyers, and promotional material. This is especially true since, had the archive not been rescued, it probably would have been lost during the recent hurricane that devastated most of the shore towns in coastal New Jersey. ★

—Tom Ewing

If anyone would like me to send them a video presentation of Marshall images, email me (cardstar@verizon.net).





DENNIS LOOMIS: WELL PREPARED

A CONVERSATION WITH MICHAEL CLOSE

“Chance favors the prepared mind.” – Louis Pasteur

In October of 2008, Lisa and I were busy brainstorming possible content for the January 2009 issue of *M-U-M*. I had a short list of magicians who I hoped would sign on as regular columnists, and Dennis Loomis was on that list. There were several reasons why I hoped that Dennis would write for the magazine: he was a full-time pro, and could thereby offer practical, real-world advice that had been gained through the performance of thousands of shows; he would focus on stand-up and stage magic, and there is a dearth of such information available; and he was a pal, and a reliable and easy guy to work with. I was delighted when Dennis agreed to sign on, and I was even more delighted when, in addition to his “A Magician Prepares” column, he offered to write up some of his reminiscences of Doug Henning, who had been his very close friend. (The Henning articles appeared as “The Skinny Kid with the Overbite,” the final installment of which is in this issue.)

Dennis has been an important part of the magazine during my time as editor, and I wanted to commemorate his contribution by putting him on the cover. Although many of his columns contained personal anecdotes, I wanted to fill in a few of the blanks and talk a bit more about his story. We chatted via Skype.

—Michael Close

Close: Let’s start at the beginning.

Loomis: I was born August 31, 1943, which makes me a Virgo; that’s okay, because Virgos don’t believe in astrology. I was born in Manistee, a small town in upstate Michigan. My father was

killed in World War II, between the time I was conceived and the time I was born. Unfortunately, my mother went to pieces, so I was raised by grandmother and her second husband, whose name was Claude Loomis.

I went through the Manistee public school system. In high school I was active in the band playing drums. I took photographs for the high school newspaper and yearbook, and was involved in a lot of other extracurricular activities. I took piano lessons from the age of five to sixteen. Alas, my piano instructor was not very good, which I didn’t realize until much later. She made me play nothing but classical, learning to read and perform exactly what was on the page – that wasn’t exactly what I wanted.

I graduated Summa Cum Laude from high school in 1961.

C: When did your interest in magic begin?

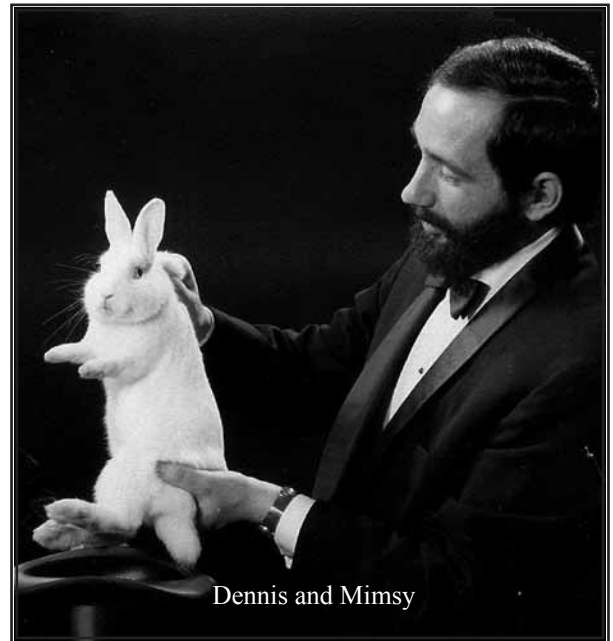
L: When I was seven years old I got a magic kit for Christmas. Unlike a lot of youngsters who get into magic, I stuck with it. I was fascinated by it from the beginning. I discovered early that I could find a lot books on magic in the local library. I had an uncle who knew nothing about magic, but he was good with his hands; he helped me build some simple props.

C: You were living in Michigan; did you make trips down to Colon to visit Abbott’s?

L: At first I ordered stuff from Douglas Magicland out of Dallas, Texas. I saw an ad for their catalog in the back of *Popular Science* magazine. Years later I found out that in that time period



Dennis's first rabbit production



Dennis and Mimsy



Performing the Zombie

Mark Wilson worked for them. It's possible that Mark might have packaged up some of the stuff I bought from them.

I was a freshman in high school before I found out that Abbott's existed, and of course, I talked my dad into driving me down on a few Saturdays. I started to go to the Get-togethers in Colon when I was a sophomore. I didn't miss one for twenty years or so.

C: Were you doing any shows in high school?

L: Yes. Another student and I did some magic and made some music. We did a school assembly for my high school in 1959. That was probably the first school assembly I ever did. I did pick up a few little gigs in Manistee doing birthday parties and shows for the Rotary Club and Cub Scouts.

I went to the University of Michigan, but I was only there one year. The first week I was in Ann Arbor I tried out for the marching band and nailed down the number thirteen position in the drum rank; I got to carry one of the two pairs of cymbals during the marching season. The Michigan marching band was a very physical organization. Often, visiting football teams would bring their marching band, and that band would go first in the half-time show. Our bass drummer would clock the cadence that they marched out to. However fast they came out onto the field, we would come out ten beats a minute faster than that. Of course, the other band knew that we were going to do that, so their goal was to set a cadence that would kill us.

I transferred to Alma College, which is in the middle of the state. It is a small Christian school affiliated with the Presbyterian Church. Alma College had a Scottish kilty band. Our fight song was "Scotland the Brave."

C: Considering the fall and winter weather in Michigan, you'd have to be brave to march around in a kilt.

L: My last two years at Alma I commuted back and forth to play in the Saginaw Symphony Orchestra. I was recruited by the conductor, Dr. Sam Jones, who gave me timpani lessons at Alma.

C: What was your major in college?

L: There were three or four semesters that I missed at Alma because I was needed to work at my family's highway construction business. I graduated in 1968 with a double major in English Literature and Psychology.

C: Were you doing shows in college?

L: I was. While I did some close-up around the campus, in the dorms, student union, that kind of stuff, I really liked doing

stand-up gigs. There were a couple of dances where they had floor shows as part of the evening and I did some magic for those. I remember I had the Alma College carpentry shop build a packing case and I did an escape from that. We put it on display at several dorms for people to examine. The night before the escape we took it back to my dorm and put in the trap.

I also did the Zombie. I was highly influenced by Neil Foster. I played with the Zombie for a while and then I gave it up. I realized that I would never do it as well as Neil, so I thought I should concentrate on things I did do well.



Dennis and Bonnie with the Zig Zag Girl

C: Was Neil Foster a mentor to you?

L: Neil was really more of an inspiration. I'd see him in Colon. The first few times I went to Colon, Percy Abbott was still alive. One of the first tricks I saw there was Percy doing Squash. He just blew me away. In later years I saw Neil do his version of Squash, which was considerably different. Percy would vanish the shot glass in his hands. Neil set the glass down on the counter; it would look like he took his two open palms and slapped them down on the glass in a one-two rhythm. The first hand was bridged, only the fingertips actually touched the counter as the ball was forced into the glass. Then the elastic was released. As the second hand came down, both hands went flat. It happened fast.

My mentor in the early days was Dick Oslund. In Manistee I was in Scouting and I did a little bit of magic at one of the pack meetings. At this point in time, Dick lived in the nearby town of Cadillac and worked for the Boy Scouts of America. He was in town for our pack meeting. My uncle had made for me a homebuilt version of a Super-X. I was going to close with that. Dick took me aside and gave me some very good advice about that illusion.

On another occasion, Dick said to me, "Never forget, Dennis: two-thirds of 'show bus-ness' is 'business.'" At the time, I was in high school. He had a good point. You don't really get good until you get out there and start doing some shows. It's a performing art; you can't learn it in front of a mirror at home. How are you going to do shows? No one is going to magically show up and book shows for you. You have to learn to do that yourself.

C: After graduation did you do something as a day job before you decided to be a professional magician?

L: When I graduated in 1968, the Vietnam War was still going on. At first, they granted student deferments to anyone who was in college, but that changed in 1965 or 66. You got a total of four years of deferment, and then, graduate or not, you went for your physical. If you passed the physical, you were drafted. I became a conscientious objector. The draft board had to approve that, and

it took a while, but they finally did. Now there were two choices: I could go out and find a job the draft board would approve that I could do for twenty-four months as an alternative to military service, or they could find a job for me. If you let the draft board do it, you ended up carrying bed pans in Wyoming.

I had some friends who had been COs, and I found out that quite a few of them were in Ann Arbor on the U of M campus. I looked around and found a job in the medical center at the Mental Health Research Institute. They hired a couple of people just as generally available extra hands for all of the researchers and the institute at large. I worked for them for two years after I graduated.



Doug Henning took this photo of Bonnie and Dennis in front of the De Lido hotel, Miami Beach 1967

C: Were you doing shows during that time?

L: My first wife Bonnie and I had married while at Alma in 1966. We were working together and booking shows around southeastern Michigan and occasionally further from home. Mostly what we did were club dates – banquet shows and the like, whatever we could scare up. The last couple of years at Alma and the first two years in Ann Arbor is when I got the bug to do bigger stuff and started redesigning illusions. I worked with Doug Henning redoing the Zig Zag Girl. That's when I built my version of the Assistant's Revenge. I bought the Aga Levitation that Phil Moore in Rutland, Vermont put out. It was called Lighter than Air. That was always the joke because the physical equipment was really heavy to cart around. I modified and changed those illusions and some others and came up with my own presentations. We worked quite a few magic conventions. We did a rather notorious act of big illusions called Dreams and Nightmares, which I wrote about in one of my columns.



Dennis, Bonnie, and Red

C: Did you book yourself as an illusion show, or were you doing the general practitioner approach?

L: That's an excellent choice of words, because it was Karrell Fox who recommended I should hang out a shingle as a general practitioner. If someone calls and asks can you do such and such, the answer is always yes. Afterwards you figure out how to do it. I did a lot of club dates, kid's birthday parties, church basement shows, mother-daughter banquets, Scouting shows, whatever we could come up with.

C: Why did you pick Ann Arbor as your home base?

L: Between my year of college there and my CO work, I fell in love with the town. Bonnie and I found a big, old, stone-and-brick three-story house close to the U of M campus. We lived on the first floor and we rented out the second and third floors to students. We were in Ann Arbor for eight years. At that time my marriage to Bonnie ended, and I moved west to join the *Magic Capades* show.

C: Let's talk about that show.

L: *Magic Capades* was Stan Kramien's touring full-evening show. Stan wanted to sell the road show, and I wanted to possibly take it over, so for a year I joined him as kind of an apprentice, tagging along with him and watching the operation. A couple of times a week I would do a spot in the show. Stan was a great guy to be around: gregarious, a bit of a hustler, a bit of a con man. He was also very generous with me. But he wanted to sell the show, and was asking \$200,000 for it. He would book it for the first six months for whoever took over the show.

C: After a year with Stan, what did you do?

L: I bought the show. For three years I ran it, mostly with all new people, but some of Stan's old promoters stayed with me. This was a telephone solicitation operation. Much of what I was learning from Stan was not about how to do illusions or how to talk to an audience; I was learning how to book a sponsor, how to get phone promoters to go to work for you, and how to supervise that – the whole telephone solicitation business.

C: That's a post-graduate course in that particular business side of magic.

L: The phone solicitation business is a tough one. The promoters would go into a town and set up phone rooms. You had a three-way split: the sponsoring organization got a percentage; the show got a percentage; and the guy who ran the phone room got

a percentage. In the bigger towns the promoters hired telephone employees. They'd run the whole promotion in one week and then be off to somewhere else. I did the show from 1977-79.

C: What was your reason for stopping your association with that show?

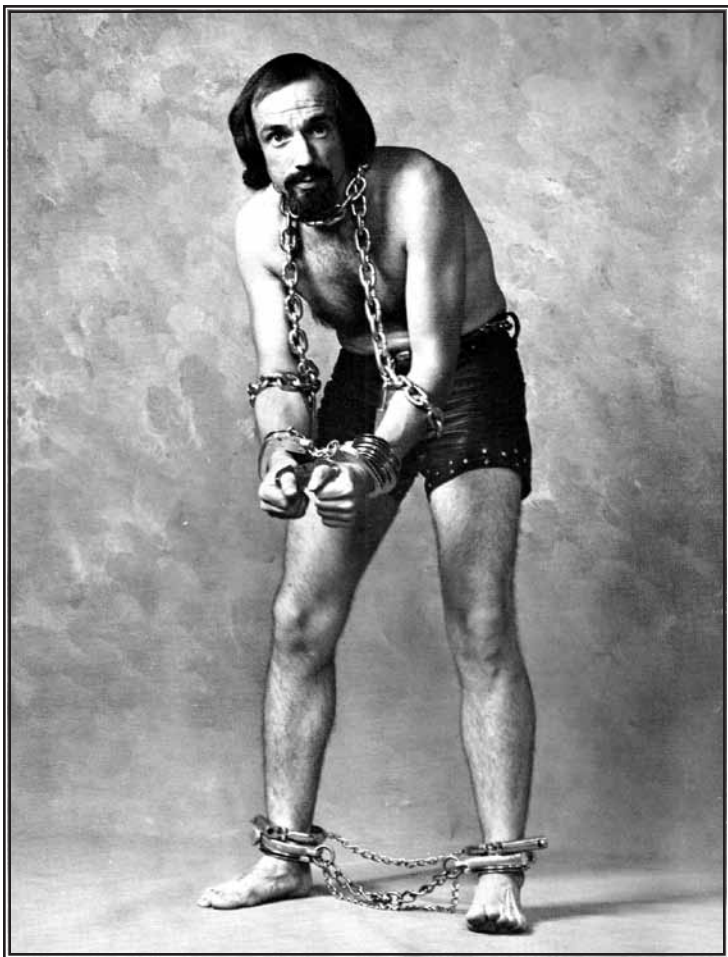
L: After three years of doing it, I hated telephone solicitation. Also, I had fallen in love with one of the showgirls who was traveling in my show. We decided to become a couple; a few years later we tied the knot and she became my second wife. I went to Stan and said, "I can't do this anymore. My soon-to-be-wife and I want to be married and we want to do something we can enjoy more." Stan understood. He kept the money that I had paid him up to that point and he accepted back the physical stuff that belonged to him. But by that time a lot of the illusions I was doing in the show were mine.

Annette and I moved to Las Vegas for several months, just kind of recuperating, having fun, and deciding what we were going to do. At the end of that time, we decided to try to work for National School Assemblies. When I mentioned this to Dick Oslund, he gave me some very good advice. He said, "National has two big auditions, one in L.A., where their home office is, and one out in Chicago. It's a cattle call. Your audience is going to be their employees: the booking staff, secretaries, and so forth. You're going to try to show them a school show, but you'll have no kids in the audience. Contact Jack West; show him some of the promo from the *Magic Capades*; he'll be interested in seeing your show. But tell him that the dates just don't work out. You can't come to the two auditions. Offer to do a school assembly show at a school in southern California, near their office. Have one of the secretaries call a few schools and offer them a free magic show. It won't be hard to set something up."



the magical
artistry of **Dennis Loomis
and Annette**

Dennis, Annette, and Rabbit E. Lee the First



Loomis copying the famous Houdini pose

That's exactly what we did. We did a forty-five minute assembly program in front of kids. Jack West, who owned and ran National School Assemblies, was there. He came up after the show and hired us. There was no question about it; he wanted us to work for him. We thought it would be good experience and a nice thing. National takes care of all the bookings, all you have to do is follow a route sheet and show up. They give you fifteen dates a week – three shows a day, Monday through Friday, regular as clockwork. Almost all are in different locations. In a bigger area there might be a show where you were asked to do two performances. But it was almost always singles, so it was get up in the morning, drive to the first school, set up, do the show, tear down, and drive to the next school, either in that city or the next city. Then you do a late morning show. Drive to another city, sometimes twenty or thirty miles away, and do an afternoon show. Get up the next morning and do it over again.

But there's a lag time before you start to work for National. The bookers go out to the schools in September obtaining bookings for the following year. We auditioned in June of 1982, which meant that we wouldn't start the National tour until September of 1983. I expected that, so we signed a contract.

I gave a stack of promotional material to Jack, and one of them described my straitjacket escape. About a week later I got a call from Jack. They had an escape artist who worked for them who was supposed to go out on the September 1982 tour, but he had to cancel out. Jack had all these schools expecting an escape artist. So he asked me, "Can you do more escapes than just the strait-jacket?" I thought fast and I said, "Of course I can, Jack. But I

don't know that I can do a forty-five minute program of escapes." He asked if I could do about half escapes and half magic, and I said yes.

I quickly put some more escapes together, and Annette and I worked the whole year with a show that was about half escapes. That's how I got to doing escapes on a regular basis.

We ended up working for National for five years.

C: Did you use Vegas as your home base?

L: Actually, after we went out on the road for National, we didn't go back to Vegas. About the second year with National, we were thinking about building or finding a home for us, and trying to figure out where we wanted to settle. I liked northern California. We bought an old farm-style house on an acre of ground near the city of Camino, California, which is on Highway 50 in the foothills. If you leave Sacramento and drive toward the south shore of Lake Tahoe, you drive right through it.

C: These were long tours for National, weren't they?

L: It was a school year. We'd start out about the middle of September and we'd be on the road continuously until the middle of May. Usually, it was a linear route. We were not more than two or three hours in one particular little town and then we were off down the road.

C: Why did you leave National?

L: We liked National. They didn't pay a huge amount, but they paid exactly what they owed you; there was never any problem getting your money. And you were always busy. So there was a lot to be said for it.

But after five years we thought we could do better. We thought that if we booked ourselves, even if we did fewer shows, we could make more money because we didn't have to give National a cut. We lived in the house in Camino, and started doing mostly school assembly shows. That's because that was what our experience was. We knew we could go in and make them really happy about the show. And we found out that they were not too hard to book.

We had five years of experience and we had a lot of good quotes from schools. National gives every school you work in a report card to fill out. First of all, they give you a letter grade, and then there's a place for the principal to write in comments. National makes all of those available to the performers. So we had all of those cards. By the way, after our first year, for the next four years, we were always the highest rated show that National had out on tour. We were conscientious. We worked hard and showed up on time.

We started filling in with club dates and a variety of other things. Every year we seemed to fall into getting a flurry of inquiries during the Christmas season from up in Tahoe. So we would go up there and do Christmas shows in the evening while we were doing school shows during the day.

We also had one other, non-magic sideline. After the *Magic Capades* show went off the road, I had all this concession equipment I had purchased. During the summertime, we would book a lot of fairs and festivals and we'd set up our various concession machines. There was one day when we brought in \$8,000 in just concessions. It was in Placerville, California. Placerville had not had a Fourth of July fireworks show. A local Jaycee club wanted to put together a day's worth of events. They had sponsored the *Magic Capades* show and they remembered that I had a cotton candy machine. They contacted me.

The first year we did it, it wasn't that big a success because we didn't really have enough stock with us. Even so, I stood working

the cotton candy machine all day long. But the next year we were prepared and had an \$8,000 day. We did almost that well for a couple of years after that; but then the Jaycees stopped sponsoring the event and we lost our monopoly on the concessions.

C: How long did you stay in Camino?

L: Annette and I divorced in 1992. She went back to the Midwest. I stayed in the house in Camino for another year and then I relocated to a little community partway down the hill, the town of El Dorado. I had continued to do the school shows and to book them. I had always been the magician, and Annette was a good assistant, but she didn't have any magical skills. The big difference was a practical one: I had to do all the driving as a single and at the end of the show, when it was time to leave, everything wasn't packed up backstage. When I had an assistant, we usually closed with an illusion, but prior to the illusion I would do some five-to-eight-minute patter thing, and Annette would be back there packing up everything we didn't need. When the two of us finished a show, we were basically following the last of the kids out of the multi-purpose room. As a single, that doesn't happen. Nothing that you've done during the show gets packed up. You can plan things out so you can do more practical stuff that doesn't need a lot of repacking or resetting, but still, it took longer for me to get in and out.

I lived in El Dorado until 1995, and then I moved to the little community of Bay Point, where I'm still living today.

C: Did you keep a "core" set of tricks for your National shows? Since you were moving around the country, by the time you returned to someplace you had played before, the

kids who had seen you had moved on to upper grades. How did you handle your repertoire?

L: As you indicated, it really wasn't necessary to change up the repertoire. On the other hand, you get tired of doing the same old stuff over and over. So we did change up. And I had slightly different programs for the older kids. National mostly booked elementary schools, but they also booked middle schools and high schools. So we did need to change up the program to suit the age of the audience.

C: You wrote forty-nine columns for *M-U-M*; how was that experience?

L: I found out that I enjoyed it very much. In the beginning when you talked me into it (although there wasn't any pressure), I told you that I had a tendency to procrastinate; I might not have a column every month. But I took to it. It was fun. While I didn't get a ton of feedback, I did get some. It was almost always positive. People would email me and say thanks so much for sharing this or that. And that was satisfying.

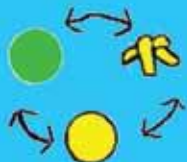
I had the thought of writing a book and putting all this material together, but it was definitely a back-burner project. But you put me in a position where I had a reason to sit down and write. So now, the book is there. I will be pursuing the idea of putting the material from the columns into a book.

C: That book will be a valuable resource. It has been great working with you, Dennis. On behalf of all the compeers of the S.A.M., I'd just like to say thanks.

L: You're more than welcome. Thanks for asking me. ★

KNOT-A-BALL™

When is a knot not a knot? When it's a ball. It's a knotty problem with 6 major applause points...NO SKILL REQUIRED



EFFECT: Magically throw a knot onto a bright green rope. Pluck the knot from the rope. Instantly it changes to a green ball. Press the ball onto a yellow rope. It changes back to a knot – a green knot on a yellow rope. Blow on it and it changes to yellow. Pluck it off. It becomes a ball again. Place the yellow ball on a red rope & it becomes a knot again. Untie this yellow knot to show it. You now have a red rope with a short section of yellow in the middle. \$!8.00 + P&H

If you like Knot-A-Ball, you'll love our Rope Kit. Make up many old favorites or unique new tricks. Tri-color Linking Rope, 4 Ended Rope, Stretch-A-Rainbow, Cub Color Ropes and many new ones to fit every occasion. Rope is the pocket trick that plays big. Kit includes 3-12 ft lengths in choice of 4 colors (red, blue, green, yellow, white), magnets, gimmicks, and 2 instruction books. \$45 + P&H

ROPE RABBIT & SUPER BUNNY

Meet my pet rope. He does imitations – a white line going down the highway, dental floss for the Jolly Green Giant and more! Put him in a paper bag (his dressing room). He comes out, a skeleton-like rabbit made out of rope. "I told him not to go skinny dipping in the piranha tank."

To put some muscles on him, he goes back into the bag. Out he comes as you help him rip and tear his way out of the bag. It's Super Bunny! He now has a blue rope body and a red cape. The bag is empty. \$27.00 + P&H



CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR OVER 500 ITEMS
32 categories include 75 Klamm originals plus Stage Illusions

KLAMM
MAGIC L.L.C.

1412 S Appleton Avenue
Independence MO 64052-3747

E mail: klamm@klamm-magic.com www.klamm-magic.com

Visa, Mastercard, Discover, PayPal

USA P&H \$10.95

Info: 816-461-4595
FAX: 816-254-1155



THE RULES OF MAGIC

I would like to begin this month's column talking about "art."

Art, in general, is a very complex subject on which a great many books have been written. Frankly, if I wanted to delve very deeply, I could go into an enormously long dissertation about what art is. However, for the sake of brevity, I will just skim the surface and start with *Encyclopaedia Britannica's* definition: art is "the use of skill and imagination in the creation of aesthetic objects, environments, or experiences that can be shared with others."

To me, this definition (as applied to magic) means the use of secretive conjuring techniques by the magician in order to create the illusion that real magic has occurred.

Some would argue that just because a magician can do a trick, does not make him an artist. That subject is not the purview of this month's column. I'm just talking about the basics here. So, for the sake of argument, art is a painter putting paint to canvas, a pianist hitting a piano key, a photographer taking a picture, and a magician doing a sleight in order to complete a magic trick.

THE RULES OF ART

The quality of art can vary widely; for the most part, the beauty of art is truly in the eye of the beholder. But it seems to me that when it comes to works of art that are widely acclaimed, those works often follow or conform to an aesthetic, or a set of rules or guidelines. Take for instance the famous painting "The Death of Socrates" by Jacques-Louis David (1748-1825), which currently is on display at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. I have personally viewed this painting up close many times and I find it to be a great technical example of the painter's skill. I love the way the artist shades the figures in the scene with a light that emanates from

an unseen window past the top left corner of the frame. Another thing that impresses me is the extent to which this painting conforms to the so-called "rule of thirds." The "rule of thirds" is a guideline that was used by classically trained artists to make images more appealing to the viewer.

It works like this: Imagine that you divide a picture into thirds with two imaginary vertical lines and into thirds with two imaginary horizontal lines. To make a picture appealing, it is suggested that the artist place important subjects in the frame along the imaginary lines and at the points where the imaginary lines intersect. It is for this reason why many painters and photographers avoid putting the main subject dead center in the picture. Following the "rule of thirds," the torso of the main character (Socrates) in "The Death of Socrates" follows the imaginary vertical line on the right and his head and upraised hand is near the point where two of these imaginary lines intersect. What I am saying is that by any measure, Jacques-Louis David was a master at his craft. A painting like "The Death of Socrates" does not come into being by accident; it's too good. It's the product of a trained artist who understood all the fundamental techniques of his time and a man who knew the rules of classical pictorial composition.

When I say "rules," I mean that over a long period of time many artists made images in various ways; when somebody noticed that a certain technique seemed to be effective, they created a guideline or a rule.

Some art forms have very few rules and others, such as music, have a lot of rules. If a music composer fails to follow some of these rules, his music can sound incorrect to the trained ear. For instance, about a year ago, I wrote a new piece of music for my show that I had recorded using an electronic keyboard and drums. While recording and rerecording the various music tracks and testing the different versions of the song, I had mistakenly transposed the bass line to an incorrect key! Sadly, due to my lack of musical acumen, I failed to detect my error when I mixed the track. However, I am aware of my musical shortcomings, so I sent a copy of the song to Michael Close, the editor of the *M-U-M*, so that he could check my work. The reason I did this

is because in addition to being a superb magician, Mike is also a brilliant musician. Upon hearing my song, Mike immediately detected the dissonance of the bass line and told me of it, after which I corrected it.

The point of this is that music has rules and if those rules are ignored, a song can sound wrong or off-key. Similarly, if rules of pictorial composition or perspective are ignored, a painting can seem odd, off-balance, or unpleasing.

You might be asking yourself, how does this apply to the Art of Magic? Or you might wonder, if there *was* a set of magic rules, would following those rules make a trick more deceptive?

I believe that magic also has a set of rules. I initially became aware of this long ago, when I was studying video of the great Cardini. The very first time I saw his act, the vast majority of his tricks and sleights fooled me. Over time, by watching his act over and over, I broke it down to the point where I understood how it all worked. It occurred to me that when Cardini fooled me, it was usually when he seemed to be following a certain technical strategy. Later, when I studied other great magicians such as Roy Benson or Charlie Miller, it seemed that they employed similar strategies. I reasoned that if I could codify these tactics into a list of "rules," it could help a magician fool the public, provided, of course, that he *followed* the rules.

I first wrote of these rules in the book *Roy Benson by Starlight* (2005) and called them "Levent's Fundamental Rules of Stage Magic." But since then, I've amended some of the rules and even added more rules as they occurred to me. I have also had these rules translated into several languages for use when I lecture in foreign countries.

I'll conclude this month's column with the most current list of rules; throughout the year, I will fully explain each rule in numerical order, and I will explain how each rule applies to magic in a practical way. Also, if you ever lose this list you can always access the latest version for free on my website (www.LeventMagic.com). Simply go to the home page and click on the American flag button on the bottom of the page. ★

LEVENT'S FUNDAMENTAL RULES OF STAGE MAGIC

- 1. When making a steal, the visible movement should have a natural motivation.*
- 2. The big movement masks the smaller, secret movement.*
- 3. When palming an object onstage, you have only a few seconds before you must either produce the object or add a visible object into the fingers of that hand.*
- 4. The easiest way to secretly dispose of a palmed object is to discard it under the guise of picking up a visible object at the fingertips.*
- 5. The simplest way to steal and palm an object is under the guise of picking up a visible object at the fingertips.*
- 6. Secretly maneuvering a palmed object from one hand to another is better if the procedure employs a visible object.*
- 7. Deception can be enhanced by lengthening the time between the secret move and the magical effect.*
- 8. When stealing an object from inside a coat under cover of misdirection, it is more deceptive to have the object travel to the palming hand than the other way around.*
- 9. When performing a routine with a repetitious effect, it is more deceptive if you vary your methods.*
- 10. You should only break these rules if you fully understand the rules and can offer an intelligent reason for breaking them.*



BUILDING A SHOW

BY LARRY HASS

In my concluding “Theory and Art of Magic” column in these pages (April 2012), I promised to be back soon with a new column “on a topic of supreme importance for performers.” With my sincere thanks to Editor Michael Close, I am here to fulfill that pledge: welcome to my new monthly explorations, “Building a Show.”

From the very beginning of my interest in magic (twenty years ago), I have been fascinated with how excellent magicians construct effective shows. Which piece goes where in their show order? How do they open? How do they close? What principles, values, or goals guide their decisions? I have spent many enjoyable hours studying the exceedingly few books that list the show orders of famous magicians and reading biographies of magic legends to glean their running orders and the ideas behind their choices.

However, since 2005, when I started performing many more shows – often for higher fees and in prestigious venues – these questions have become far more pressing. In fact, they are the kinds of questions that keep me up at night. How can I build the best possible shows for my audiences? Do I have the right repertoire to fulfill the demands of an upcoming show? Do I have enough “texture” (Eugene Burger)? How are my segues? Which pieces are “major” and which ones “minor” (Bob Cassidy), and how am I fitting them together? Are my routines for different slots in the show too long? How am I going to open so that people don’t start texting?

In the months ahead, this column will seek to provide some clear ideas and possible answers to these important questions by studying shows I have witnessed by today’s finest magicians. In this respect, my column will be akin to Max Holden’s classic book *Programmes of Famous Magicians* (1937) and Ian Keable’s contemporary study, *Magic Shows* (2010). That is, it will provide a written record of particular shows delivered by

some of today’s brightest stars, many of whose running orders have not yet been committed to print. I believe (and hope) that readers will find this aspect of the column to be intrinsically interesting.

At the same time, I also intend to study these shows with an eye toward what we can learn about show building from each of these great performers. In addition, I hope to briefly interview a few of them about their choices and insights. In this respect, my other goal for this column is explicitly educational: it aims to help us all learn how to build better shows.

This educational slant feels so urgent to me because, frankly, the topic of show building is badly neglected in the sub-culture of magic. Is it talked about in the magic magazines? No. Is there any great book on this essential topic? No. Is there a DVD on it? No. Is there a classic essay or resource to get us started? Not that I have seen. And yet, there may be no more pressing set of questions and insights for determining our success in magic than those that will help us build better shows. I say this because here is the deep secret I have discovered:

The fundamental unit of magic is the show, not the trick.

I invite you to say it again and spend some time with this big idea: “The fundamental unit of magic is the show and not the trick.” It may be a one-trick show, a two-trick show, or a twelve-trick show, but the essential measure of our success as magicians, the thing that gets us hired and hired back, the thing that sells tickets, is whether we are able to create effective shows for real people. Period.

I understand that this idea cuts against the grain of so much going on in the magic sub-culture. Magic magazines sell tricks and explain tricks. Our books are full of tricks. We go to conventions and lectures to learn hot, new tricks. Everywhere enthusiasts are talking about, obsessing about, reading about, buying up, and working on tricks. Yet when you think about it, the isolated “trick” is an abstract idea. It is an idea in the head that has been ripped out of the living context in which it has value and any hope of success: the living, breathing context of a show for real people.

What I am suggesting here about the fundamentality of the magic show can perhaps best be understood by an analogy to music. We can focus on the individual “notes” or “chords,” on how they are best played, on who created which ones, but the fact is that music lives, breathes, and sells in songs.

I believe everything changes when we make this paradigm shift, from the magic trick to the magic show. Because now we are in a position to move from abstract questions about whether something is “a good trick” with “a clever method” to subtler, more interesting ones about where in a set, or in what venue, a particular routine might best play. We are also in a position to better understand the ways professional and master magicians think about their work.

Indeed, as a magic performer, producer, and teacher, I have spent many years talking about magic with top professionals and I can tell you, “they ain’t talking about the tricks.” Tricks are tricks – they are everywhere, a dime a dozen, and most of them worth less. No, in my experience what the pros are talking about backstage, after the show, when they get together over a drink, is whether or not something worked in that slot, or whether some particular bit went over, or how certain pieces work together to create a build, or if the closing piece was effective for this particular audience, and so on.

As I said at the outset, these are the kinds of questions that keep me up at night. And they are the kinds of considerations we will be learning about every month by studying the shows of some contemporary masters of magic.

I hope you enjoy the ride in the months ahead. Don’t hesitate to email me with your thoughts and questions: Larry@LawrenceHass.com.

Next month we will plunge in by studying a recent show at the MGM by David Copperfield. ★

Lawrence Hass, Ph.D. is the Associate Dean of the McBride Magic & Mystery School and Publisher of Theory and Art of Magic Press. He is also Professor of Humanities at Austin College in north Texas.

**COMPETE IN THE S.A.M.
CONTESTS OF MAGIC
AT THE NATIONAL CONVENTION**

JULY 3-6, 2013

There are two contests: The Dr. Paul Critelli Close-Up Magic Contest and The Father Cyprian Murray Stage Magic Contest. You may apply for either or both.

If you would like to be considered for this event, your first step is to obtain an application packet. To do this, email me at: MagicPaul@aol.com with "S.A.M. – Contest" in the subject line. Please make sure to include your email and your full name, regular postal address, and your phone number. If you do not have access to email, send your request to:

Paul Critelli
858 Iroquois SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506

All application packets will be made available electronically or sent out on or after January 7, 2013.

**PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING
DEADLINES:**

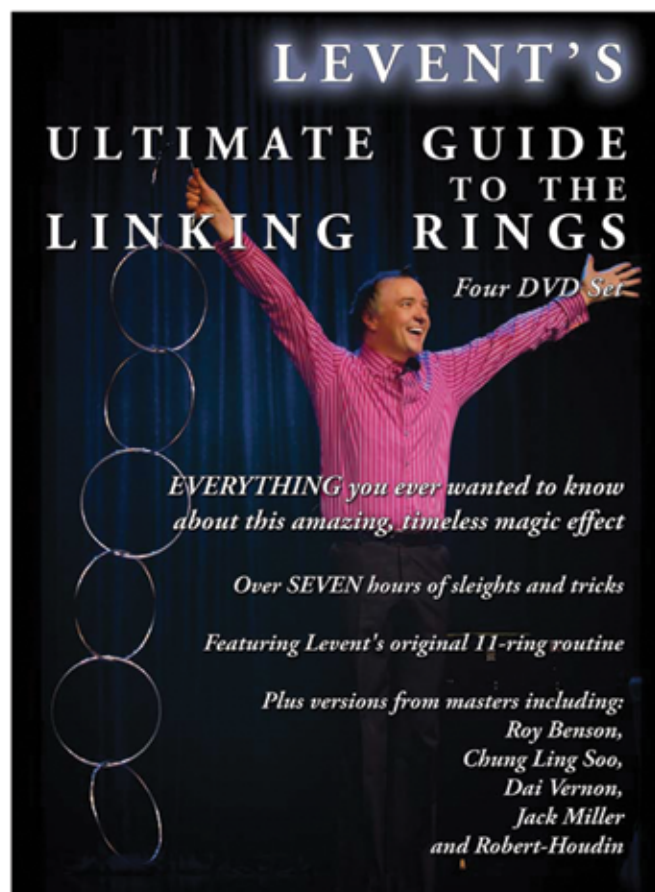
*** All requests for an application packet must be in my possession by or sent on or before May 20, 2013.**

*** All applications and DVDs must be online as instructed in the application packet by June 3, 2013.**

*** Do not put any act online or send it to me in any form before you read and complete and submit the application form.**

Good Luck!

Paul Critelli
Chairperson – Contest of Magic
Society of American Magicians



**Levent's Ultimate Guide
to the Linking Rings**

**4-DVD Set
7 ½ Hours Long
In Stock and Shipping Now**

Only \$79.95 plus S&H

**Available From:
www.LeventMagic.com**



MENTAL BREAKDOWN

BY CHRISTIAN PAINTER

GROUP GLUTTONY

"Have you ever sat in an automobile with your friends trying to decide what to have for lunch and then suddenly you all shout out the same restaurant name at once? That's called 'Gastronomical Group Gluttony.' It's a form of telepathy brought on by a craving for unhealthy food. Would you like to see a demonstration? I thought you would."

The performer tosses a fast-food restaurant bag on the table. *"This is one of my favorite vices. I love their French fries; but they're not my only vice."* The performer pulls out of the bag a stack of index cards; each bears the name of a different restaurant. He hands the cards out to the audience to be examined and mixed.

"I also have this," says the performer while placing a small trash can on the table. *"This is probably where most of that food should go. There is one notorious restaurant in that pile of cards; it's called Bob's Burger Barn. I will say this...no wait; I shouldn't say anything that could possibly influence the outcome of this demonstration."*

The performer gathers up all the cards and places them on the table into three separate piles. Selecting a person in the front row, the performer says, *"Let's imagine that you are one of the people sitting in the car. You will help us eliminate a pile of choices."* The helper points to a pile and the performer tosses that pile into the small trash can.

Pointing at someone else in the audience, he asks her which pile she wants to toss in the garbage. Another pile is disposed. The performer walks over to the fast-food bag and tosses the last remaining pile of index cards inside.

The performer chooses one more person to help him. *"In order to get down to one restaurant of deliciousness, I will pull one card out of the bag at a time. Then I will walk over to the trash can and toss*

that card away. Stop me at any time – from the moment I take the card out of the bag to just before I toss it in the can."

As the performer pulls the cards one at a time, walking them over and tossing them into the trash can, he converses with the audience. *"People love French fries. Fights get started over which restaurant has the best fries. So now I never talk politics, religion, or French fries in public places. Oh, I love to eat. When I was in school, the teacher asked me what my favorite animal was. I said fried chicken. I like vegetables, but I love meat. I didn't climb to the top of the food chain to dine on plants."*

Suddenly the audience member shouts, "Stop." The mind master pauses and looks at the index card. He issues a sigh of relief. *"This is excellent. It's my favorite restaurant, Donna's Dream Diner."* He hands the index card to his helper. *"Of course, there could be some doubt as to my honesty. Remember when we began this I talked about group gluttony? We just had that moment. Look."* The performer asks her to remove an envelope from under her chair.

The mind master holds the envelope up for everyone to see. He slowly and fairly opens the envelope and pulls out a large sheet of paper. Printed on it is the following: Donna's Dream Diner.

After the applause has died down the performer pauses, *"You probably wondered why I was a little nervous. There is a restaurant that disagrees with my taste buds. The food is just atrocious. I talked about it for a moment before we started, Bob's Burger Barn. It was the index card just before the one you stopped me on."*

The performer cleanly reaches into the small trash can and pulls out the previous index card. He shows it to the audience helper. It reads, Bob's Burger Barn. The performer takes the large envelope that was under her chair, reaches deeper inside it, and pulls out a smaller sign. On it is written the words, "I'm very happy you didn't select Bob's Burger Barn."

Here's how to get the inner workings of this trick. Send me three M-U-M covers of concurrent months that have the same color on the sixteenth page. Include a blue Tally-Ho deck in reverse Si Stebbins order that has had one in-faro shuffle performed on it. On the twenty-third card of that

deck...

Oh, never mind, here's the secret:

Write the names of local or chain restaurants on thirty index cards. These are ungimmicked and are the cards you will be handing out to the audience to be mixed. Secure two fast-food restaurant bags just big enough for your index cards to sit flat on the bottom of the bag. You will cut out the bottom of one of the bags to create a fake bottom in the other bag. Under the fake bottom you will have a small secret stash of index cards.

The secret stash of index cards will consist of ten cards that alternate between two restaurant names. The names are your choice. It will look like this: Burger Barn, Dream Diner, Burger Barn, Dream Diner, etc. The audience never knows about this secret stash.

Under a chair in the audience you will have a large envelope. It will have two messages. One message will be written on a large card. It will say: Dream Diner. Written on a smaller card deeper in the envelope will be the message, "I'm very happy you didn't select Burger Barn."

After you have all the materials, simply follow the trick as I laid it out in the description. The only tricky move necessary is when you reach your hand in the bag for the first time. You will place your thumb on the top of the stack you just tossed in and dig your fingers under the false bottom of the bag. You will continue to dig your fingers under the secret stack of cards and then flip everything over. This will put the secret stack on top and the ungimmicked stack at the bottom of the bag.

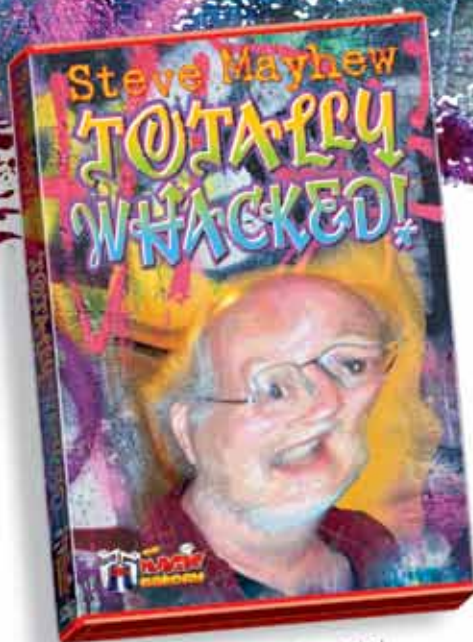
Now you can start pulling out one card at a time and dropping it into the trash can until the audience member says stop.

Oh wait, what if they stop you on Burger Barn instead of Dream Diner? You have an additional envelope taped to the bottom of the trash can. It is just like the one under her seat except it says the exact opposite of the one taped under the chair.

This is simple and direct. There is plenty of room for presentations about cravings, fast food, unhealthy lifestyle, synchronicity, and gluttony.

Please feel free to send me a little feedback or ideas about this (Christian@Married2Magic.com).★

He's Erdnase with an arrow-through- the-head.



NTSC / Multi-Region coded

\$35⁰⁰

Postpaid Worldwide.

US Funds ONLY.

CA residents add 7.25% sales tax.

Send Cashiers Check or Money Order to:

The Magic Bakery

P.O. Box 3255, Chico, CA. 95927 USA

Credit Cards Accepted thru **PayPal** at:

www.themagicbakery.com



Steve Mayhew, the guy with serious card chops and mad comedy skillz.

You'll enjoy every minute of Steve's entire show, with real laughs and real astonishment from a real audience. But it's not just laughs...

Freedom (aka **The Mayhew Poker Deal**), is the ultimate demonstration of false dealing, in which you appear to deal 3rd, 7th, 35th, 42nd or whatever.

For the working pros there's **Full Frontal Conus**, in which Steve steals the aces out from under the spectator's hand—again, and again!

The **Conus Aces**—a routine revered by generations of performers. Steve handles this with charm, even after the audience has been repeatedly punk'd.

And if that's not enough, Steve tips four more commercial routines from his working repertoire:

Three by Three (aka **A Balloon, a Cartwheel, and a Pony Ride**); the **James Brown Aces**, **Delores in the Meadow**, and the **Sanborn Switch**. We've also included a bonus interview with Steve, along with outrageous outtakes.

Dealers please contact: Murphy's Magic Supplies

| Toll Free: 1-800-853-7403

| www.murphymagic.com



ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS STAGE MAGIC AND THEORY FROM DENNY HANEY

BY SCOTT ALEXANDER

"If I see further, it is only because I stand on the shoulders of giants." – Sir Isaac Newton

Most magicians today simply think of Denny Haney as a magic dealer, completely unaware of his successful career as a professional performer, a career which he began in the late 1960s. He is a truly engaging performer on stage, not simply because of his elfish personality and casual delivery, but because his routines and choices of material are just so damn audience appealing (not to mention completely baffling).

I have had the honor of knowing and working with Denny Haney for nearly twenty years, and I have absorbed a great deal of knowledge and insight concerning Denny's unique approach to building routines and performing magic. In an effort to not let this material slip thru the cracks of magical history, Michael Close has asked me to chronicle some of Denny's wisdom and touches on routines.

Denny is the first to admit that he doesn't really invent magic. But like a true artist, he stands on the shoulders of giants. He builds his repertoire from studying history. His source material is drawn from several places. It is a combination of the knowledge that he garners from mining his vast personal magic library, allowing him to develop a firm foundation and understanding of the classics. He also keenly absorbed tidbits, observations, and lessons from pros who came before him. He then added in his own personal touches, and synthesized this into presentations tailor-made for him.

In turn, I have learned this material and methodology from Denny. He has generously shared and passed it on to me, and I will try to distill and crystallize it in these articles, so that you too can perch on the shoulders of Denny and those who came before him, taking these ideas and thoughts even further towards perfection.

PRODUCTIONS VERSUS VANISHES

Have you ever stopped to think about the idea of productions versus vanishes? It seems pretty cut and dry. Something either appears or disappears. But if you really take the time to analyze what's going on, not only in your mind, but what is going on in the minds of the audience, it can help you tremendously in structuring your magic routines.

Once, Denny had a customer who wanted to make a few things vanish. He wanted some suggestions from Denny. He was thinking of using a Square Circle Production box, but in reverse. Denny recommended using a Flip-over Box for the vanish instead of the Square Circle. This would make for a much better effect. Denny put it to me in these terms:

"If you were to pick something up to show it empty, the audience does not know what to expect. They are not looking for anything, because they don't really know what is going to happen next. Now, all of a sudden, you start producing things from this item that you just showed empty. They are blown away and wonder where it all came from – especially since they just saw it empty. The important thing to note here is that the mind really can't backtrack and remember exactly *how* the tube or box was shown empty. The relationship between the 'showing' and the 'producing' cannot be visually compared with each other at the same time. The 'showing empty' process is over long before the production begins.

"Once you produce something, the audience begins to applaud and appreciate the effect. They didn't look for hiding places because they didn't know what was going to happen in the first place. They are caught off guard and are surprised. Therefore, you have a stronger effect.

"With a vanish, it is a little different. You place an object inside of a box and then show that the box is empty. The object has vanished, *or has it?* From the moment the audience no longer sees the object, they begin looking for where it could be. All of

a sudden the thick table, doubled-walled box, or mirror box is instantly noticed by a spectator. The principle may be fine for a production, but as a vanish, it's not effective. The audience assumes that the object is still there and begins looking for how you are hiding it.

"I hope you can see the difference in these two effects. In a production, you are showing something empty *first*. The effect of the production is *second*. In a vanish, the effect of the vanish happens *first* and then the process of showing something empty comes *second*. The audience begins to scrutinize your tricky prop. This can be a deadly blow to your performance. The audience now has time to figure out where the object went.

"So how do we overcome this problem? Some of the greatest vanishes ever done are vanishes in which the object being vanished is gone *long before* the audience even suspects that it has left. When you cause the object to vanish, you are left clean because there is *really* nothing there."

THE EGG BAG – THE MOST PERFECT TRICK IN MAGIC

One of the staples of Denny's act for the last forty years has been the Egg Bag. Let's take a look at this classic from Denny's act because it encompasses both productions and vanishes.

Denny calls the Egg Bag the most perfect trick in magic for many reasons. The method is so well hidden that it can be done not only in stage and parlor settings, but it also can withstand scrutiny even when done in a close-up situation. The props are small enough to carry in your pockets. It can be done quickly in a one- or two-phase close-up routine, or it can become a featured six-minute piece in your stand-up or stage show. Plus, Denny's addition of producing a shot glass full of liquid at the end really takes this trick to a whole new level, giving the finish a real punch. I think this is Denny's biggest contribution to this effect. Normally, the Egg Bag is repetitious and the ending becomes predictable. Once the egg has disappeared

and reappeared a few times the audience “gets it.” Even if you have the spectator produce the egg as a finale, it still seems anticlimactic. But Denny’s kicker ending makes it a full routine with a surprise finish that really wows the audience.

Denny’s routine is based on the Ken Brooke routine. Denny’s performing material is heavily based on a lot of Ken Brooke’s work. Back in the day, Denny took a leave from Vietnam for thirty days and went to England. He went to Harry Stanley’s Unique Magic Studios, where Alan Alan was a demonstrator. When Alan saw the kind of material Denny was into, he pulled him aside and whispered to Denny, “You need to go to Ken Brooke’s place.” So, Denny hopped on the tube and went to see Ken Brooke. Not only would Ken sell you stuff, but if you were cool, he would even personally teach you. Needless to say, Denny spent the rest of his leave hanging out and absorbing all that Ken had to offer. As Denny was learning the material, if he got a move wrong, Ken would punch Denny in the arm, really hard, and yell out, “Not like that!” Denny said he got more wounds learning magic from Ken Brooke than he did serving in Vietnam.

SO WHAT? IT’S AN EGG AND A BAG

I will walk you through a few touches on Denny’s routine. I do recommend that if you get the chance to take one of Denny’s Egg Bag workshops you should certainly do that. They are expensive, but worth it. But for now, here is a peek behind the curtain. When he performs, he does so with two smiling, fun-loving ladies he selects from the audience, placing one to his right and one to his left.

The most important thing about performing the Egg Bag is to simply treat it like nothing more than a piece of cloth. Denny opens his routine by saying he has, *“Two pieces of material placed together and sewn along three sides.”* This is what you want to emphasize. The bag is just a piece of fabric and should be flopped around carelessly because it is *insignificant*.

A lot of Egg Bag routines begin by showing an egg, putting it into the bag, and then making it disappear. Denny believes that the egg should be produced from the bag as a surprise at the beginning of the routine. If you recall from the pro-

duction versus vanish philosophy from the beginning of this article, it becomes quite clear why Denny made this choice. If you begin right off the bat by showing an egg, putting it in the bag, and making it disappear, the audience immediately has only one obvious choice as to where the egg is. The egg must somehow still be in the bag. This puts all of the “heat” (the audience’s focus) on the bag, which is exactly where you don’t want it. By starting the routine by letting your volunteers inspect the bag (looking at the stitching, pulling it inside out), you have immediately communicated to the audience that the bag is just what you say it is. Certainly you wouldn’t have let anyone look at it that closely if it were gaffed. This removes the audience’s suspicion of the bag right from the start, so you are home free. When you vanish the egg two more times in the bag, the audience begins trying to come up with other places it could be. This is a very subtle point, but it is key to Denny’s success with the Egg Bag.

The other key point here is that Denny uses a blown egg. That is, an egg in which all the contents have been removed so that just the shell remains. A lot of Egg Bag routines use a wooden egg just for the old tired gag of the egg being laid by a decoy duck. This is not just a lame joke; the wooden egg causes the material of the bag to sag, which can be spotted by an eagle-eyed spectator. The lightness of the blown egg causes it to gently float around in the bag, causing no stress on the fabric and therefore offering no clues as to where it is hiding.

More important, there is no danger or drama to using a wooden egg. The audience should believe that you have produced a raw egg, just like they would find in their refrigerator at home. Why? Because if you drop the egg or it breaks in the bag, you get a giant mess! People can identify with this aspect of an egg. They know that an egg would be difficult to hide or manipulate because they deal with eggs in their lives. Some magicians get “creative” and use a billiard ball or some other quirky object in the bag. What they don’t realize is that they have removed half of the effectiveness and drama from the routine by using these objects.

Denny says that to an audience there are three things that seem hard for the magician to control or manipulate: liquids, fire, and live animals. This is why there are so many magic tricks that use these items.

An egg is just like a liquid, but contained in a fragile shell. If that shell breaks, the magician is in big trouble. So you see that using a plastic egg, or telling the audience that it is an egg but admitting the contents have been removed, as in some routines such as Charlie Miller’s, can rob the trick of its effectiveness. This is why Denny uses the blown egg and does not have either spectator produce it. Because he alone is handling the egg, he doesn’t have to cop to the fact that it is blown.

The bag itself that Denny uses is made by Danny Tong and is modeled after the Malini Egg Bag. The pocket on the Malini Bag is in the corner and therefore is easily hidden by the thumb when showing the bag to the volunteers. Denny sells these bags in his shop complete with the Ken Brooke routine. In Denny’s opinion, this bag is the best to use because the egg moves in and out of the pocket so easily. This bag allows you the freedom of handling that you need to convince the audience that it is nothing more than a simple bag. The Tarbell or Mardo Bags simply do not allow easy access to do the dirty work and therefore the handling of these bags can look clumsy. Also, the Malini bag is one solid color. Why would you have a bag that was red on the outside and black on the inside? Psychologically, this screams to the audience that you could hide an egg in the space between the different colored layers. If the bag is a solid color, the audience is more likely to believe that it is free of trickery.

HANDLING THE BAG

The most important thing to keep in mind is to just handle the bag like it is nothing more than a piece of cloth. Let the bag flop to and fro as you casually handle it. A good idea is to forget about the egg. If you have practiced the moves enough you should always know where the pocket is and the egg will be in no danger of slipping out. Denny does two moves to further prove the emptiness of the bag. Again, these moves should be done carelessly and casually in an almost haphazard fashion.

The first move is to simply hold the crumpled bag in your hands and gesture with it. The cloth will naturally flop back and forth, proving in a subtle way that the bag is empty. This, combined with a gesture toward your body and away from you or up and down, allows the fabric to move on its own. Don’t look at the bag

while you do this. Simply forget about the bag; its unimportance will be conveyed to the audience by your attitude. You can even do this with the egg in the pocket and it will look natural. Just keep a light grip on the egg through the fabric.

Another subtlety that most performers miss is to keep your fingers spread wide open – don't hold the bag in a "death grip." Many performers treat the bag too preciously when showing it to the volunteers. They hold the bag tightly and keep their fingers wrapped around the bag as it is being shown. It is important to always handle the bag with your fingers spread wide open at every possible opportunity. When turning the bag inside out and outside in or when showing the stitching to the spectators, always remember to keep your fingers wide open (Photo 1).



VANISHING THE EGG

Here is a point that again harkens back to Denny's philosophy of productions verses vanishes. When you vanish the egg, don't vanish it from the bag. Apparently take the egg out of the bag and vanish it. Again, this takes the heat off of the bag. The idea is to distance the moment of the vanish from the secret place it is going end up. Denny does this by placing the egg in the pocket in preparation for the vanish. He then lets each spectator tap the egg, which is apparently resting on the palm of his hand, inside the bag. He says, "Give it a little tap and make sure it is still there." The spectators feel the egg through the bag but have no idea it is already hidden in the secret pocket (Photo 2). Now Denny grabs the pocket corner of the bag with his left hand (which is facing to his left) and slides his right hand from the bag. As it exits the bag, he makes his right hand into a fist as if it is still holding the egg. The bag is now dangling from the grip of his left forefinger and thumb, with his left fingers held wide open (Photo 3). Both the



spectators onstage and the audience think the egg is in his right hand. He then makes a tossing motion toward the sky with his right hand, opening it as if he just threw the egg into the air and it vanished. A key point here is to follow the upward motion of the imaginary egg with your eyes. This way the audience will do the same and it creates the illusion that the egg simply dematerialized as it was tossed into the air.

PROVING THE BAG EMPTY

Denny begins the process of casually showing the bag empty. There are two moves that help to illustrate this. As soon as the egg has vanished, Denny pauses for a quick beat; he then brings his right hand to the right side of the bag and slides his left hand down to the left middle of the bag. Pulling the bag apart creates a snapping noise with the fabric. He then rocks the bag back and forth in a swinging action. This creates the illusion that the bag is flat and empty (Photo 4). This move is followed up by smacking the bag flat between his hands almost as if starting a round of applause. To do this, the right hand grabs the upper left corner (where the pocket is) and the left hand is inserted into the bag. The egg hangs at the lower right corner of the bag off the palm of the hand. Now the right hand is slapped flat against the bag on the left hand. The egg is missed since it is in the lower right corner off the palm (Photo 5). Then the bag is turned inside out in readiness to produce the egg.



PRODUCING THE EGG

To make the production, Denny begins by slapping the bag against his left hand while retaining the egg inside the pocket thru the bag. To do this, he grabs the pocket corner (now on the outside of the bag, since in the previous step he turned it inside out) and reaches up into the bag with his right hand, grabbing the egg thru the fabric. He then slaps the bag against his open left hand. He grabs the other end of the opening of the bag with his left hand, and offers it to the spectator on his right to pull inside out.

There is a reason why he has the spectator on his right perform this action. By using her, his left arm blocks the only exposed view of the pocket (Photo 6). The lady on the left has the opportunity at this moment to see the corner pocket, but by blocking her line of sight with his left forearm, she is unable to catch a glimpse of it. This is one of those subtle touches of Denny's that makes this trick that much better.



Denny straightens the bag and turns it so the opening is up; he then grabs it by the upper left corner so that the egg can roll down to the pocket in the lower right corner. The nice thing about the Malini Bag is that once the egg rolls down there, it almost pops out into the bag, making it really easy to reach in and grab it.

Now, Denny goes in to pull out the egg. When he does, he *slows down*, allowing the audience to get ready for the moment. He hunches his shoulders again and slowly dips his right hand into the bag. When his hand comes out of the bag, his second, third, and fourth fingers exit first, followed slowly by the thumb and index finger, which hold and display the egg openly (Photo 7). This display gives you the most



visual impact. He repeats this two more times, ultimately having the spectators holding his wrists and the bag in the final phase, as in the Ken Brooke routine. This adds to the challenge aspect of the trick and allows for comedy byplay between Denny and his delighted volunteers.

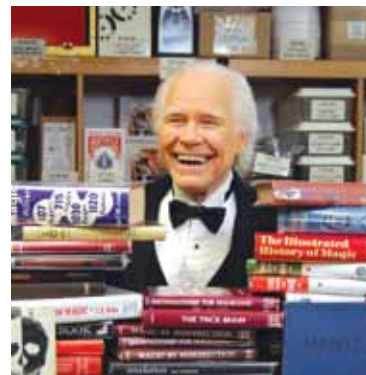
THE TAKEAWAYS

Always keep your fingers wide open when possible. There is no need to put a “kung-fu grip” on the bag. When you can, always think about extending your fingers as if you were not possibly hiding anything at all. This gives the audience instant visual information that the egg must really be gone.

Treat the bag casually and the egg delicately. Remember that the bag means nothing. The egg holds all the drama and all the mystery of the trick. It is a raw egg and could possibly break at any minute, causing a big mess.

Pause and put focus on the moments. Just before the vanish and reproduction, Denny hunches his shoulders and crouches down a bit to put focus on what is about to happen. He slows everything

down, including the pacing of his dialogue and his movements, as if to say, “Watch this closely, because you are about to be amazed.” This sets up tension in the audience, tension that is then relieved when the magic moment happens. When the tension breaks, it turns into a rousing wave of applause.



Denny Haney

Next month, we will explore the Theory of Kickers in magic, finish up with the Egg Bag routine, and talk about Denny’s stunning kicker ending with the shot glass. ★

"This is an amazing deck that allows you to cut to any card quickly and easily."
Jeff McBride

The craftsmanship of this deck is second to none.

Easy!
 Instant reset!
 No stooge
 No equivocation
 Do it blindfolded!

\$36.00
 Free Shipping

ANY CARD CALLED FOR

www.LOOMISMAGIC.com
 621 Victoria Court
 Bay Point, CA 94565
 925-429-5201

IMF
 LOOMIS MAGIC

Dealers contact Murphys Magic Supplies
 www.MurphysMagic.com (916) 853-9292

Ad design by James Howells

www.tmyers.com
 1-800-648-6221 info@tmyers.com

T. Myers Magic

BALLOONS
 Qualatex & Betallatex
 260's, 350's, 360's, 646's, 660's,
 Hearts, Rounds, and Imprinted Rounds
 Specialty Balloons

MAKE-UP
 Face paints by Mehron,
 Paradise by Mehron & Snazaroo
 Clown make-up by ProFACE
 Wolfe Brothers line of face paint

& MAGIC
 Balloon Magic
 Card Magic
 Clown Magic
 Thumb Tip
 Coin



EL ROBERTO ENIGMATICO THE MAGIC OF BOB FARMER

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH

BY R.D. MICHAELS

THE CASINO INSPECTOR

Effect: A deck is shuffled and spread face up to show it really is in a completely random order. It is mixed face up and face down, furthering its descent into pure chaos. Then: 1) All the cards turn face down. 2) Four royal flushes are dealt off the top. 3) The remainder of the deck is dealt off the top in suit and number order.

Method: The deck is stacked with the royal flush cards above the number cards. The two groups are shuffled into each other creating two interlocking chains of cards. The face-up deck appears to be in a random order. The chains are separated with a Slop Shuffle, the deck is returned to its original order, and then it is dealt out for the finale.

The Deck: If you can, use a deck with a white border and a casino or poker logo (for example, World Poker Tour cards). Punch a round hole in the two non-index corners of each card. You will claim this is a cancelled deck from a casino. I use the Bicycle 125 Year Anniversary Edition deck because it looks unique. You can also get cancelled decks at casino gift shops.

You will arrange the four Tens, the four Jacks, the four Queens, the four Kings, the four Aces, and the four Nines with each group of four in C-H-S-D order. Arrange the remaining cards in C-H-S-D order, running from the Eight down to the Two in

each suit. Place this group of twenty-eight cards onto the previously arranged group. The entire stack is shown in Photo 1. Put this deck in your pocket.

Working: The theme is that the spectator will be taking the same test that is given to casino inspectors. This is to determine if he can detect cheating. The magician will play the part of the card cheat. Introduce this theme as you remove the supposed "casino" deck from your pocket; uncase the deck and show the holes that have been drilled through. Explain that after decks are used in a casino they are punched so they can't be used again for cheating.

Hold the deck face up (the Two of Diamonds is on the face). Cut off about a third of the cards to show the holes running all the way through. Replace the cut-off portion and cut deeper to show more holes. Square the deck. This subtly creates the impression the deck is in no special order since the spectator will see different values and suits.

Holding the deck so only you can see the faces, spread to the Nine of Diamonds. Separate the deck at that point, with each hand holding approximately half the deck. Table the two halves face down in preparation for a riffle shuffle. (The Nine of Diamonds is on the bottom of the left-hand portion; the Two of Diamonds is on the bottom of the right-hand portion.)

"The first and most important thing that must be determined is whether the



deck has been shuffled." Riffle shuffle the two portions together. Allow a few cards to fall from the right-hand portion first, and then evenly shuffle the remainder of the cards. Allow one or two cards from the left-hand portion to fall last. Spread the interwoven cards in a vertical spread (Photo 2) and allow the spectator to push the two portions together. This reinforces the fairness of the shuffle.

"Okay, Mister Inspector, did that look like a shuffle?" (Take his response, whatever it is, but get him to agree that it looked like a shuffle.) *"Sure, most people would think that was a shuffle, but a casino inspector would want to ensure it was genuine."*

Square the deck, then turn it face up and spread it from left to right on the table. Keep a small group of cards at the right end of the spread bunched together. By spreading from left to right, the indices will be upside down from the spectator's point of view and this will be an additional impediment to him seeing any regularity in the spread cards. As you'll see, the arrangement of the deck looks really random, suits and values are mixed together and there is no easily discernible order (Photo 3).

"Those cards are shuffled; do you agree?" (Take his response whatever it is, but get him to agree that the deck is in a random order.) *"The number of ways of shuffling a deck of fifty-two cards is a*



Photo 1

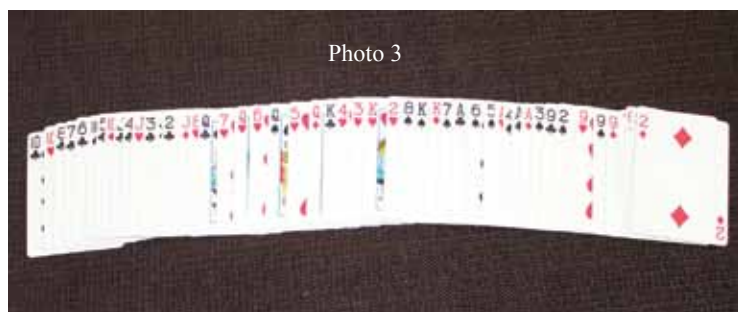


Photo 3

number sixty-eight digits long. That's a big, big, big, number. Here's how big it is: If you and the other six billion people on earth could shuffle a deck one thousand times per second, and the entire planet did this for the next ten billion years, you wouldn't even scratch the surface of how many different ways there are to shuffle a deck of cards."

Point to the spread deck as you say, "However, we know one thing, the order you see is just one of the ways; if we shuffled the deck again, the odds are billions to one that we'd get this same order."

Square the deck and pick it up, holding it face up (the Two of Diamonds on the face) at about chest level, with the face of the deck pointing at your eyes. Squeeze the deck so there is a concave bend in it. (This will make an upcoming calculated cut much easier.)

"But I'm going to make this even more complicated. What if you dropped the deck on the floor and got all the cards mixed up and turned over like this?"

You will now do a Slop Shuffle that will: 1) Separate the cards that are Nines or higher from the lower number cards; 2) Maintain the order of the two groups of cards; 3) Arrange the deck into two face-to-face portions.

For those unfamiliar with Sid Lorraine's Slop Shuffle sequence, the actions (as applied to our particular effect) are simple. Cards are pushed off by the left thumb into the palm-up right hand. When a card of a value of nine or higher appears on the face of the left-hand packet, the right hand turns palm down and the higher-value card (or cards) is fed between the now face-down cards and the right thumb. When a card of a value lower than nine appears on the face of the left-hand cards, the right hand turns palm up and the lower-value card (or cards) is fed under the right-hand group of cards. This is repeated for the entire deck.

A series of photos showing these actions

should make everything clear. The left thumb pushes off cards until the Nine of Diamonds is reached (Photo 4). The right hand turns palm down, and the next cards (three Nines) are pushed between the packet and the thumb (Photo 5). The right hand turns palm up, and the Two of Spades is taken under the packet (Photo 6). (The next action will be to turn the right hand over and take the Nine of Clubs.) The final one or two cards will be Tens. The right hand turns palm down to take these cards between the right thumb and the remainder of the



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6

(now-faced) deck. Keep the right hand palm down; the left hand takes the deck and tables it.

Situation check: All the cards with values lower than nine are face down;

beneath them are all the higher-value cards, which are face up.

[Note: The Slop Shuffle is the only activity in this routine that could be classified as a "move," but it really isn't. It should be done relatively quickly, but must look casual and haphazard. You will have to practice this, because the turning of the right hand is controlled by the value of the cards on the face of the left-hand packet and you don't want your thinking to show. There should be no hesitation. The way to achieve this is to focus only on the high-value cards, letting them be the cue to turn the right hand.]

"This is a complete mess." Cut the top face-down portion to the left of the face-up portion. This cut is easy because of the concave bend you put in the deck before the Slop Shuffle. The left hand arches palm down over the left packet as the right hand arches palm down over the right packet. Each hand cuts off half its packet and turns palm up: this is a quick display that will show a mix of face-up and face-down



Photo 7



Photo 8

cards. Freeze your hands in this position for a beat to sell the mix of face-up and face-down cards (Photo 7). Your hands turn palm down and replace their packets.

"Now, would you agree with me, Mister Inspector, that short of blasting this deck with a shotgun, there is no other way of making this deck into a bigger, more random mess than it already is?" (Get him

to agree.)

You now use the Drawbridge Move (Farmer-Kaufman) to assemble the deck and secretly turn all the cards face down. Grip the ends of the packets, butt their sides together, and lift each packet to the vertical (Photo 8). They kiss, coalesce, and form the deck. Guide the vertical deck down to the left and table it. It is now in its original order and tabled face down.

[Note: the Farmer-Kaufman Drawbridge Move was published as Triumph Handling in *Cardmagic* by Richard Kaufman (1979, p. 11). It was independently invented by Farmer in 1975; he showed it to Frank Garcia. Richard Kaufman also showed Garcia the move. When Garcia started using it without crediting it to anyone, both Farmer and Kaufman each thought he had “borrowed” it from the other.]

“Remember, I said that this is the test that all casino inspectors take to see if they can catch cheating; you have agreed with me that so far no cheating has occurred. You agreed the deck was shuffled, and you even helped me in the process; you looked at the deck to make sure it was shuffled; and you’ve seen the deck made into a complete mess of face-up and face-down cards. I think you’ll have to agree with me that no cheating has occurred, at least not up to this point.” (Get him to agree.)

“I’m afraid your new career as a Las Vegas casino inspector may be in jeopardy, because about five seconds ago, I cheated and I cheated big. First of all, I straightened out all the cards.” Snap your fingers over the deck and spread it out, showing that all the cards are face down.

Scoop up the deck and hold it in dealing position. Start to deal out four hands of cards, face down. Deal five cards to each hand. This should be done rapidly.

“While I was straightening out the deck, I managed to stack a few good poker hands. I hate when anyone loses, so I gave each player the same hand.” When the deal is finished, turn over each hand and spread the cards vertically, showing four

royal flushes.

“I know you’re wondering if I could have cheated and controlled the Nines as well. Yeah, I got them, too.” Deal the next four cards, one each onto the royal flushes.

“In fact, I controlled all the cards.” With the right hand, turn the left-hand cards face up and then take them from above with the right hand. Place the packet on top of the Nine of Clubs and then spread the cards vertically, until you reach the Eight of Hearts. Lift the packet (with the Eight of Hearts on the bottom).



Photo 9

This reveals the remaining Clubs. Repeat this process for the remaining three suits. Photo 9 shows the final display.

“Unfortunately, as far as your career as a casino inspector goes, in the words, of Donald Trump, ‘You’re fired.’”

Gather up the cards and place them in the card box. Resetting is fairly fast because most of the cards are already segregated.

Background: The principle that two separate stacks of cards when shuffled into each other retain their respective orders was first published in *Stanyon’s Magic* (September 1913, pp. 100-101) and was there credited to Mr. Chas. O. Williams of Cardiff. Charles Jordan then developed the idea much further (see *Trailing the Dovetail Shuffle to Its Lair in Thirty Card Mysteries*, 1919).

Eric Mead suggested that the two interlocking chains could be separated using

Sid Lorraine’s Slop Shuffle (*Tangled Web*, Hermetic Press, 2006, pp. 104-108). Eric notes that he was predated in this idea by Marlo, Jennings, Elmsley, and Tamariz.

In 2007, Henry Evans published *Suit Yourself (Antinomy, Number Eleven, 3rd Quarter 2007, pp. 15-17)*. Basically, a deck stacked King to Ace is cut in half and shuffled together, then spread face up very briefly to show it is mixed. A Slop Shuffle is then used to separate the two chains and put the deck back in stack order. The deck is then cut into four equal packets

and the packets shown to be in order. However, there was a weakness: when the deck was spread face up to show the cards were indeed shuffled, the display had to be brief because regularities in the run of cards could be spotted. This happened because the entire deck was in the same cyclical order, so even when cut in half and shuffled, cycles were still apparent.

I decided that the most important part of the method was the display of the face-up, shuffled deck. If the audience could stare at the deck for an extended period they would absolutely be convinced that the deck was really in random

order.

The solution I came up with was to put one chain of cards (the royal flush cards plus the Nines) in one cyclical order and the second chain (the numbered cards) in another. When these two chains are shuffled together the display looks really random, with a confusing mix of suits and colors.

The chains are then unwound in three different ways: a Slop Shuffle, a poker deal for the royal flush cards, and a consecutive spread for the numbered cards.

The patter theme provides a plausible reason for pulling out yet another deck and adds some entertainment to what could be a boring poker deal. ★

Copyright 2013 Every Trick in the Book, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

I KNOW WHAT YOU ARE WRITING

Since the beginning of mentalism, impression boards and carbon paper have been used to obtain information written down by audience members. A new tech device brings the methodology into the twenty-first century.

The **Livescribe 2 GB Sky WiFi Smart Pen** is an amazing device. Imagine being able to see on your computer backstage everything that has been written by a pen! This works with a special notebook and WiFi to transfer the data to your computer. The paper looks normal and comes as spiral notebooks. I put a chain around the pen (like in a bank) and attached it to the spiral notebook. An assistant passes the notebook around to waiting audience members, who write down their questions. They then rip out the page to keep the paper. The pen is returned backstage, where all the information is downloaded to be read. It really is remarkable. The **Livescribe Sky Pen** is around \$150 and is available at Apple Stores as well as Amazon.com.



SIRI-OUSLY SPEAKING

Warning: I'm going to get geeky for the next few minutes.

Ever since Siri came out on the iPhone, there have been many parodies of Siri talking back to you with very funny remarks. Many magicians, including myself, have been working on routines with Siri as an assistant. I have received many letters asking how to get Siri to say anything. Well if you own a Mac, here are the steps:

On your Mac, go to System Preferences and click on the Speech icon. You will have a voice already selected for text-to-speech. To change it to Siri's voice, click on the dropdown menu. Click on Customize and then look for Samantha; check the box to the left of her. Samantha is the Siri voice in the USA. Then click OK. You will be prompted by the system to confirm Samantha's voice. Click Install.



Close everything and open your word processor. Type what you want to say, such as, "I can see that you selected the red scarf." Now press Command+Shift+Down Arrow and hear Siri speak your text. To select specific sentences, just hold down your mouse button and drag your cursor over the words you wish to speak; then do the Command+Shift+Arrow Down action.



Saving your voice:

You can simply record off your computer speakers or better yet, try a program like **Soundflower** or the one I use, **Wire Tap Studio**, to record sounds directly from your system. These programs will turn the file into something you can play on iTunes.

RETURN TO THE BEST APP I HAVE EVER FOUND

In a previous column I told you about **Mind Lister**. I received many letters from people eager to download it. For some reason, many found it difficult to find this app on the iTunes App Store. Try this:

Open Safari on your iPad or iPhone and Google "Mind Lister App." Click on **Mind Lister** for iPhone, iPod Touch, and iPad on the iTunes App Store. It will open up in the iTunes Store; you can then download it. ★

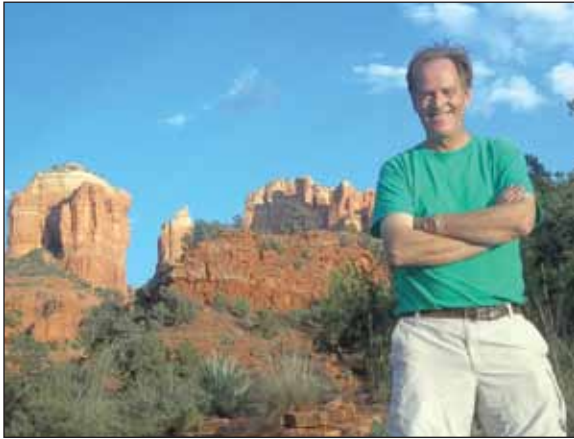
Found a cool gadget, app, or website for magic applications? Share your discovery with Bruce to include in a future column. Email him (SAMtalkBruce@cox.net).



Roger Blakiston (AKA Jolly Roger)

Unlimited Possibilities

THE EVENT HORIZON



There are many exciting events happening in my life, including the near completion of my book *The Spiritual Stage* (www.SpiritualStage.com) as well as my relocation to the magical township of Sedona, Arizona. I am also shortly to become a grandfather; my daughter-in-law is expecting a little girl at the end of January. I wonder who will be entertaining at her birthday parties over the years!

I have had the privilege of writing this series of columns in *M-U-M* for the past three years and have decided to take a sabbatical. I would like to thank Mike and Lisa for this great opportunity to share my perspective on entertaining children. Through my columns I attempted to encourage you to think out of the box and to be as passionate about children's entertainment as I am. Since this is my last column, I thought you might like to read an insight into the life of this children's entertainer from the perspective of a partner. I therefore will hand over the reins to Mrs. Jolly Roger – my wonderful wife, Artha.

"The first time I saw Jolly Roger perform was on a VHS tape in the privacy of my own home. I laughed from beginning to end. There was something about this distinguished English gentleman, dressed up in a costume that was such a dichotomy to his personality that it brought me to tears. (He wore a harlequin-colored jester costume then, covered with little bells.)

I'd never seen anything like him, nor have I laughed as hard since, except maybe the times I saw Terry Herbert and The Great Ballantine perform. The seemingly unnatural balance between his character, the clever magic he performed, and the roaring laughter of the audience was almost unnerving.

"Then he performed the Magic Drawing Board. I was stunned, fascinated, charmed, and reduced to one of the children crowded around him – inching closer and closer – in what appeared to be someone's living room. I had never seen anything so simple, yet so baffling, and I was sure I was witnessing something rarely seen by many people. I grew up in a small town and none of my friends had a magician perform at their birthday parties. I think I once saw a clown deliver a bunch of balloons, which I remember thinking was quite ostentatious (okay, I was probably jealous). Of course, the girl was an only child and spoiled to the hilt. The only magicians I'd ever seen were on TV, and they were few and far between. I can't even remember who they were; they always performed big illusions, which for some reason never impressed me.

"By the time I'd finished watching Jolly Roger's video, I'd witnessed, among other tricks, silks appearing from nowhere, the Linking Rings, the Magic Drawing Board, and the Chair Suspension. The action never stopped, the attention of the children never waned, and Roger had me mesmerized. At the same time, he'd sent me an industrial video he had done for Chevrolet where he played a 'Bill Nye the Science Guy' character (who I was familiar with from the TV show). Once again, I was thoroughly entertained. I realized at this moment that the magic of Jolly Roger, his childlike humor, was innate; it was part of his very personality and he was that character. I remember telling my family and friends about it all and showing my sister the video of his magic performance. We found ourselves laughing until we cried and saying over and over again, 'how'd he do that?' It was all so absurd; so surreal.

"I've spent my career under florescent

lights in a cubicle, with forty-to-sixty-hour work weeks in corporate America, working for companies of 10,000+ employees all over the world. For a long time I even had a two-and-a-half-hour one-way commute into Washington, D.C., and I endured it along with all of the other corporate zombies on the same gerbil wheel of unobtainable success. I met Roger around the time I was laid off from a job I'd had for nearly twenty years. They closed an entire operation of the company and over 3,000 employees lost their jobs; some had been there much longer than I had. Some of you may have experienced something similar.

"Jolly Roger has been a children's entertainer most of his life. My existence in corporate America was as foreign to him as his magical world was to me. He couldn't understand why I chose to suffer in that world; I couldn't understand how he could afford to 'play' in his. It looked like play from my side of the horizon. It looked like fun; it looked like a dream of a job; and if you asked him, he said it was. There is the old saying that if you love what you do, you'll never have to work another day in your life. Roger tells me it never feels like work. I have never heard him complain, even when he has five shows in one day! Of course we really don't have 'weather' or 'traffic' in Phoenix, so he has that on his side.

"In the fourteen years that I've known him, I've only seen him get more and more passionate about what he does and the new routines he creates. He has a room (well-organized so he says) filled with toys – I mean tricks of every size, color, genre, and era. He has a story about each one and can tell me exactly who created it or made it famous and where he obtained it.

"His stories fascinate me, even after hearing them over and over again. The names, places, historical events, tragedies, and honors bestowed on so many who have gone before and those who are waxing and waning in their magic careers; the sunrises and sunsets of famous magicians and comedians that he has admired, who have in one way or another taught him so much.

"I watch him sometimes when he doesn't know I'm there, sitting on a little stool surrounded by boxes and bags of every color and shape. Some ornate like ancient boxes that look like they would



Artha & Roger

have held a pirate's treasure and some that look to me like worn out laundry hampers that should have been discarded long ago. He will often just sit and stare at a prop or into space for the longest time. He is at home there and looks like an innocent child surrounded by all things make believe. It is his paradise.

"I've been tempted so many times to jump the corporate ship into his world – like crossing an imaginary horizon where time stands still and you can be a child forever. I've tried. I painted faces for a while and even hired myself out a couple of times as Mrs. Claus to entertain the children before his shows or during the intermission of his two-hour parties. It isn't a place I can stay very long – it can't be everyone's world. I think it is reserved for those who are still deeply in touch with their child within. My guess is you have to *want* it, *feel* it, and *be* it with all that you are. The child in you must be accessible and not afraid to be vulnerable.

"I've seen Jolly Roger's show many times now and I *still* do not want to know how the tricks are performed. Every now and then, logic takes over and my heart sinks because I figure it out and I know I'll never see the trick the same way again. But when I see it now, I try to see it through the children's eyes. I especially like the ones who gasp and put their hands over their mouths as if to hold in every breath of wonder. My favorite thing to do is watch the adults. There are still ones out there who don't act like they have to know how every trick is performed; they are reduced to their former selves of five or six years old and everything else around them disappears.

"The closest I can come to being part of his magical world is helping him with his website, proofreading his articles, making him a sandwich when he is running out the door, and yes, helping him find his keys

and perhaps a balloon or foam ball or knotted rope he may have dropped along the way.

"If you live in this world of magic and laughter, surely you are making this world a better place for us all. Even if you want to become a children's entertainer and haven't done so yet, you are so much closer to that world than the 99.9% of the rest of us who can't even perceive the event horizon."

I must confess that reading the above truly makes me realize how blessed I am to have such a supportive wife. So let me recap some of my ramblings over the past three years before I disappear into the Sedona sunset. I have talked about the two-hour party with games and magic. This is the way that most entertainers in the UK run their parties, and for me it has proved a winner on this side of the pond. I highly recommend you try it, and from the emails I have received, I know that many of you are incorporating this with great success. My *Kapital Kidvention* DVD filmed in Washington, D.C., in 2010 is still available from my website (www.ComicMagician.com). My lecture describes in greater detail the way I organize the two-hour party.

I have stressed the importance of lots of bits of business in your shows. A good children's entertainer needs to be more than just a clever magician. At the end of the show, you want the children to tell their parents that they want you, and only you, to entertain at their birthday party. With this in mind, it is also helpful to have a catchy name that the kids can relate to, as well as a costume that sets you apart.

I have encouraged you be your own unique self, and not to copy others. There is only one magnificent you, and you know who that is better than anyone else. Always think and dream big. You all have far greater potential than you may realize. Don't settle, even though you know you have a good show. It can always be better. Treat each show you do as a dress rehearsal, and not the finished product; that way there is always room for growth.

When selecting your tricks and routines, try to be original. This does not mean you should not buy standard props from dealers. However, once the props

are in your hands, blend them with your own patter and personality. Do not copy someone else's patter, but create your own. When things go wrong in your show, use the situation to your advantage. If you get laughter from the kids when something goes unintentionally wrong, you may consider keeping this "mistake" in your show.

Be aware that there are many different outlets for the children's entertainer: birthdays, daycares, libraries, company picnics, school assemblies, holiday parties, and more. Make friends with other children's entertainers in your area so that you can network with shows.

You have an amazing talent. Use every ounce of this talent to give pleasure to the children in your audience, as well as any adults who may be watching. There are many souls wandering the planet who are



not as fortunate as you are. Help them to smile. From time to time, pause and reflect on all your blessings. Your gift will change the world, and bring happiness into the lives of many. Have fun. Your paycheck is a bonus, but seeing the smiles and hearing the laughter is priceless! ★

"In the thousands of moments that string together to make up our lives, there are some where time seems to change its shape and a certain light falls across our ordinary paths. We stop searching for purpose, we become it. Looking back, we might describe these moments as times when we were at our best, when the gifts we were born with and the talents we have developed were braided with what we love and the needs of the world."

~ From the book ~
I Will Not Die an Unlived Life
by Dawna Markova

Please stay in touch by email:
ComicMagician@cox.net

INFORMED OPINION

LATEST PRODUCT REVIEWS

Compiled and Edited by W. S. Duncan

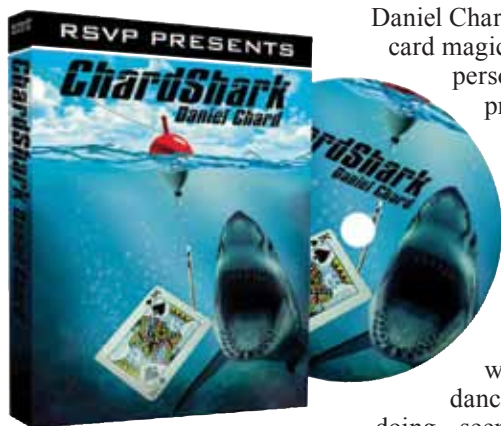
CHARDSHARK DVD By DANIEL CHARD

Available from: www.rsvpmagic.com

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$30.00

REVIEW BY DAN GARRETT



Daniel Chard is a young British card magician with a pleasing personality and an impressive arsenal of card moves. On this DVD he presents ten card routines of his own construction. Many of the routines are quite visual, with playing cards dancing around and doing seemingly impossible

things. In addition to video of real-world performances in a pub and thorough explanations, Daniel includes a bonus "toolbox" that teaches three card moves that are used in the routines. Two of these you may not have seen before: Denis Behr's Four Queens Production is very much worthy of your attention, as is Charlie Miller's Cascade Control. All the routines use standard ungauffed playing cards and require skill levels from intermediate to advanced. Crediting is abundant throughout the explanations, and Chard provides an even more extensive crediting of moves and inspirations in the form of a PDF file on the DVD. I applaud this loudly.

I particularly liked the routines Kickback Bonanza, Four My Mates, World's Fastest Threesome, and Mouthy Transpo. There were no routines I didn't like, although some of them looked a bit "move-y," with a lot of handling going on. In the end the payoffs were consistently visual and/or strong.

Because young Mr. Chard has strived for excellence while inserting this product into the saturated world of card magic, I am compelled to offer a few points of constructive criticism. Everything I'm about to say I have been guilty of doing myself. These suggestions also apply to many of you compeers out there, even the pros.

Avoid "descriptive patter." This is a common ball-and-chain in the performance of card magic. Come up with something better than simply describing what you are doing. Because Chard's card magic is nicely visual, I enjoyed watching much of it without any script at all. You can find an example of this on YouTube.

There is a British quirk of speech in which the end of a sentence is often followed with the word "yeah?" In moderation, you can get away with it once or twice, yeah? Mr. Chard overdoes this,

sometimes after every other sentence. I went back and counted it eleven times during his performance of the first trick. During the explanations, it all but disappears.

It's like, you know, uh, saying extra words is a result of not having scripted your performance. Superfluous words (Americans are overly fond of "like" and "you know" – Canadians are known for ending sentences with "eh?") basically fill time while your brain tries to come up with something meaningful to say. This includes phrases magicians overuse all the time: "I want you to..." or "I need you to..." or "Do me a favor, and..." that are completely extraneous. Eugene Burger and Jeff McBride whimsically refer to this as "verbal lint." I'm as guilty as many others, but I'm putting an effort to eliminate all of these unwanted phrases from my performances.

There is one routine on the video that involves putting a card in your mouth. You probably should not do this if you are performing at a restaurant or banquet, but for casual performances and bar magic, Mouthy Transpo packs quite a visual wallop!

That said, I believe Daniel Chard is a performer who will use this constructive critique to improve his performances. He already has the card skills...in spades! The performance shortcomings can be fixed. He would benefit tremendously from a mentor who could coach him on his performances and the theatrical side of his magic. I predict that soon he will live up to his billing and become, as John Carey states, "a force to be reckoned with."

You will find a lot of material to be absorbed in *ChardShark*. If you practice diligently and make the routines your own, you will be rewarded with some great card magic to add to your arsenal.

ESCAPE ARTIST SHOW DVD By DAN HARLAN

Available from: www.llpub.com

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$34.95

REVIEW BY DAVID GOODSELL



Don't let the title fool you.

You do not have to be an escape "artist," or have a super hero physique to do the escape-themed routines on this DVD, one of L&L Publishing's *Dan Harlan's Pack Small Play Big* series.

In this, like the others in the series, the show really does pack in a rather small briefcase. The show as Dan

presents it runs about thirty minutes,

but every routine on the DVD can stand alone, or work in concert with one or two others to

provide a unique interlude in a regular stage or parlor show.

You will recognize most of these tricks from even brief descriptions. However, Dan Harlan seems to have an encyclopedic mind about things magical; many of you will find subtleties, tips, twists, and new techniques that elevate the impact of the effect several times over.

You are encouraged to run through the complete presentation of the act without checking the methods, as many are tempted to do. By doing so you get a sense of how the act is set up and how it plays to an audience. You will also determine whether or not you should try the whole act or use only parts of it. Study Dan's professional pacing – the routines move quickly, are fun to watch, and will fool you. This kind of act can be deadly if it drags. Maybe Houdini could take twenty minutes to get out of a rope tie, but today's audiences won't put up with it.

The opening routine is a three-phase knot-tying demonstration using thick white rope that is much more visible than standard magician's rope. This is followed by a double thumb cuff routine with lots of comedy, then a great hostage rope tie in which the escape takes place under cover of a borrowed jacket. Dan then uses the jacket and the two ropes for the tried and true jacket release, with the ropes threaded through the sleeves of the jacket, but using a very nice subtlety you may not have seen before.

Dan next escapes from a set of shackles. These are the typical style readily available through magic dealers, with locked chains at each end of a rectangle with curved ends – you will recall they look like two U-bolts welded together. In fact, Dan shows how to make your own set out of U-bolts! Dan escaped from these by placing his shackled wrists behind the open top of his briefcase. It might be more effective if he simply turned his back for fifteen seconds.

Possibly the best routine on the tape is Dan's thumb tie, using two shoelaces. While it really did seem impossible for him to get loose, he caught steel rings between his hands and hooked the spectator's elbow, as well. We magicians know how it must happen; the lay audience has no idea. And it's a good bet that you won't know his method, either. Very nice.

The Thumb Tie is followed by the old loop of ribbon threaded through two steel rings. The ribbon is passed around the waist of a lady from the audience, who holds the rings in front of her. When two other spectators pull on the ropes, which had been passed through the steel rings, the ribbon passes through the lady. This is a very effective routine using three spectators, which as shown on the DVD, took up a lot of space! It did, indeed, "play big."

Taking up the most space in the briefcase was a regulation straitjacket, from which Dan escaped after being secured by a gentleman from the audience. While many will still want to use a gimmicked jacket, Dan does explain how he performs the escape with the real thing. This routine was funny and very strong, perhaps on a par with the thumb tie. In fact, it is probable that a lay audience would rank the straitjacket number one, where magicians, understanding the intricacies of the thumb tie, will prefer the latter.

Finally, Dan explains the importance of finishing the act with something not quite so dramatic and energetic: a simple release of a playing card, a King for Houdini, from a ribbon under a black cloth.

In addition to a full explanation of the methods, Dan also discusses how he packs the case, why various effects fit in the act where they do, how he keeps records on his performances, and various other bits of wisdom. As we stated in the beginning, don't let the title fool you. *The Escape Artist Show* is for magicians who are not escape artists. Well done, Dan!

THE MULTIPLE REVELATION PROJECT 2-DVD SET BY ANDI GLADWIN AND ROB JAMES

Available from: www.vanishinginmagic.com

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$40.00

REVIEW BY ANTONIO M. CABRAL



The multiple revelation routine has enjoyed a long popularity with bar workers, going back past Eddie Fechter, back to Max Malini. It's one of those effects afforded by a pack of cards that really can't be matched with any other medium – a trick for each and every individual member of a large audience. It takes all the

little goofy ways we have of saying "Is this your card?" and turns them into a blockbuster display of card control. It's impressive, it's practical, and whether you love card tricks or you think they're your perfect idea of hell, it may very well be "the ultimate card trick." Many individual performers have put their personal routines into print over the years, but the best examinations so far have been from Doc Eason (*Notes on the Multiple Selection of Cards, MAJ Aspen Bar Issue* 1990) and Paul Cummins (*The Multiple Selection Routine, ... from a shuffled deck in use...*, 1996). Twelve years ago these two men combined their thoughts in the now-classic *Fusillade*, your one-stop shopping treatise on putting together a mostly-improvised multiple selection routine. *The Multiple Revelation Project* by Andi Gladwin and Rob James treads much of the same ground, but still provides a solid framework for the card worker looking to add this effect to his repertoire.

The first DVD is dedicated to the outline of the routine. Gladwin and James both take their cues from the model set forth in *Fusillade* in that the routine should have a solid beginning and a very strong ending, but what happens in the middle should be left up to the moment (Cummins calls this the "Flexible Middle"). While other professionals have found it best to stick to a set routine of specific revelations, here the idea is to use the energy of the moment to drive the routine, to look for those improvisational moments that make a performance unique and memorable. In a few places, Gladwin and James take the extra step (inspired by Malini) to encourage those moments that seem completely spur of the moment, but are in fact the performer setting himself up to bust out an apparent miracle. Which approach works best for any individual is, of course, up to the individual performer.

There are also good suggestions for how to deal with the logistical problems of having people wait through a potentially lengthy selection process in those venue atmospheres that seem to encourage attention deficits. Then there's the obvious problem of how you control and keep track of nine to fifteen selections at a time in the first place. The lads here offer three or four solid, practical control systems including an obscure and very good one of Ed Marlo's. For a couple of young guys, they have a good deal of professional experience between them, and their logistical advice is solid and worthwhile. They even provide a "beginner's routine" of set revelations to get you wading into the deep end of the pool.

Disc Two has the building blocks of your potential routine, over seventy card revelations and strategies with which to piece together a sequence of your own. There have been many such compilations in print over the years, from J.G. Thompson's *The Living End* to Daryl's massive *Encyclopedia of Card Revelations* video series. It was Thompson who once observed that if you know fifty different ways to control a card but only one way of revealing it, to your audience you only know one trick – whereas if you know one way of controlling a card and fifty different ways of revealing it, you appear to know fifty tricks. In the multiple selection routine, variety is the name of the game. The revelations offered here are of a nice variety, although some of the cutting discoveries seem a little too similar and there's a dearth of interesting color changes. On the other hand, the accompanying booklet does a nice job of breaking the revelations down to what works best in walk-around or with a table, the relative ease of the revelation, and how strong a reaction it receives – all in all, a fine compilation of card revelations.

The biggest problem with recommending this DVD set is that it costs twice as much as the book that the authors admit taught them everything they needed to know about the multiple selection routine, namely *Fusillade* (which is still readily available from FASDIU Productions). If you learn more easily from video, that might be an excuse to choose one over the other. The structure of these DVDs feels a little more suited to the beginner, which is another recommendation. If you're truly interested in this effect, there's no reason why you shouldn't own both these DVDs and the book that begat them. All in all this is a fine addition to the study of the multiple selection plot. Recommended to the interested beginner.

LETS [sic] GO DUTCH DVD By FRITZ ALKEMADE

Available from: www.rsvpmagic.com

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies
Price \$30.00

REVIEW BY DAN GARRETT



Fritz Alkemade (pronounced "Alky-mada") is a Dutch magician living and working in Great Britain. That might explain the grammatically incorrect title (there should be an apostrophe in "Let's"). In spite of that, this DVD is jam-packed with a wide variety of card magic from a magician's working repertoire.

The vanishing apostrophe magically reappears on the title screens of the video and in the accompanying PDF file.

There are eleven card routines on the disc, including a lengthy multiple selection and revelation routine. There is something for almost every taste. Most of the routines use normal cards, though there is one routine that involves a special prop available from dealers. And there's a coin effect, called Euroutine, provided as a bonus. It is a one-coin routine that is quite visual. Since the performances on the video are all in a very noisy bar in Bristol, England, visual magic is good. Fritz handles the noise and the real-world distractions of the bar fairly well.

You should definitely check out Just in Time 2.0, a really

premium card routine that was also published last year in a popular magic magazine. Joshua Jay picked this routine as one of his top ten favorite card tricks of 2011. Other items of interest include Y.A.M.S.M.A.T., which is an acronym for that question we've all been asked: "You're a Magician? Show Me A Trick!" Fritz came up with this fun routine in answer to that perennial question. Also, It's a Four-King Production is itself much better than its title.

Some readers may recall that I'm a nut for the crediting of ideas and moves. Fritz provides a fourteen-page PDF file on the disc that offers additional ideas and alternatives for each routine, as well as the most extensive crediting I have ever seen. Fritz even provides credits for things like a double lift and a top change. He also pokes a bit of fun at himself for making a mistake on the number of days in a year on the video. Reading the PDF file is quite entertaining, even as much as watching the video!

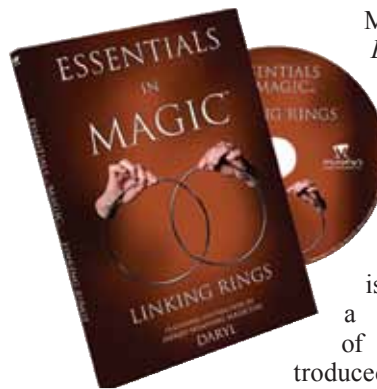
While this material is not necessarily for the hobbyist magician who does a few card tricks here and there, intermediate and advanced card workers will find plenty of material to keep them busy in *Let's Go Dutch*.

ESSENTIALS IN MAGIC: THE LINKING RINGS DVD By DARYL

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$9.95

REVIEW BY DAVID GOODSELL



Murphy's Magic Supplies's *Essentials in Magic* DVD series, featuring Daryl, "The Magician's Magician," provides an introduction to classic routines in magic in an inexpensive, instructive format. The Linking Rings, for example, reviewed here, is an hour-long DVD in which a great many basic elements of linking ring routines are introduced: the key ring concept with various handlings for displaying, linking, and unlinking rings while keeping the opening of the key ring hidden; counting and displaying sets of rings, which include the key ring, single rings, and sets of permanently linked rings; various flourishes with rings to enhance the illusion of separate and normal steel rings; figures that can be created with linked rings; and a sample routine with four rings that uses many of the techniques taught. In addition, Daryl discusses basics such as the wide variety of sizes available and the numbers of rings in various sets, along with the venues appropriate for their use, and the importance of taking care of and storing the rings. Several topics covered come from Dai Vernon's famous *Symphony of the Rings*, which is perhaps "the classic routine" in magic today; but Daryl also teaches a few moves credited to our own Dan Garrett, Michael Skinner, and Richard Ross, among others. Daryl draws from his extensive history as a magician to provide tips and insights into many moves that will enhance any routine.

For ten bucks it is hard to go wrong, but this is primarily designed for the beginner in magic. It is a great place to learn basic moves. Daryl's four-ring sample routine is relatively simple and can serve the novice magician well, but the purpose of the DVD is not to provide the professional with a finished routine.

Armed with the material presented here, however, you will be ready to move on to more polished routines on the market today provided by some of our more accomplished colleagues. As a bonus, in presentation only, Daryl performs the Quadro-Vicious Circle routine with linking rings made out of barbed wire – fun to watch, but not for everyone.

Writing on the DVD case states that the Linking Rings is an amazing magic effect [true] and that it is easy to do! Not true. While the individual moves are singly not too difficult to master, it does take concentration and practice to put a full routine, filled with literally dozens of nuances, together in a way that looks like magic. It is worth the time and effort, though, for this truly is a classic.

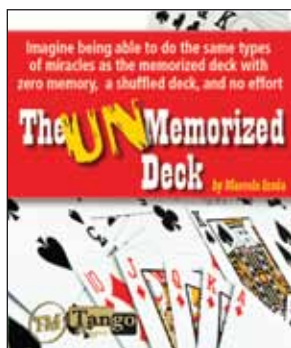
UNMEMORIZED DECK DVD

By MARCELO INSÚA

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies:

Price \$30.00

REVIEW BY ANTONIO M. CABRAL



Marcelo Insúa's UNmemorized Deck is a powerful and proven practical method for performing a number of miracle divinations with a shuffled pack of cards. It is also neither new, nor original. The basic principle is the divided deck – any card removed from one half and placed in the other is easily detected. Any way to distinguish between two sets of cards can be used to set up a deck in this manner (red/black, odd/even) and each set

of cards can be freely shuffled by either the performer or the audience. The system presented here is the brainchild of the late Martin Gardner and can be found in J.G. Thompson's *My Best* (Spread, Shuffle, Spread, page 89). This is made very clear upon viewing the DVD. What would be better is if this were indicated in the advertising copy.

There's nothing wrong with reintroducing an old concept to a new or younger audience who might not have access to some older or harder-to-find resources. To sell it as some kind of mysterious new "system" is disingenuous. And to sell it as an effortless substitute for the memorized deck is a little depressing. The name "Unmemorized Deck" itself speaks directly to people who desperately want to jump on the memorized deck bandwagon but somehow are surprised that it involves actually memorizing a deck of cards. What isn't mentioned is that, if you actually go through the not-much-trouble-at-all to actually memorize an arrangement, your memorized deck is also (among other things) a divided deck setup. That means you can do all the things performed on this DVD, as well as the myriad other things that might exist in your stack. Any good memorized stack, once in mind, can be performed "with no sleight of hand, no special cards...no work, and no stress," just as the ad copy for the UNmemorized Deck describes. The part I left out was "no memorization," but the irony here is that this particular divided deck setup is one that actually requires a little more recall than knowing a card is red or black, odd or even, etc. Of course, the more you get used to the system, the quicker your recall will be – just like the card/number pairings involved in a genuine memorized deck.

Probably the most common sin in magic advertising is when

magicians sell to each other like we sell effects to laymen. It's one thing if you want your magician audience to appreciate the effect the way a layman would perceive it (admittedly a difficult task sometimes). It's another when you fear if your intended market knew you were simply re-teaching a principle found in *My Best* (or *Greater Magic*, or *Tarbell*, or *The Encyclopedia of Card Tricks*) that you wouldn't make any sales. If this were more overtly offered as a study in the divided deck, I could recommend it more heartily; the divided deck is indeed a deceptive and powerful tool. As some kind of wacky new "system" to supplant the memorized deck or encourage folks that they can be as good as Juan Tamariz or Simon Aronson while being ten times as lazy, I'd rather point folks at any of the books previously mentioned. Maybe then there'd be less complaint about the lack of scholarship in magic. Maybe.

ULTIMATE CONTROL

REMOTE CONTROL MUSIC SYSTEM

Available from: www.happieamp.com

Price \$449.00

REVIEW BY JIM KLEEFELD



If you perform shows, you should be using music. Doing so enhances your act immeasurably, particularly if you add relevant music at the right times. The problem for most performers in live settings is how to control that music. The Ultimate Control is a device that allows you

to store and play back music with exacting control, including track sequencing, starts, stops, fade outs, and volume levels either pre-set or changed during a routine. It accomplishes what Virtual Soundman, ShowTech, MP3Tech, and MediaStar do, but at a significantly lower price point than any of those.

First, let me assure you that I know a little about the audio tech arena. For several years I marketed SoundControl, a remote control device that worked with Apple iPods. It was small, efficient, and very inexpensive, except for the condition that you had to add your own iPod. When parts for that product were no longer available, I had to take it off the market. Brian Happie, of the company that markets the Happie Amp, stepped in to fill the void and worked with engineers to create Ultimate Control from scratch, designed especially for performers. Several of the features I pioneered, including an anti-time-out feature, tactile buttons, and color-coded track numbers have been incorporated into Ultimate Control. I consider this an ideal way for performers to personally control their music at a show.

In the Ultimate Control package, you receive a specially designed mp3 player with display screen, a pocket-sized remote control, a device-to-USB cable, a USB travel charger, a 3.5mm audio cable, and a set of ear buds for monitoring the audio output. After you first charge the music player, you pair the remote, so that only it can control your unit. Then you plug the player to any computer with the included USB cable and copy your songs or sound tracks onto the player. Songs can be in either .mp3 or .wma format, and with 4GB of memory the player will hold thousands

of songs. If that's not enough for you, pop a micro SD card in the slot for more storage.

When you have songs loaded, you can create a playlist using the push-button menu system on the device's screen. Add the songs you want in the order you want to your playlist. You can make virtually thousands of playlists, though most performers will only need one for each of their different shows. Songs can be added, deleted, or rearranged through the device menus screens. This part is a bit tedious, but occurs only once when you set up the device. You can have some songs set to play continuously and other songs set to cue up and pause, waiting for your command. Once your songs are loaded and sequenced, you can use the device for years without ever altering it or going back to your computer.

At the show, you set the tiny player on your amp (or attach it to the side with a piece of Velcro), plug an audio cable from the player to your amplifier or sound system, and turn it on. The remote slips into your pocket and allows you to control your music throughout the show. You can play pre-show tunes, switch volumes up or down, change tracks, start and stop music as much as you want, and generally make your show sound like it has its own film score.

The easy playlist system and simple remote allow you to change your music any time you want with a single button push. The remote fits nicely in your vest or pants pocket or slips onto your belt. The buttons are raised so you can feel which one you need without looking.

The player has several helpful features. It comes with pre-programmed track numbers. When a song plays you can see a large bright colored square with a large colored numeral on it. The numbers and background colors change each time you change the track. The color sequence follows ROYGBIV background with white numbers, then again with black numbers, then color numbers with white screen, and then color numbers with a black screen. That's twenty-eight different images; from quite a distance you can easily tell that the next song will be, say, the red 3 or the blue 4, even if you cannot see the number. Another feature is that each time you press a button on the remote the player blinks a red light, telling you that the connection was successful. This is helpful if a particular track starts on low volume and fades up. You can increase or decrease the volume of a track during the show, but you can also pre-set the volume of each track in your playlist so that some tracks play louder than others. This feature allows you to have some bold pieces of music carry your show action and other pieces play softly in the background while you talk. The SD card slot allows you to keep and carry a backup file of your songs and playlists. If anything should happen to the internal memory portion of the device while you are on the road, you can easily run the playlist from a memory card instead. There are plenty more features that you can read about on the website (and I presume you would not simply buy one without researching those features, despite my strong recommendation). I won't list them all here. Instead let me mention some strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths: The remote has a removable, replaceable outer shell made of rubber. It is sturdy, waterproof, and very protective. I doubt you could break the remote even by dropping it from a roof. The button configuration is ideal: large enough to feel and raised where needed, with a separate fade button on the side. It is curved to rest comfortably in a pocket without changing positions. It has flexible belt loops in case you want to wear it at your waist. The player also seems sturdy and solid with a clear, simple display screen. It is flat, thin, and lightweight with a visible red confirmation light. The battery lasts for three to four hours and is easily rechargeable. If you frequently do more than four shows per day, I suggest you buy a second unit – with that many shows, your

income can withstand it. You can change your songs or tracks at the venue without going back home or hooking up to your computer. You can use it with any sound system, amplifier, or PA. The remote is RF, not infra-red, so it does not need a line of sight signal, and can be hidden. Any sound file works, not just music. You can add a laugh track, a rim shot, a doorbell, or any other audio that will enhance your show. You just have to remember to play it in sequence at the right time.

Weaknesses: Not many. I found adding tracks and arranging them into playlists a bit tedious. A one-time set-up of about ten to fifteen minutes per playlist is expected. If you have dozens of shows with dozens of songs in each one, you will find it very time-consuming to scroll through hundreds of songs in order to add each new track to a playlist. Once they are playlisted, though, you should be all set. You can change the sequence of tunes before or after your show, but not during. Your songs will always be in the specific order that you set up, so you cannot, for example, decide to do your musical rope trick last instead of first. Only mp3 and wav files are playable, so if you have all your music in Apple AAC iTunes format, you will have to duplicate and change the format of those songs before you upload them to the UC. If you already own an iPod or other good music player, you are essentially paying to replace that with this player, because the UC player and remote are built to work together, and not in conjunction with anything else. Changing the battery in the remote requires a mini screwdriver to remove three screws. Even if you have the screwdriver on site at your show, changing the battery will take up a fair amount of time, not ideal if it dies on you during your set-up. I suggest you mark your calendar and change the battery at home at regular intervals. Three dollars per year is not much to pay to make sure that the unit is always working. The manual is thin with small print and no illustrations. I strongly recommend that you skim over it, and then watch the online video instructions completely.

As you may have guessed, I thought very highly of Ultimate Control. In addition to the high quality of the unit, I have to mention the great reputation Brian Happie has. I've researched online and talked personally to many customers who own Happie Amps or Ultimate Controls, and almost everyone has mentioned his personal help and quality service. Replacement parts were sent free, upgrades added when needed, problems solved expertly, questions answered completely, and phone and email responses returned quickly. He even advertises a 30-day, 100% money-back guarantee, unusual on a product this expensive, and almost unheard of in magic supplies.

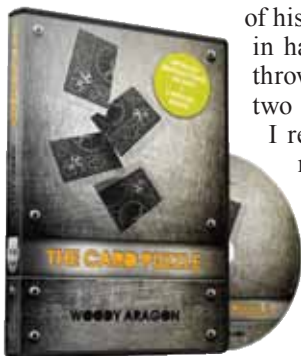
There have been other remote control music systems on the market, including my own SoundControl. The current comparable systems I mentioned above cost between \$800 and \$1,900. Ultimate Control is under \$450, so it is relatively inexpensive. Yes, it is still a sizable investment – more than most single tricks you've bought. But having a long-term sophisticated way to add and control music to your show will really upscale your act and can bring in thousands of dollars in additional shows and higher fees. It is well worth it for any professional performer.

THE CARD PUZZLE DVD AND CARDS BY WOODY ARAGÓN

*Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies
Price \$35.00*

REVIEW BY DANNY ARCHER

The Card Puzzle is a wonderful effect by Woody Aragón. I first heard of Woody when Seth Kramer performed a great effect



of his at MINDvention. Cards were ripped in half, turned this way and that, pieces thrown over the shoulder, and yet the last two pieces matched. Then just last week

I read a cover story about Woody in a magic magazine and got to watch another of his effects. Killer! And today in the mail comes this DVD for review. Woody, if you are reading this...I get it...please stop. I will order your book tomorrow.

The DVD is produced by Luis de Matos and the folks at EMC; the production and quality are excellent. Along with the DVD, you also receive all the cards you will need to perform the effect. Here is what happens. A card is selected and tabled unseen. A packet of pieces of quarter cards, cut from a bunch of jumbo cards, is introduced. The quarter cards are shuffled by the spectator and laid out in pairs on the table. The spectator freely selects two pairs and can even swap pairs if she likes. When the quarter cards are turned face up, amazingly they all complete a single card. The selection is turned over, and it too matches the jumbo card.

This will seriously fool you (and your audiences). Woody has used a great principle in a different way to produce a very clean and baffling effect. The fact that the spectator shuffles the packets herself, chooses the card and the pairs, and can change pairs right up to the finish adds a wonderful air of randomness to the effect, which makes the climax so strong. There are no sleights in the routine, so this is within the skill range of anyone who is willing to learn it.

Carrying the special deck and the quarter cards is a lot for the strolling performer, so this would probably play better for use in a stand-up show. Although with just a small change in handling all you would need to carry are the quarter cards. The effect is called the Card Puzzle and it will produce some seriously puzzled laymen. I recommend this highly and I am looking forward to more great effects from Woody.

SPIDER PEN PRO TRICK BY YIGAL MESIKA

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies
Price \$150.00

REVIEW BY JIM KLEEFELD



Fred Kaps practically invented close-up floating magic with his original cork routine. Steve Dusheck raised the bar (literally). James George revolutionized it with his Invisible Thread Reel (ITR). Yigal Mesika refined it with his motorized Spider Pen. Now Mesika has refined it even more with patented technology that helps make it more reliable. Spider Pen Pro is the latest iteration of a motorized reel that gives you a strand of invisible

elastic thread to use for some amazingly visual close-up levitations. Like the latest iPhone, the new Spider Pen is not a great leap forward, but a slightly better and more dependable version of the

earlier model. It is stronger and classier than the original Spider Pen. It has a locking mechanism and very fine thread. Mesika claims that his thread is the finest in the world bar none, because the pen's motor can keep constant tension on the reel, unlike the variable and unpredictable tension of an ITR. I have no way of measuring either the diameter or tensile strength, so I'll have to take his word for this. I do have to search diligently to see the thread even when I know where it is.

As for the pen, having invisible thread readily accessible from an everyday, ubiquitous object makes for a strong and practical concept. Clip the pen in your pocket or shirt and you are always ready to "hook up." You can float a dollar bill, finger ring, drinking straw, or any of a dozen other lightweight objects.

The DVD that accompanies the pen is not exhaustive, but it does amply cover the basics and adds some new features. Mesika demonstrates floating a bill crumbled into a ball, and then teaches a way to float a flat, un-bunched bill. The dollar lays stretched out flat upon your palm and then simply levitates upward becoming a flat, level, horizontal piece of amazement. He also teaches a hook-up that can be used to float a borrowed finger ring and one that floats a straw horizontally. To lay people these effects look like real magic.

In addition to the tricks, tips, and instructions, the DVD is interspersed with several commercials as Mesika touts extra thread, spools, clips, and other product accessories. He suggests you buy a black pen clip accessory and then teaches how to remove the pen's silver clip and replace it with the black one. Really? If the black clip is better, why not make the pen with a black clip in the first place? Or, for \$150 they could have included both black and silver clips in the package. And a battery. There is no mention of this fact on the case or on the DVD, but the pen comes *without* a battery. You will have to watch to the middle of the DVD to discover how to insert a battery, all the while wondering why your new thread reel isn't working.

The video teaching was adequate, but could have been expanded. Little is said about anchoring the thread except to do it. In a working performance, you cannot simply reach up to touch your pen, then reach down to touch a salt shaker, then start floating a bill. Mesika might have included some nuances, subtleties, or misdirection advice along these lines. Also, a couple of times Mesika extols the virtues of this being a "real" pen that actually writes. He even explains how to change the ink cartridge. Then why not include some writing routines or at least some suggestions as to how to incorporate writing into a routine?

These quibbles do not detract from the fact that this is a very fine product. Overall, I was quite impressed with the mechanics and quality of the Spider Pen Pro. It is a one-trick pony, and easy to ruin by overuse, but for the professional who knows how to entertain and structure a close-up set, this can be a valuable tool that provides for the most memorable moment of the night.

INCEPTION DVD BY CHRIS RANDALL

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies
Price \$60.00

REVIEW BY JIM KLEEFELD

A while back the latest, newest, best bill in lemon routine was Chop. I reviewed it quite favorably in these pages. Along comes another bill in lemon from bar and street magician Chris Randall. Inception is a very finely honed, well-thought-out piece of magic. I'd label it Chris's real worker (with apologies to our editor). It



is a tad costly, but worth it for the almost-two-hours of extensive, detailed handling and advice. There are no gimmicks, no fakes, no special utility props, just a smooth and magical way of producing a signed spectator's bill from inside a real lemon.

The spectator can cut the lemon, pull it apart, and pull the bill from inside. It is actually her original bill,

signed with her name, which vanished in a

funny yet mysterious opening bit moments before.

Best of all, the method is simple and easy to handle if you take care to study and use the nuances and subtleties that Randall explains.

Inception was honed on the streets and works especially well as a performance piece in that venue. Tips include how to gather a crowd and induce them to watch, how to pace several effects into a smooth routine that starts and ends with the bill, and how to help increase your hat. In fact, Chris says that after adding this routine to his set, his average tip take doubled. This may be in part due to the dramatic close of the piece. You pull out a bill – they see that it's the familiar \$20 – then you snap it open at face height to display the spectator's bold signature. It's fast, visual, and immediately recognizable magic. No stopping to verify if a torn corner fills the space or a serial number matches. Just bam – their signature – their bill.

One bit of premium information is that the way Randall has structured the routine takes the heat off the loading of the bill. This is taught clearly and the psychology is further explained in a post-teaching interview segment. Don't skip this part – it has some good additional advice on the thinking behind the routine. Also do not skip a seemingly misplaced teach-in on the Center Tear. It only seems out of place until you watch it, and then you discover why it was included on this DVD. Also included is a thorough teaching of Professor's Nightmare. Randall uses this as careful time-misdirection to make the bill in lemon effect stronger. You could easily substitute a different effect from your repertoire, as long as you do something magical between vanishing the signed bill and recovering it inside the fruit.

I have no qualms about recommending this routine as a strong piece of magic suitable for many performers on many occasions. I do have a complaint that the advertising labels it as "An anytime, anywhere, self-contained routine." It is only self-contained if you prepare the props, carry them in the recommended cloth bag, and have the right kind and number of pockets. On a theoretical level, it is not the type of routine you would want to do any time. You need a waiting audience, primed for an event, and several minutes of undivided attention in order to accomplish at least three different effects; the vanish of a bill, a rope trick, and the re-appearance of the bill. If you walk out of a movie theater with two friends and one of them says, "Hey, do a trick," you cannot do this one. Also, theoretically, you would not want to do it anywhere, as cutting a lemon leaves a dripping mess on the floor. Outside on the sidewalk, let the juice pour down willy-nilly. Inside on an expensive Persian rug, not so much. Neither is it "anytime, anywhere" on a practical level. You need a pocket or two in which to effect a vanish. The props are carried inside a cloth bag, which is necessary to hide both the actual lemon and the load movement. That bag must be picked up, set down, and retrieved from a table-high surface. This means that on the street you have to work from a table, and in a restaurant you risk either having no place to set

it or placing it in very close proximity to curious spectator hands. But those complaints are not about the routine, which is strong and solid, but rather about the way it is being marketed.

Inception is a great routine and worth investigating, especially if you do any kind of bill in lemon routine. Even if you do not, you might want to get it just so you can appreciate a fine product that teaches some great magical thinking.

KNOCK EM DEAD 2 DVD AND DECK OF CARDS **AVAILABLE FROM ALAKAZAM MAGIC**

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$27.80

REVIEW BY NORMAN BECK



The basic effect is this: A spectator deals cards face down one at a time, stopping when he wants to stop. The card he stops on matches your prediction. The deck may not be passed out for examination, but the fact that it is handled by a

spectator helps to mitigate that. The

instructions are good and very clear, and the video is well shot. I could see someone just getting into magic liking this more than I do. There is nothing wrong with the trick or the method, but it has been done over and over again. This is really just Audley Walsh's Magician's Dream (*The Jinx*, April 1938), also known as Miracle Pack, the 1-0-1 Deck, and most commonly, as Al Koran's Five-Star Prediction. It's a fine method; I would just like to see something that is a tad bit fresher.

X-ACT GIMMICKS AND DVD

By MARK MASON

Available from: www.jbtvusa.com

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$40.00

REVIEW BY NORMAN BECK



Mark Mason is the best magic demonstrator I have ever seen. The reason is twofold: He is a nice guy, and he sells really good tricks. X-Act is not a just another really good trick; it is a great trick.

The effect is direct. The performer hands a prediction to a spectator. He asks the spectator to select a number between 1 and 52. The cards are removed from

the deck and are cleanly counted to the named number. The card at that number and the prediction match. The deck is reset and ready to go again the moment it is put back in the case.

You can also show that the cards on either side of the stopped-at card do not match the predicted card. You do not fumble with anything while removing the cards from the case. This is really clean. The spectator will say that you didn't do anything. Before this was sent to me for review, I actually bought it, when a friend

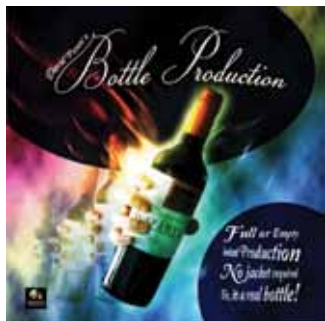
recommended it to me. I am now doing you the same favor. Just go buy it; or watch a demo of it. Then you will buy it.

DAVID PENN'S BOTTLE PRODUCTION TRICK By DAVID PENN

Available from: www.worldmagicshop.com

Price \$40.00

REVIEW BY PAYNE



The ad proclaiming that Mr. Penn's Bottle Production can be done without a jacket is a bit of a linguistic trick. A little deeper in the ad copy the diligent reader will discover the proviso that an over-shirt must assume the role of the jacket in the execution of this effect. It is, I fear, a proclamation that might mislead prospective purchasers. So, to be quite clear, one must be wearing

a jacket-like garment of some sort for this effect to work. It must be loose fitting and no longer in length than a suit coat. So if you commonly perform in a hoodie or a zoot suit, this is not the effect for you. What you wear under your jacket-like garment is also of importance. It must be rather snug in fit. So, if you are a fan of the baggy T-Shirt look, you might have some issues with the mechanics of this bottle production as well. Posture is also an important factor in this trick. It's definitely not for slouchers... unless you wish to resemble something of a hunchback. So if you want to do this bottle production, stand up straight (which is something you should do anyway).

As for the effect itself, it's pretty straightforward. After using a silk handkerchief in a trick or two to establish the fact that it is devoid of any bottle-like object, a bottle is produced from it.

Apart from the location of the load it owes a lot to the structure of Bob Read's excellent, and well known, bottle production. In fact, if you wish to add a second bottle production to your routine and are already using Mr. Read's load location for the first one, this gimmick will allow you to produce the second. This is precisely what Mr. Penn used this device for in his award-winning Magic Circle close-up competition performance, in a controlled and contained type of venue that this gimmick is perfectly suited for. Results in real-world working conditions may vary.

First off, the angles aren't nearly as good as they are in Mr. Read's version. Anyone standing behind you will see exactly where the bottle comes from and how it's hidden behind the silk before it's produced. You might be able to get around this handicap in a strolling type of situation, but I think it would be problematic in a typical table-hopping environment.

This bottle production can be a tad awkward to set up or reset. Unlike Mr. Read's version where you just stick a bottle under the waistband of your trousers, Mr. Penn's requires you to feed it into the gimmick by feel alone. Once you develop the knack, it only takes a few moments to do. But those moments are best spent in a secluded or private area.

A certain amount of misdirection is necessary to cover the steal of the bottle. So this effect is strongest in a small, intimate group where the focus can be more easily managed. A stand-up or stage environment will require a certain amount of blocking and staging to ensure that the dirty work is upstage and out of view when the steal is made. This is something that I think slightly

weakens the effect, because, unlike in Mr. Read's method, the silk goes out of view for a moment, giving the spectators a mental piton on which to string a solution. So all in all it seems that if you are only required to produce a single bottle, look into Mr. Read's classic version. If you need to produce a second one then give Mr. Penn's a go.

For your investment you receive the all important gimmick, the secret attachment implements that allow you to safely pin the gimmick to your shirt, and an instructional DVD. The DVD contains detailed instructions and tips on the performance of the trick. Also included are an explanation of Mr. Penn's version of the coin rollout, Craig Petty's version of Vernon's Expansion of Texture, and two impromptu glass productions that are oddly un-credited. (They are Mac King's and can be found in his first lecture notes). All of these additional routines and bits are to be used as a lead-in for the production so as to justify the use of the handkerchief and establish it as being devoid of any sort of bottle.

There are better bottle productions out there. So I would look into those first if you want to add one to your bag of tricks. But in the right circumstances, this version can augment whatever primary production you eventually settle on.

BOOM TRICK By MICK VALENTI

Available from *Imagine That Magic*

Distributed by *Murphy's Magic Supplies*

Price \$39.95

REVIEW BY PAYNE



For years the infamous Brassiere Trick has generally held the top spot in the category of most tasteless and inappropriate trick. Well, no more. There's a new kid on the block by the name of BOOM and it, hands down, secures the position of worst trick ever. This effect has so many marks against it that it is hard to even know where to begin.

First off, even though there is a card revelation involved, it's not even really a trick. This effect falls more into the prank category. If it wasn't for its outrageous price of nearly \$40, one would expect to find BOOM on the spin rack of SS Adams novelties alongside fake vomit and artificial dog doo rather than residing in the showcases or shelves where the quality magic is generally to be found. Secondly...well, before I get to secondly let me describe the "effect" so we can all share in the misery.

You have a card selected by an unsuspecting (and far too trusting) spectator. The card is returned and then "lost" in the pack by performing a poorly-taught false cut. The magician then tells the spectator that he will find his card in less than ten seconds. A stopwatch is asked for. But since such a device cannot be located and no one thinks to use the sweep second hand on their watch or the timer function on their Smartphone, the magician removes a "poor man's timer" from his pocket, which turns out to be a rather large firecracker or half stick of dynamite (depending, I suppose, on your audience and/or patter choices). Regardless, the spectator is informed that the explosive device has a ten-second fuse. He is then asked which hand he writes with.

I'm sure you all can see what's coming next. The spectator

is cajoled into holding the bomb and the fuse is lit. As the fuse (not included) or piece of (not included) flash string burns, the magician vainly tries to find the selected playing card. Of course, the magician fails in his attempts to locate the previously selected card and the firecracker goes off with a bang. Well, at least a bang sound of some sort is heard. The spectator is coaxed back into the room and told to pick up the still whole, yet smoldering explosive off the floor – violating every rule of safe firework handling practices by doing so. Then he is told to look inside the UXB and pull out what he finds there. Surprise, surprise, it's his previously selected card! The only thing that could make this trick worse is having the spectator at the end of the trick turn his hand over, only to find a large plastic spider stuck there.

Magic already has a questionable reputation. Do we really need to validate the public's perception by inflicting this type of prank on our audiences? The ad for this ill-conceived trick even boasts that your hapless helper will need a change of clean underwear after participating in this prank. Vernon once said "Confusion isn't magic." If he was alive today and unfortunate enough to witness this poor excuse of a trick, I have little doubt he would add the addendum that "Terrorism isn't magic" either.

But who am I to stop you from having a little low-brow fun at the expense of the rest of us trying to elevate the craft of magic to an art? While some of us find it questionable to use the old "clean hand" gag, others have no issue with threatening to blow the hand off.

So, if you have a use for a trick of this ilk and no reputation to worry about maintaining, here is what you need to know. For your \$39.95 you receive two red cardboard tubes and two cardboard caps to seal the tops of said tubes, with a small supply of caps and a Bang gimmick to make them go bang. There is no fuse or flash string included. So make sure you add that to your order if you want to perform this when it arrives in the post. You also get a DVD containing the most surreal instructions I've ever seen. There are also three gimmicked cards that will allow even the most unskilled of performers to make the spectator's forced card vanish from the deck. The DVD also contains instructions allowing one to have a signed card appear in the cardboard tube. This addition in no way improves the trick.

So unless you have a gig in a dive bar for a bunch of rowdy miners with a penchant for playing with high explosives, I'd give this one a wide berth. The magicians of the world will thank you.

SOLARI'S SWAMI SECURE UTILITY DEVICE **By BOB SOLARI**

Available from: bobsolarimagic.com

Price: \$19.95

REVIEW BY JOSHUA KANE



The Swami Gimmick (or nail writer) is a staple of the mind reader's toolkit. In the right hands it can help create devastating impact in effects that require on-the-go secret writing. Many models have been seen on the market over the years. Some performers swear by a particular model and all curse the situations when the darn thing comes free or falls off. Solari's

device will mitigate that issue.

The design is that of the classic adjustable band writer; it can be worn on either hand and is easily adjusted to ride in an optimum position on either thumb. It is of the Listo marker type and comes with an ample supply of refills as well as information for finding inexpensive replacements. The gimmick is painted flesh color for Caucasian hands and can be repainted to match any skin color. It is well made, can be easily put on, and is not likely to prematurely detach. I like this model better than the Boon or under-the-nail variety and would trust it in real world conditions. Instructions on the maintenance of the device are included. It is simple and well made. I recommend that you buy two while they are available. ★

**If you wish to have your product
reviewed please send it to:**

Bill Duncan

P.O. Box 50562

Bellevue, WA 98015-0562

Need to Write an Assembly Report? **We Made Your Job a Little Easier**

Go to www.mum-magazine.com and click on "Easy Report Submission." You'll be taken to a page with a form that makes submitting your assembly report a breeze. Simply fill in the required fields and paste in your report from your word processor. Upload a photo and a caption if are submitting one. Then hit "Submit Form." You're done, and your report comes to us in format that makes our job a lot easier, too.

THE SOCIETY of AMERICAN Magicians



**RING IN THE
NEW YEAR!**



Become a Life Member and join the ranks of over 360 S.A.M. members who have chosen to show their pride and support in the S.A.M. and the S.A.M. Magic Endowment Fund, by becoming Life Members.

The Magic Endowment Fund Activities

Magic Camp Scholarships

College Scholarships

Hearing Impaired Grant for a Convention signer

Hall of Fame Support

Houdini Fund

Leslie Guest Award

Support Production of a Documentary

Lecture Tour Support

W.O.W Convention Support

RESOLVE TO BECOME A LIFE MEMBER!

To find out how to become a Life Member go to
<http://magicsam.com/presidents-welcome/s-a-m-life-membership/>
or email Dan Sclare at dansclare@gmail.com for info and an application



THE DEAN'S DIARY

BY GEORGE SCHINDLER

A SATURDAY THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

Nat Weill and I were the only two magicians at Lafayette High School in 1945. I was selected for the annual variety show because I could work on stage; poor Nat could only do card tricks. I knew nothing about card tricks except for my Phantom Photo, in which a selected card appeared in a picture frame that was previously shown empty when I assembled it. As far as I know, I invented it (see *Presto, Magic for the Beginner*).

Nat was amazed; I had to teach him my secret, which was called a Svengali Deck. In exchange, he taught me how to bring a card to the top of the deck with a secret cut he called the Pass. Weill was a real magician. I didn't appreciate sleight of hand at the time. We'd meet after school many times and Nat told me about a group of kids who met in the city on Saturdays. We decided to get there. In those days mothers weren't afraid to let their sixteen-year-old kids travel alone in the subways.

We met in a bare, cold building used

by the Department of Parks. A man called "Doc" was the magician who mentored the group. He was a physical education teacher at Yeshiva University who moonlighted in the summer as "Peter Pan the Magic Man." Professor Abe Hurwitz was the official magician of New York City, so named by Mayor LaGuardia. He performed at all the parks in the city and ran a small magic club for kids. Nat and I were taken by the expertise of the kids and were warmly welcomed by them. We saw all kinds of magic we never knew existed. Looking back at the group, I would estimate that more than ninety percent of us became professional magicians. Nat couldn't make the meetings on Saturdays because he worked in his brother's radio repair shop, but I attended most of them and I dutifully reported to Nat.

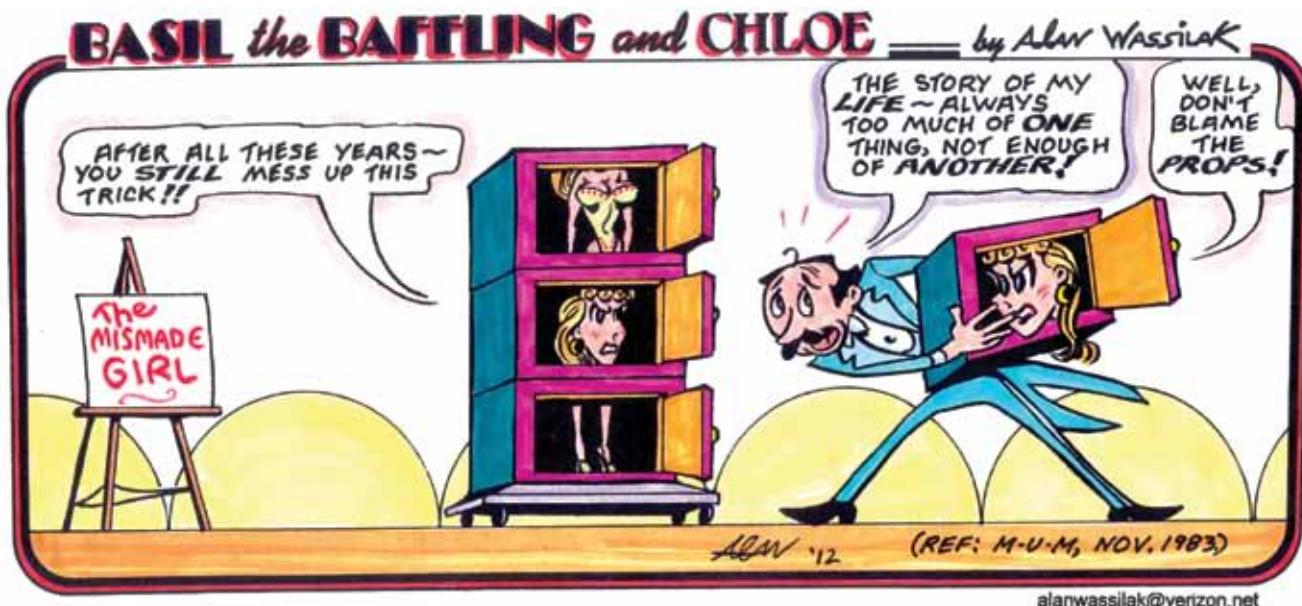
Some of us occasionally were allowed to assist Doc in one of the parks. It meant loading "Oscar" the rabbit in an oversized drawer box and helping to carry the props across the lawn, but most important of all we had the opportunity to watch a performance and learn presentation, routining, and patter. The Saturday Peter Pan Magic Club was the forerunner of the S.Y.M. or today's magic camps. A kid named Howie Schwarzman was our secretary; he kept very clear notes of our activities. The early part of the summer meetings



Abe Hurwitz and Oscar

were spent concentrating on, and planning for, the annual Columbus Day show in Central Park Mall [See "The Dean's List" – October 2007 *M-U-M*].

After the morning meetings a few of us would go uptown to visit a real magic shop, usually Max Holden's, where we would meet celebrity magicians and watch the Norman Jensen demos that would make up our "wish lists." We eventually changed the name of the group to the Future American Magical Entertainers (FAME), and we certainly were. ★



OUR ADVERTISERS

Axtell Expressions	10
Balloons to You	10
Burgoon Magic	9
Card Shark	72
IBM/SAM 2014	7
Joe Mogar - Magic Stars	4
Jolly Roger	4
Klamm Magic	41
La Rock's Fun & Magic Outlet	3
Levent Magic	45
Loomis Magic	51
S.A.M. Convention 2013	71
S.A.M. Life Member	67
S.A.M. Twitter	4
Secrets in Africa	2
Show-Biz Services	9
The Magic Bakery	47
T. Myers	51

S.A.M. PHOTO CONTEST



Congratulations to Bill Gleason (on the right) on winning the November S.A.M. gear photo contest. Bill is pictured here in his S.A.M. logo shirt delivering hurricane relief supplies collected from Westville High School and Junior High School to the Red Cross after Hurricane Sandy. Thanks, Bill, for everything you do for the S.A.M. and for people everywhere! – Steve Marshall

INSIDE STRAIGHT

BY NORMAN BECK

JUDGMENT CALL

A friend of mine was talking to his daughter and used the phrase “you can’t judge a book by its cover,” at which point his daughter asked, “But isn’t that the reason they put attractive covers on books – so you will buy them?” Such is the wisdom of children.

I am a big fan of book covers, but today I want to talk about judging *people*, and the possible outcomes of doing this. I am a big fan of cold reading and the study of human nature; I often quickly try to figure out who and what people are about, based on all the information I have at hand. I would like to tell you I am good at it (and many times I am), but often I am not. As magicians, I think we often make judgmental mistakes.

I recently asked Ace Greenberg his thoughts on the subject. He told me that his rule is to never judge anyone on the first meeting. I now have adopted this rule. The problem is that you never know who you are talking to.

I recently attended a convention in Las Vegas; a friend of mine had a problem with her room. She complained to the manager and was told that he could not fix her problem for several days. I think most people would have gotten very forceful at this point, but she did not. She thanked him and never said another word to him. The thing that the manager of the hotel did not know was that she was his boss’s, boss’s boss. My friend was so far up the food chain the manager did not even know her name. I assure you, however, that *she knew his*. I don’t know where he works now, but his employment location changed shortly after this incident.

As a personal example of misjudgment, I had many chances to talk with and learn from Mel Stover, but I never engaged him in conversation because I thought he was a crazy old man. I was very wrong about that, and it was my loss.

I know very little about the world; I only feel like I know anything about three subjects: magic, bridge, and travel. I have almost five million miles under my belt and I am intimately aware of how the airline system works. Last week, a gate agent felt the need to steal my seat reservation from me. Three times I asked her to explain this, and three times she lied to me. Then she stole from me. I was told later that she thought I looked harmless (and based her actions on that judgment). The most interesting aspect of the story for me was that I was speaking her jargon to let her know I was “with it.” She just didn’t get it; now she works someplace else.

A rule of thumb is this: the better dressed and more outgoing they are, the less they probably have to offer. Those with the knowledge and the ability do not have a need to show it. When I was a cop I drank coffee every morning with Bill Pigman. When I asked what he did for a living, he told me he was a farmer. One morning I found out that he was an attorney whose persona was that of an old country boy who couldn’t find his way to the courthouse; but if you opposed him in a trial, he would beat you like a drum. I think of the great card magicians I know: one sells produce, one teaches math, and one counts beans. None of them have a website or a business card. Should you ever meet them, all three would be slow to show you a trick; it would be very easy to write them off.

The rule to follow is this: Treat everyone like a million dollars. Should you feel the need to change, you can always back off the million dollar treatment, but you can *never* go in the other direction. ★



CONFESSIONS OF A PAID AMATEUR

BY ROD DANILEWICZ

As we begin our series on unscheduled discrepancies that can creep into a show, I want to begin with hecklers. I am old enough to remember the line many performers used decades ago: "The war's over; you can get parts for your head now." Audiences who had just gone through several years of shortages and rationing could relate to that. This is the secret of dealing with a heckler. Never do or say anything that might cause you to lose your audience.

Your response to a heckler will be predicated on many things, such as the nature of the venue, your performing style, your experience, and your age. Most important, your response should be tailored to the type of heckler you are dealing with; there are six distinct categories.

For many of us, during our early performing careers, the possibility of being heckled is a genuine fear. Certain types of individuals are not unlike aggressive animals. They can sense fear or weakness and will attempt to intimidate you. As you gain confidence in front of an audience the problem will diminish proportionately.

For most of us learning how to respond to a heckler is a trial by fire. Something happens during a show and we come away thinking, "I'll be ready for that the next time it happens." If we had done our homework, we would have been prepared for the unexpected.

Part-time magicians who actually take the time to research and rehearse their effects are not in the majority. A book listing the names of those who do research on the *audience* would be thinner than the broth made from the shadow of a chicken that starved to death.

If your stage persona is that of a wise guy, you might get away with taking on a heckler directly. Nathan Kranzo and I discussed this at length. He works a lot of comedy clubs where over-oiled customers often want to get into the act.

Nathan does his research. His rationale is that comedy club patrons are there to have a good time. When they interrupt, they are not being antagonistic. They get caught up in the moment and want to be a part of the fun. Nathan is prepared to interact with them and weave their contributions into the show. His presentation is tailored to the nature of the venue. He also has years of experience. I steal a lot of his stuff every time he lectures for our club.

This would not be the approach to take if you were working a corporate event or a private party. You are representing the person who hired you. Your function is to entertain the guests or clients of your boss, not to create ill will.

The majority of the problems I encounter with audience members come from magicians in the audience. I ignore them the first couple of times. If they start tipping tricks, I will stop the show and address the audience directly.

Disruptions from the audience can take many forms. While it may be the intention of the heckler to make himself important by becoming the center of attention, you must understand his motivation so you may respond correctly.

People who carry on a conversation during the show can be a distraction, but they are not challenging you directly. Most of today's audience members were raised watching television. They are not familiar with the rules of etiquette expected from an audience during a live performance.

Usually those seated close to the talker will silence him. If it gets out of hand, you can ask him to help with an effect. Once he

is on stage you have home court advantage. Don Alan's favorite method for derailing a disruptive audience member was to ask them a direct question.

You may encounter "the helper." This individual is not acting out of malice. He actually believes his witty contributions are adding to the audience's enjoyment. More often than not, this will be another magician or someone who has some inside knowledge about magic.

The majority of the problems I encounter with audience members come from magicians in the audience. I ignore them the first couple of times. If they start tipping tricks, I will stop the show and address the audience directly.

I explain that the offender is another magician and his comments are inside jokes. I will be at his next show doing the same thing to him. This will quiet him down, but your chances of getting even are nil. Those types never seem to get a show.

Then there is the person who has had too much to drink. It is not worth getting into a confrontation with these types because their disruptions are often without logic. You vanish an elephant and he yells that it went up your sleeve.

Members of his party will often take it upon themselves to quiet him down. If he is too far gone to take the hint, you can make an announcement from the stage to no one in particular. "Would someone be kind enough to notify security? Tell them to bring a stun gun and a roll of duct tape." This gets the point across that he is headed for the lobby.

There are three more types of disruptive individuals we will discuss next month. I have saved the worst for last – the true antagonist who deserves your best heckler stopper. I have at least four pages of these, almost none of which are suitable for today's politically correct audiences.

None of them would stop the show but they sure would slow things down a lot. This is not the result you want if you hope to work for this group again. I would be interested in hearing from anyone who has been plagued by hecklers and how you respond to the situation. ★

Email me at polishwiserd@sbcglobal.net

THE 2013 S.A.M. NATIONAL CONVENTION WASHINGTON, DC

★ **PROUDLY HONORING AL COHEN** ★

July 3-6, 2013 | Marriott Hotel Crystal Gateway

JUST ADDED! DENNY HANEY PRESENTS: "WORLD'S FUNNIEST MAGIC"

★ **Register Now for Only \$250 Until February 1st** ★

★ STARS OF 2013 ★

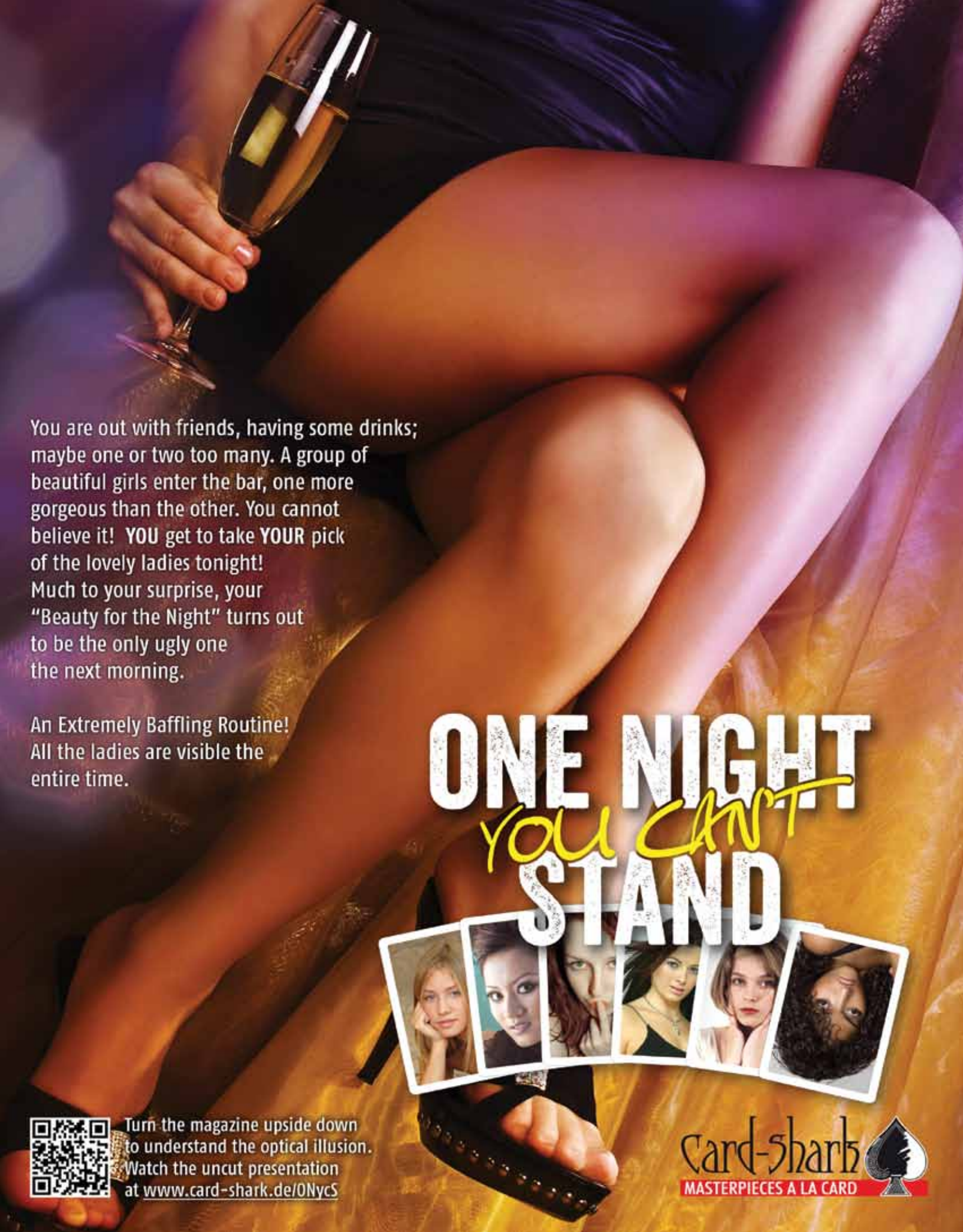
Stephen Bargatze ★ Kobayashi Dai ★ Denny Haney
Hilby the Skinny German Juggler ★ Kohl & Company
Takao Koichi ★ Levent ★ Chipper Lowell
Steve Marshall ★ Mayuco ★ Bobby Maverick
Rick Merrill ★ Nobu & Yuri ★ Shoot Ogawa
Bob Sheets ★ Tashiro Shigeru ★ Tempei

REGISTER NOW AT MAGICSAM.COM

OR SCAN HERE >>>

**TO REGISTER BY PHONE:
719.338.8169**





You are out with friends, having some drinks; maybe one or two too many. A group of beautiful girls enter the bar, one more gorgeous than the other. You cannot believe it! **YOU** get to take **YOUR** pick of the lovely ladies tonight! Much to your surprise, your "Beauty for the Night" turns out to be the only ugly one the next morning.

An Extremely Baffling Routine!
All the ladies are visible the entire time.

ONE NIGHT *you CAN'T* STAND



Turn the magazine upside down to understand the optical illusion.
Watch the uncut presentation at www.card-shark.de/ONycS

card-shark 
MASTERPIECES A LA CARD