

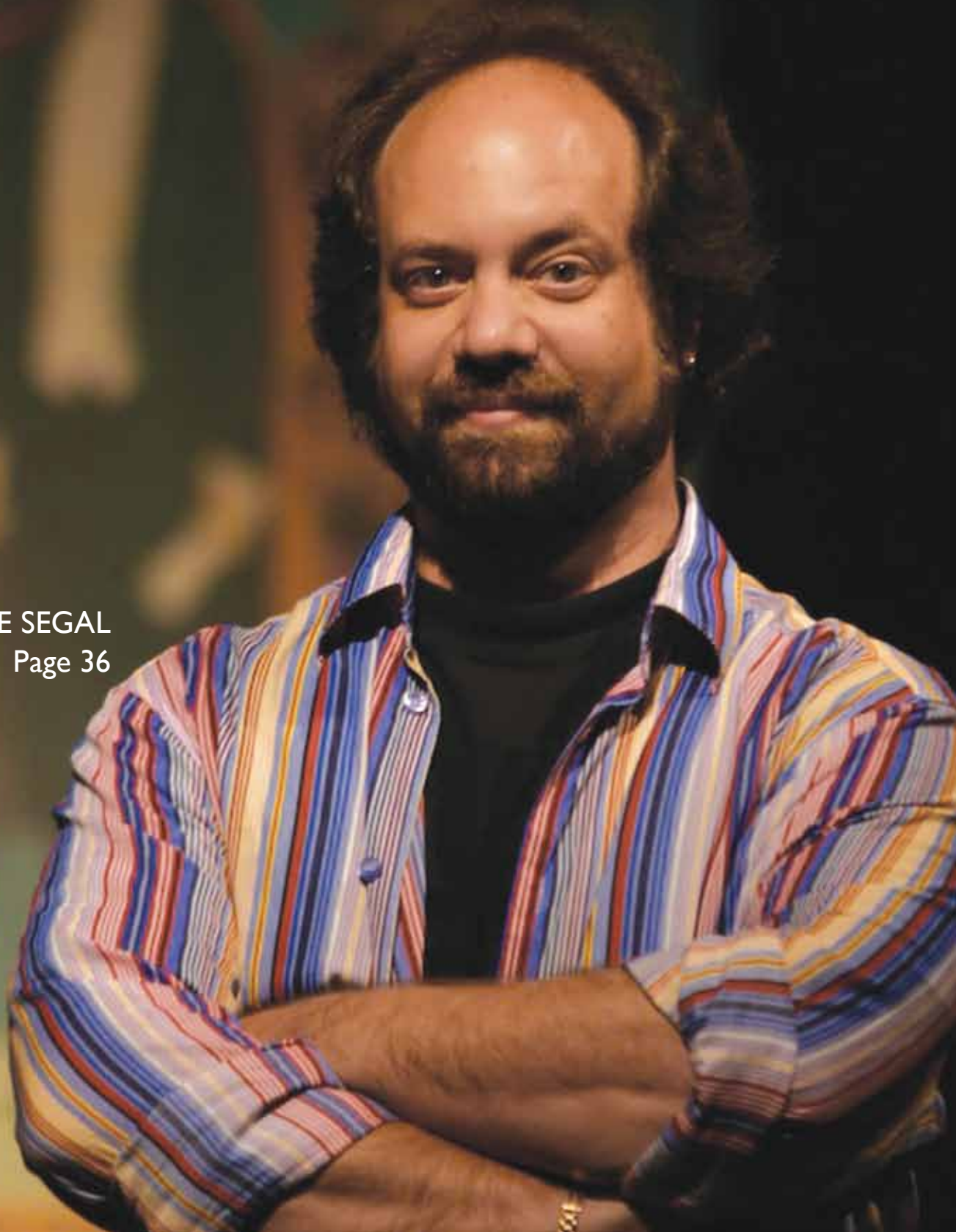
# MUM

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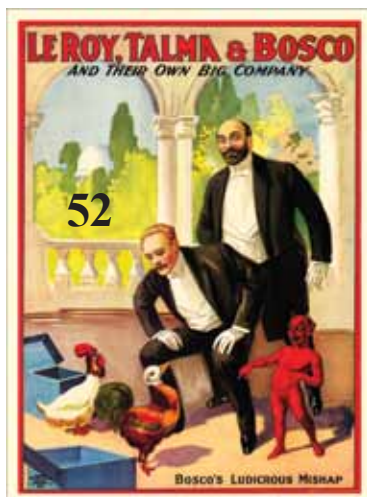


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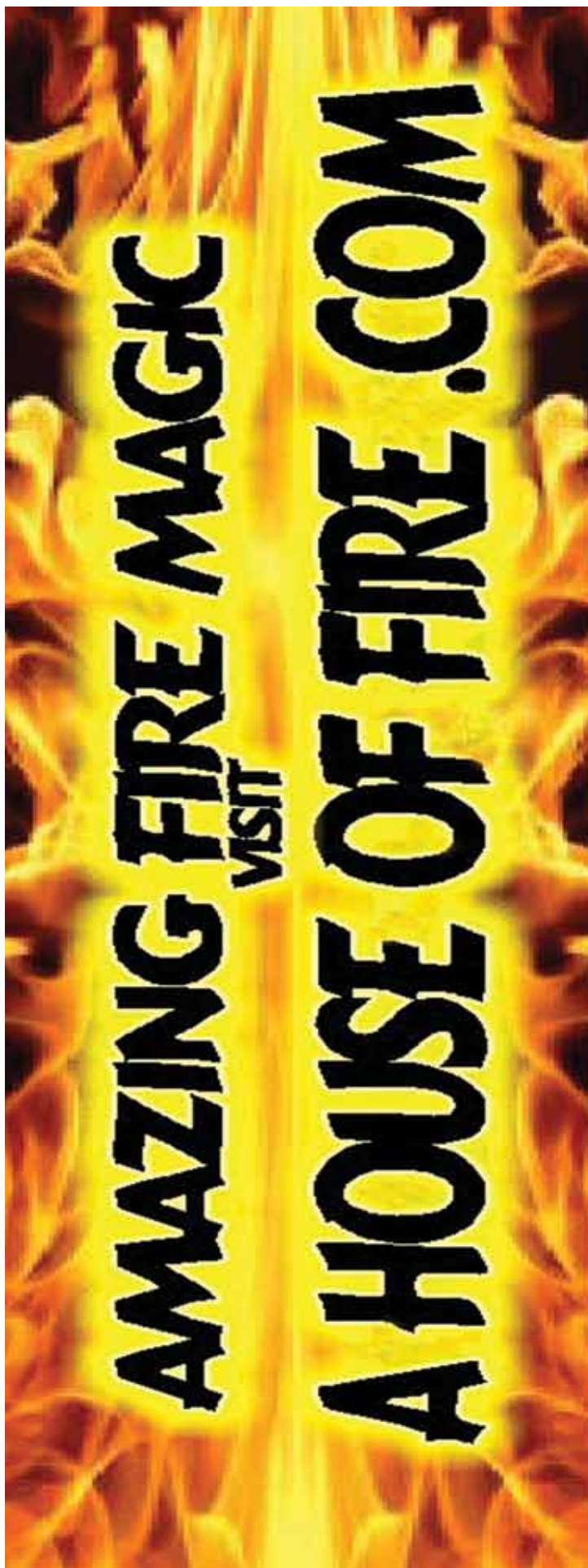
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## President's Desk

Vinny Grosso

### DAL AND CINDE SANDERS

In March my work took me to Dallas and I had the pleasure of visiting with 1st Vice President Dal Sanders and his wife Cinde. Dal and Cinde are incredibly dedicated to the S.A.M., and Dal wears many hats beyond 1st VP. As many of you know, he is a fantastic full-time magician and lecturer. I had the pleasure of sitting in on one of his shows for the younger folks. To be honest, I loathe children's shows, but I have to say I really enjoyed Dal's show. He incorporated many elements beyond magic tricks that kept the tough customers engaged throughout.

Later, I did a quick interview for a documentary Dal is spearheading (as executive producer) with five-time Emmy-winning documentarian Jason Van Sickel. The documentary will be about the history of magic with a focus on the S.A.M.! He will have the trailer for it on the landing page of our new website, so please go to [www.magicsam.com](http://www.magicsam.com) to check it out. This is a wonderful project and will take some time to complete. So stay tuned as Dal updates us as he continues working on this project.

### NEMCON

I always look forward to Assembly 127's annual New England Magicians Convention, and this year's event did not disappoint, with a great lineup of lecturers that featured *M-U-M* columnist Nathan Kranzo, David Acer, and past *M-U-M* cover subject Banachek. The convention honored Michael Nabel, and I had the privilege of honoring the convention organizer Bill Hoagland with a Presidential Citation. Bill was very surprised and the crowd expressed their appreciation for all the work he has done for magic in New England.

While NEMCON is a one-day convention, they have been holding extra events the night before. I was unable to make it to this year's night-before event featuring Peter Samelson, but I heard it was fantastic, and I don't doubt that he was. I saw Peter this past September at Magic in the Rockies; he does a great job.

### THE TRUE MAGIC OF CONVENTIONS

My favorite part of conventions like NEMCON is spending time with the friends I don't get to see as often as I'd like. There have been several announcements lately of several regional conventions folding up shop. This is not good. Conventions, regional or national, are important in the advancement of our art. So many people have fostered friendships and collaborations from chance meetings at conventions.

Some say there are too many conventions and the competition for registrants is the reason for some of these conventions having to end their run. Others will point to the economy, and still others will put some blame on the "YouTube and social media" society.

### MAGIC & TECHNOLOGY

I am a big fan of technology and of the amazing ways technology can impact and improve our art. However, today's technology is changing so fast that it is hard to keep up with it. Effectively applying today's technology to our art is difficult because

the rapid rate of technological advancements render techniques obsolete in such a short period of time. In the past, with a limited number of ways to communicate and socialize, it was much simpler. Systems and methods could be developed and fine tuned.

We are challenged today to be able to use technology to advance our art rather than send it backwards. There are several performers and companies that are leading the way. To stay relevant as a society, it is important that we find ways to work with these leaders and continue to help advance our art.

### NATIONAL COUNCIL

We recently completed our spring national council meeting in Philadelphia. Council meetings are not unlike conventions in that you get to meet with your friends in magic, and so many of mine made it to this meeting. The attendance was great, and Assembly 4 in Philadelphia went above and beyond in putting together events throughout the weekend. A special thanks to PNP Mike Miller, Arlen Solomon, and PNP Brad Jacobs for their efforts in putting together the events.

There's also a lot of work that gets done. It is such a pleasure working with so many dedicated people who share our love for the society and art. I encourage you to go to the website and read the Blue Book. The Blue Book got its name because it is always printed with a blue cover. It contains the minutes from the previous meeting and all of the committee reports. You might be surprised at how many projects the S.A.M. is working on and how many people volunteer.

### ACADEMY OF MAGICAL ARTS

The Academy of Magical Arts, whose clubhouse is the Magic Castle in Hollywood, had their annual meeting in March. I am a member of the AMA and was in town, so I attended. I was pleased to learn that the AMA has some programs and initiatives similar to those of the S.A.M. Most notable is the AMA's Dai Vernon fund, which provides financial help to magicians who are ill. This is very similar to our Houdini Fund. The AMA is doing some great things and has fantastic leadership.

### TRAVEL TIPS SURPRISES

I have received some nice comments about my including travel tips in this column. This month I offer a surprise rather than a tip. I was recently in San Luis Obispo, California, for a show that my good friend and new S.A.M. member Mike Mills produced. The sponsors of the event made the hotel arrangements. They put us up in the Madonna Inn. It is a hotel famous for its themed rooms. They claim to be the first hotel with themed rooms, and they also take tackiness to a level that you have to see to believe. My room was called the "Chestnut Foal," and it had a lovely chandelier as you can see from the photo. I am not sure when my nightmares will end! ☆



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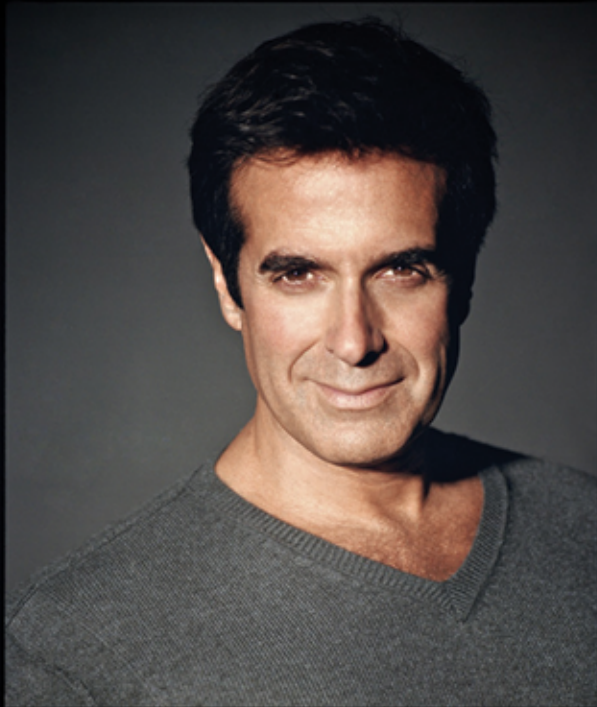
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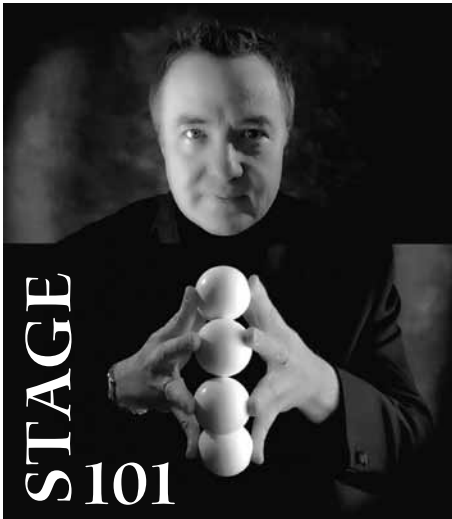
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## CLASSIC BOOKS

In previous columns, I explained how magic tricks can change over the course of time and that these changes are not always improvements. Therefore, if a magician chooses to do a classic magic trick, it is best if he does the research to learn as much as he can about the earliest version of the trick in order to ensure that he doesn't omit an important detail. Furthermore, comprehensive knowledge of a trick gives a magician the maximum amount of choices with regard to method and presentation when creating a routine.

Needless to say, this sort of knowledge requires access to a good magic library. Please note that you do not need every magic book under the sun. You can concentrate on building a collection of books in your unique area of interest. For instance, I had always wanted to be a stage magician and to that end I mostly collected books that I felt would be helpful for the presentation of visual stage magic. That said, I also acquired some books about other forms of magic, such as close-up and mentalism, so that I would develop well rounded knowledge of the art in general. The books I read tended to be classics, such as *The Expert at the Card Table* (1902) by S.W. Erdnase, *Practical Mental Effects* (1944) by Theodore Annemann, and *Modern Coin Magic* (1966) by J.B. Bobo.

As it stands now, the chances that in the future I will do a trick from a book such as *Practical Mental Effects* is very remote. But I feel that artistic and technical inspiration can come from many sources, and broad knowledge about magic is always a good thing.

If I had to create a list of "must have"

classic magic books for the budding stage magician, then as a starting point I would suggest the following list of books (in chronological order), accompanied with the reason why I recommend them specifically.

### *Les Secrets de la prestidigitation et de la magie* (1868) by Robert-Houdin



Most of the early magic books were published in England with titles such as *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584), *The Art of Jugling or Legerdemaine* (1612), *Hocus Pocus Junior* (1634), and *Sports and Pastimes* (1675). Later, however, much of the magic literature was being written in France with titles such as *Récréations Mathématique et Physiques* (1694), *Nouvelle Recreations, Physique et Mathématique* (1769), *La Magie Blanche Dévoilée* (1784), and *Nouvelle Magie Blanche Dévoilée* (1853). Without question, all of the aforementioned books are historically important. But when you read them you have to keep in mind that they were all written by amateur magicians or magic enthusiasts who were mostly attempting to describe effects that were in common use at the time. In other words, the focus of the older books was to describe *how* the tricks were done and *not* how to actually present the tricks before an audience.

This all changed in 1868 with the publication of Robert-Houdin's superb *Les Secrets de la prestidigitation et de la magie*, because it is the first textbook of magic that teaches the reader how to be a conjurer. In his day Robert-Houdin was one of the top professional magicians in the world; he had hoped to pass his act on to his sons, but neither of his boys was interested in being a magician. After his retirement, he wrote this book as a way to pass his secrets and thoughts about the art of magic to the magicians of the future. In 1878 the book was translated into English and renamed *The Secrets of Magic and Conjuring*. The original English and French editions from the 1800s can be

fairly expensive. Luckily, today you can get a print-on-demand paperback copy for about \$35, an ebook version for \$10, and if you search the Web you can find a scanned PDF copy for free.

### *Modern Magic* (1876) by Professor Hoffmann



In Victorian England there was an amateur magician named Angelo John Lewis (1839-1919), who made his living as an attorney and journalist. Under the pseudonym "Professor Louis Hoffmann," he wrote a monthly column that taught the secrets of magic in a children's periodical titled *Every Boy's Paper*. His primary sources for the magic tricks in the periodical were the French magic books, such as those by Robert-Houdin and Jean Nicholas Ponsin's well-regarded *Nouvelle Magie Blanche Dévoilée*. Eventually, Hoffmann's columns from the magazine were compiled and new material was added to form the book *Modern Magic*. Upon publication, the book was a hit; the initial edition of 2,000 copies was sold out within six weeks. Eventually, it was reprinted over seventeen times! The book was so influential that the noted magic historian Henry Ridgley Evans (1861-1949) called it "the Old Testament of the Conjuring Art." Please note, Hoffmann also wrote several other magic books, most notably *More Magic* (1890) and *Later Magic* (1903). They are all very useful, but *Modern Magic* is the must-read masterpiece of the bunch! The price of a hardcover copy varies widely, depending on edition and condition. But a used paperback copy or print-on-demand edition costs about \$20. Also, all the aforementioned Hoffmann books can be found on the Web as free ebooks.

### *Greater Magic* (1938) by John Northern Hilliard

John Northern Hilliard (1872-1935) was a journalist, amateur magician, advance-man for the Thurston illusion show, and a friend to many of the greatest magicians



of his time. When Hilliard decided to write a book with the latest magic methods, he was able to rely on his friends to contribute an enormous quantity of first-class conjuring. Sadly, Hilliard

died before the book was completed, after which this enormous project fell into the capable hands of Carl Jones, Jean Hugard, and Harlan Tarbell. When *Greater Magic* was published in 1938, it was considered an instant classic; it went through several printings, including a 1956 edition in which the book was split into five parts and a superb expanded edition published by Richard Kaufman in 1994. The book is fairly expensive; the used copies start at \$150, but it is worth every penny.

### ***Tarbell Course in Magic (1928)* by Dr. Harlan Tarbell**

In 1926, the professional magician and illustrator Harlan Tarbell (1890-1960) was commissioned by a publishing company to create a mail-order correspondence course that taught all forms of magic in the same



manner that professional educators teach other art forms. By 1928, Tarbell had completed writing and illustrating this amazingly

comprehensive sixty-part course. In 1941, Louis Tannen purchased the rights to the course and enlisted Harlan Tarbell and Ralph W. Read (as editor) to redo the entire course, formatting it into a series of five hardcover books. Eventually, Harlan Tarbell wrote a sixth book for the series; he died just as he was beginning to write a seventh volume. In 1970, Harry Lorayne began to write Volume 7; he also created an excellent index for the entire course. Finally, in 1993, Steve Burton and Richard Kaufman put together an eighth volume utilizing material from the original *Tarbell Course* that was omitted from the hardcover books, as well as Tarbell material from other sources. The current

price for the entire eight-volume set is around \$200, or about \$30 per book; used copies go for about half that price.

The way I see it, the Robert-Houdin and Hoffmann books give us a good understanding of the magic that was common before the 1870s. *Greater Magic* and the *Tarbell Course* explain how many of the classic tricks were done up until the middle of the 20th century.

## **BEGIN A COLLECTION**

So there you have my suggestions for beginning a collection of classic magic books. There are certainly other books that you should have such as:

- *Sleight of Hand* (1885) by Sachs
- *The Modern Conjurer* (1903) by C. Lang Neil
- *The Art of Magic* (1909) by T. Nelson Downs and John Northern Hilliard
- *Magicians Tricks and How They Are Done* (1910) by Henry Hatton and Adrian Plate
- *Our Magic* (1911) by Maskelyne and Devant
- *Illustrated Magic* (1931) by Ottokar Fischer
- *Secrets of My Magic* (1936) by David Devant
- *Magic without Apparatus* (1945) by Camille Gaultier
- *Learn Magic* (1947) by Henry Hay
- *Rice's Encyclopedia of Silk Magic Vol. 1, 2 & 3* (1948, 1953, 1962) by Harold Rice
- *The Amateur Magician's Handbook* (1950) by Henry Hay
- *Classic Secrets of Magic* (1952) by Bruce Elliot

I could list many important books; this is just the beginning.

## **YOU MUST ACTUALLY READ THE BOOKS**

I have met some magicians who have a very large collection of magic books, yet they know very little about what is written in the volumes in their possession. This is because some people like to collect books, but they don't like to read them. You are far better off having one good magic book and knowing how to do every trick in that book, than having a thousand books and no clue as to what the books contain.

Basically what I am saying is that you have to read and absorb the books that you own.

In my opinion, it is best to start slow and from the beginning. Right now you can go on the Internet at [www.Books.Google.com](http://www.Books.Google.com) and read Hoffmann's *Modern Magic* online in your browser or you can go to [www.Archive.org](http://www.Archive.org) and download the book for free as a PDF or ebook.

As I have mentioned in a previous column, old magic books (such as Hoffmann's or Robert-Houdin's) are written in an old style language that can sometimes be hard to understand. If that is the case, then you can just begin with 20th century books such as *Greater Magic* or the *Tarbell Course*.

## **ADVICE**

A few months ago, a young man attended my magic show. The boy had been doing magic for a couple of years and he was very enthusiastic about the art. After my performance, the boy's father asked me if I could recommend a magic book or DVD for his son. This made me think back to my childhood. Back then I did not have a lot of magic books, but the books I had were classics and I knew everything in those books, knew it like the back of my hand. Also, I thought about people like Dai Vernon and Johnny Thompson, who as children spent years studying a single book, *The Expert at the Card Table*. I have come to believe that intimately understanding the classics of magic literature can make a young person a better magician. For this reason I told the kid's dad that he should get his son the *Tarbell Course in Magic*. But I told him not to get the entire course right away. I felt that if you give too much information too quickly, it could possibly overload the boy's mind and he might drown in a pool of knowledge. Instead, I suggested the dad only get Volume One of the *Tarbell Course* and buy each successive volume in six month increments. This way the boy will have a better chance of absorbing the complete knowledge from the books.

I have heard it said from a lot of old pros that a magician can build an entire professional career using only tricks from the *Tarbell Course in Magic*. I agree completely and about four years from now, I hope that the little boy who attended my show will concur. ★

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# Ellipsis\* [ih-lip-sis] an omission of a word, sentence, or whole section from an original text

by Michael Perovich

## New Light on a New Theory

Dai Vernon often said that when he saw old Dad Steven's work, his riffle shuffle technique was so beautiful that it brought tears to his eyes. This wasn't a figure of speech; Vernon really meant it. I didn't cry when I saw Vernon do his second deal, but I came close. I would jump up in my chair when I saw this done from only inches away. It looked perfect. To me, unfortunately, it's always been like rubbing my stomach and patting my head, and I don't claim to do it well. But I think I can tell *you* how to do it.

The sleight is described on page 48 of *Dai Vernon's Further Inner Secrets of Card Magic*. The description, particularly the initial part, is quite good, but the dealing action isn't conveyed correctly and the photographs are misleading if you wish to convey the same illusory quality that Vernon exhibited.

Because I liked this so much, because I found it so challenging to perfect, and because it was so effortless in Vernon's hands, I believe I can explain to you exactly how to do it. It was discussed with me several times. The key is not so much in the finger movements but in the coordination between the two hands.

It is noted in the text that the sleight was devised for use by magicians and not by gamblers. This has always puzzled me because the sleight is done from a relaxed hold and with a very natural action. In my opinion the action is much more natural than the other methods in common use such as the double push-off and the strike seconds. I think the sleight may have been considered better for magicians than gamblers because it works best when cards are counted onto the table rather than dealt to players. For the most part, this is how magicians would theoretically make use of the sleight.

I should note that Vernon often scoffed at so called gambling experts who demonstrated the second deal as an exhibition to show how gamblers cheat. This often involved dealing seconds quite quickly, usually by the strike method. While this can be done so the spectator is baffled and can't see how the second is achieved, the action is betrayed by the manner of the deal. Vernon would point out someone who was ten yards away and say, "Look, look, you can see it from here. He's dealing seconds! It's obvious from across the room." You could tell just by the action that a false deal was being performed. This is the sort of thing that would draw attention in a game and is nearly useless in a trick. It would seem to me it is more important for the second deal to look natural than to be telegraphed by a rapid razzle-dazzle deal. Having said this, it is true that many professional dealers deal quite rapidly and for them the action can be made consistent.

Vernon's method is fairer looking than any other I've encountered. First, it is important to understand how the cards are dealt. This is a method of dealing that is in fairly common use by someone who doesn't appear to have a lot of finesse. This isn't to say that it is a clumsy method, but more like the method of a journeyman who is practical and direct in his action. The cards are held loosely in the dealing hand, gently boxed in by the first finger, and beveled toward the taking hand. The thumb is to the side away from the taking hand and about three quarters of the way up the pack. Everything is relaxed and natural.

The top card is pushed to the side toward the taking hand. The taking hand seizes the card between the length of the thumb from above and the second finger below. *This is the key to the deceptiveness of the sleight.* The card is not taken between the tips

of the second finger and thumb as in Photo 1 on page 49 of *Further Inner Secrets* but rather between the second finger and thumb as shown in Photo 4 on the next page.

Note that the thumb covers the entire length of the side of the card where it grasps it. The pack is held up to a foot off the table and the card is taken in both an abrupt and a measured way. We will discuss this contradiction later. The action is not the action of an elegant artiste with the pasteboards, but rather that of an ordinary guy directly counting cards onto a table – someone who is a tad rough with the cards as he deals them down. If you are not used to dealing this way, it will be helpful to practice dealing through the whole deck in this manner until it is comfortable for you. Very few magicians deal this way but it is not uncommon to see normal human beings use this method. The card can be grasped even deeper in the hand than the photo shows.

Here is the exact action to be followed when dealing a second. The dealing hand holds the deck as described above. As the two hands move toward each other in a measured, relatively slow way, the top card is being pushed off. Only the top card is moving, not the second card down. A viewer should ideally never see the pack with more than one card pushed to the side at any point during the sleight. Just as the taking hand is about to seize the card, the thumb of the dealing hand, which is on the far edge of the top card, engages the second card and the two cards are pushed toward the taking hand (Photo 1). The thumb immediately recoils as the second finger of the dealing hand gently touches the second card from below, preventing it from being pulled back with the top



card. This push-pull is like a viper's tongue going out and back. It takes place in an instant under cover of the top card apparently being seized. Bang, bang. This leaves the second card protruding from the side of the deck with the top card square with the rest of the pack (Photo 2).

The protruding card is not seen because, as we have discussed, the method of grasping the card covers the entire length of the card to be taken. In this case, it is the second card (Photo 3).

Again, it is important to understand that the action is not of dealing cards to players in a game, but rather of counting cards onto a table. Also note that the second card is not pulled out from below the top card by the second finger of the taking hand. Rather the second card is seized from above and below after it has been jogged out as described. It is simply taken.

Now the second card must be pulled from the pack and this must be done quite quickly if the action is not to be exposed. Once



Photo 2

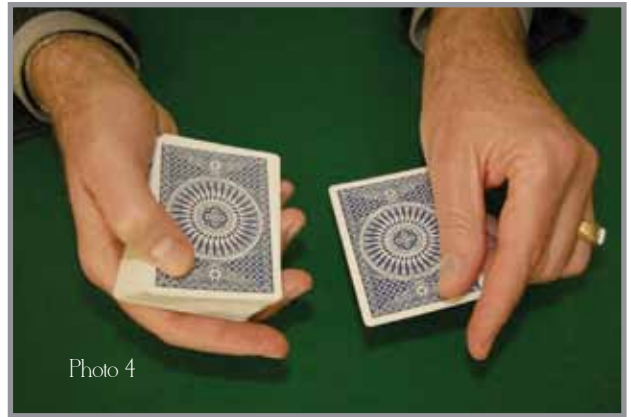


Photo 4



Photo 3

the card is clear of the pack (Photo 4), the action slows and the card is placed deliberately on the table. All this timing is very critical. The action is measured (if not slow) at the beginning and at the end, but in the middle it occurs very quickly. I noticed that Vernon used this technique of slow-fast-slow other times, for example when performing the bottom change and in the trick Penetration of Thought. If you deal the second card down quickly onto the table, the illusion will be lost. Properly done, it appears that the entire deal is done fairly and rather slowly.

I think the mind of the onlooker processes this as follows: When the hands approach each other without haste, no attention is drawn to the deal. Then, in an instant, the second card is pushed over and exposed and the top card is drawn back and the second card is pulled away from the pack. This quick action will likely alert the viewer but by the time he focuses to see just what attracted his attention, all he sees is a card being placed on the table in a reasonable, methodically paced manner. He is left to conclude that what attracted his attention was the card separating

from the pack and nothing more.

Perhaps a gambler would be more alarmed by this than a common spectator, but my observation is that it is much less suspect than dealing strike seconds as though the devil were chasing you.

Here is one last hint. I've found this works much better if you hold the pack as level as you possibly can.

The technique I've just described is titled Dai Vernon's Second Deal in *Further Inner Secrets*. A few pages later Dai Vernon's "New Theory" Second Deal is described. In this method the taking hand grabs the card palm down from above. The description in *Further Inner Secrets* is exactly correct. The side-jogged card is, in this case, hidden by the hand over the pack as the second finger of the taking hand engages the jogged card and twists it from the deck as the card is turned face up. This type of deal is commonly done in stud poker. The important thing is to keep the card in the same plane as the top card as it pivots about the base of the dealing hand and not to begin to turn it over before it clears. If one fails to do this, the top card will flutter, giving away the action. So, the New Theory Second Deal description does make clear how the protruding card is momentarily hidden, but the Dai Vernon's Second Deal explanation does not. In the case of the New Theory deal, it is the second finger of the palm-down hand that hides the protruding card. In the case of Dai Vernon's Second Deal, it is the thumb of the palm-down dealing hand. The action of the dealing hand is exactly the same in both deals, and in both cases the taking hand provides the necessary cover.

In Vernon's hands this was indescribably beautiful.

Gaultier's *Magic without Apparatus* is chock full of complicated sleight of hand from the beginning of the last century. Henry Hay states the book contains many moves not practically useful. Next time we'll take a look at one that lies dormant in print but pops when you see it done. ☆

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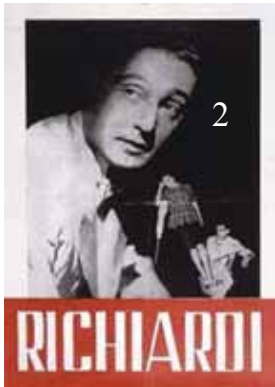
# A Magician Prepares...

by Dennis Loomis



## THE TIP-OVER BOX

As a young magician growing up in upstate Michigan, I didn't have many chances to see magic being performed. However, my family and I always tuned in to the *Ed Sullivan Show* on Sunday evenings because he occasionally had magic acts (Photo 1). One of my favorites was Aldo Richiardi, Jr. (Photo 2). He often included a transposition routine in which one of his female assistants vanished from a DeKolts Chair on one side of the stage and reappeared in a trunk on an elevated platform on the other side of the stage. Having seen this routine many times, I developed a fondness for it and for its use of the Tip-over Box. It's a versatile prop because it can be used for either a vanish or a production.



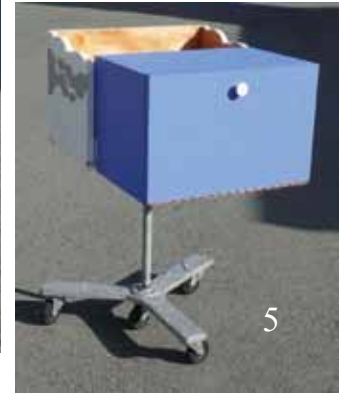
And it can be built in any size, so it can accommodate the production or vanish of a large variety of things, including a person.

Richiardi's trunk was a large Tip-over Box. The one seen in Photo 3 is a more common size (8" x 8" x 12"). Years later I had built for me a larger version for my own use as seen in the next few photos. Photo 4 is an overall view of the prop with the yardstick included to give you an idea of its scale.



In Photo 5, you can see how the inner box tips forward and out of the outer box. Photo 6 shows the interior of the inner box being shown empty from the front by lifting the lid. Photo 7 is an exposed view of the box from above, revealing a stack of books in the hidden position.

The interesting thing about this prop is that the items to be produced do not move at all. If they are essentially flat, they can be stacked up as in Photo 7.



Some years ago, I was working on the idea of a motivational/educational segment for my library and school shows that celebrated the value of books, reading, and libraries. I wanted to magically produce books, magazines, newspapers, and video media. I made a list of these items and then gathered them together so that I had an idea of what kind of a prop I might be able to use. I thought about a Square Circle, a set of Organ Pipes, and so on, but when the idea of a Tip-over Box occurred to me, I knew it was the ideal solution. Working with the actual production items, I was able to determine the size that would be needed. My friend Bill Bell in Sacramento built the prop to my specifications. He did a great job and I've used it hundreds of times since. I have a second motivational/educational act I use it for: a talk about recycling, reusing, saving our environment, and global warming. I've also used it to magically produce many gifts for birthday parties and Christmas shows. I'll end this by sharing the routine on books and reading that I've done for hundreds of libraries and schools.

The following are produced from the Tip-over Box: *Magic* by Albert Hopkins, *Houdini, His Legend and Magic* by Doug Henning and Charlie Reynolds, *The Dennis Loomis Cups and Balls Routine*, *The Complete Juggler* by Dave Finnegan, *Magic's*

Touch by Earvin "Magic" Johnson, a copy of the local newspaper, a copy of *Popular Science* magazine, and two of my DVDs (*The Dennis Loomis Knot Routine* and *The Dennis Loomis Doll House...Plus.*) A magic wand is in a pocket or table so that I can bring it out without delay when it's needed.

"I'd like you to think of this magic box as a library...a brand new library, to be exact. How do I know it's a new library? Because it's empty."

I tip the box forward and lift the lid, showing that the inside is empty. I like to bang the wand around inside to demonstrate that there is really nothing there. I close the lid, tipping the inner box back inside of the outer box, and I say, "Once the library is built, they bring in all kinds of things like tables, chairs, computers, and boxes and boxes of..." I like to leave the sentence unfinished to let the children say, "Books!" Then I say, "Let's see if we can make some books in our library."

I wave the magic wand and open the lid, letting it hang down against the front. Then I say, "When I was about his age (pointing to a youngster just five or six years old) I became interested in magic. I went to my local public library and found a copy of this book on magic written by Albert Hopkins. (The book is removed and displayed.) It was hard reading, but my Uncle Bill helped me, and together we made some of the magic stuff it described. By the way, I did take that book back to the library, and years later I bought this copy for my collection. I don't think I would be a magician today if I hadn't found this book in my local library."

"Once I became a magician I had the opportunity to meet other magicians; one of them was a Canadian named Doug Henning. When we became friends, Doug gave me a copy of this book, which he had written about one of the most famous magicians of all times...Harry Houdini." (The Henning/Reynolds book on Houdini is brought out and displayed as it's mentioned.)

"When Doug gave me this book, he wrote this inside: To my wonderful friend Dennis Loomis... may your life be filled with joy and many wonders. Magically, Doug Henning."

To allay the fears of the educators that I'm suggesting that children should write in books, I add, "You guys know that you shouldn't write in books if they aren't yours, don't you? Good." Then I say, "I thought that if Doug Henning could write a book, then I could, too. Here's the first one I wrote. It's about one of the oldest tricks in magic, the Cups and Balls."

I bring out my Cups and Balls book and display it. "When I was in high school I became interested in things besides magic... like juggling. I didn't know how to get started, so I went to the library and found this book." I hold up the Finnegan book. (If I need a little more time in the show, I will often do a bit of juggling at this point. Because there are so many patterns possible with just three or four balls, this sequence can help me adjust the length of the show. Sometimes ending exactly on time is important.)

When I'm ready to go on I say, "In high school I was also interested in basketball. I started to follow the career of a fine young basketball player from Michigan State University. Maybe he interested me because his name was Magic - 'Magic' Johnson. Later, when Magic wrote this book I immediately bought a copy. Of course, I didn't have to buy it; I could have checked it out at the library."

"Of course, libraries have much more than books. They have

newspapers. This is a local newspaper, but in libraries you can find newspapers from all over, so if you want to know what people are thinking and doing in New York, Atlanta, or even London, you can find newspapers from those places in many libraries. Libraries have magazines as well. Here's a copy of *Popular Science*. I've been reading this magazine since 1958! And I'm up to page..." (While this is a joke, it's also true. I first got a subscription to *Popular Science* when I was a high school freshman, and I've maintained that subscription to the present day.) As the script indicates, I bring out the newspaper and the magazine. If possible, I pick up a copy of the local newspaper on the way to the show.

"Libraries have video material as well: VHS tapes and DVDs on all kinds of subjects. Here are a couple of DVDs I've made." I bring out my DVDs. As each of the preceding items has been produced, I've placed them on a handy table. Once I've shown the DVDs, I quickly return the whole stack of things to the Tip-over Box.

I wrap up by saying, "I hope that you will get the library habit into your life as I have in mine. Let's give a big round of applause to all of our wonderful school and public libraries."

When I do this routine in a school, I try to make time to talk to the school librarian. I explain what I am going to do and I suggest that she pull the books on magic and make a special display of them for the students who will come in looking for them following my program. ☆

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Coin



# I LEFT MY CARDS AT HOME

 by STEVE MARSHALL

## Peter Dommel



I am excited this month to introduce Peter Dommel to you. Peter is the first contributor to this column from Germany; he contacted me directly with his effect. Thanks, Peter.

Peter was born and raised in Germany; he became a full-time missionary and moved to West Papua, Indonesia, where he learned to speak Indonesian and worked as a bible translator for many years. Toward the end of his time there, the organization he

was working for ran into some financial troubles and, due to visa problems, Peter was sent to Tucson, Arizona, to work for the organization at one of their stateside locations. While he was there, Peter met another missionary named Rod Robison who also did magic. One night when he was at Rod's home, Rod showed him some magic. "He showed me the Professor's Nightmare, a sponge ball routine, and a vanishing silk in a thumb tip; they really blew me away. He then taught me the vanishing silk trick. When I left his house it was well after midnight, but I was so excited that when I got home I woke up my wife and showed her the vanishing silk trick. That was twenty years ago but I can still remember all this clearly!" I then asked Peter if he remembered what his wife said after being awakened to see his new magic trick. "I don't really remember that," Peter said with a laugh.

Peter stayed in the USA for a while; Rod took him under his wing and taught him a lot about magic and performing. He also introduced Peter to The Society of American Magicians.

The financial problems continued with the organization that Peter was working for and he moved back to Germany. Since he had been away from Germany for almost sixteen years, he was unable to find a job as a high school teacher, the profession he had originally studied for.

"Since I wasn't able to find work as a teacher, I went for plan B, which was actually what I really wanted to do. I became a full-time magician." Since then Peter has kept himself busy performing in Germany, doing family events, children's parties, and corporate functions around the holidays. He also is the president of a new mission organization – a group of eight magicians in six different countries; he also travels all over the

world doing magic with this new organization.

Peter says that the magic profession can be interesting and challenging, especially at times when he goes to countries that really believe in magic (including his own country). "I find that there's a thin line between faith and superstition. People in some countries think that I'm in league with the devil or have supernatural powers." Peter said that he counteracts these feelings with his comedic presentations and a personality that puts them at ease. I asked him if he just says that everything he does in his show is a trick before he started and he said, "I used to do that, but then I read somewhere that a magician saying that is like seeing someone getting killed in a movie and then the actor getting right up to show the audience he is okay. I think it takes away from the fun when you make statements like that, so now I just do my show and let them decide."

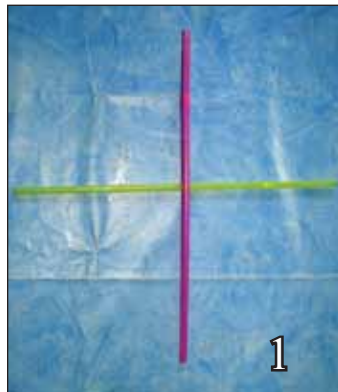
As I talked with Peter on the phone I could tell that he really put the entertainment first in his shows and presentations. I asked him why he felt this was so important and this is what he had to say: "I don't feel like you should be acting like, 'look how clever I am' or 'look what I can do' because that implies 'look how stupid you are' to the audience. My philosophy is that I want my audiences going home saying, 'What fun it was to watch the magician,' not just thinking that I got the better of them. It's really important to me that my audiences have fun!"

## Straw through Straw

Contributed by Peter Dommel

**The effect:** Two straws are twisted around each other until they are clearly knotted together. However, when the magician pulls the ends of the straws, the knot magically dissolves and the two straws are separated.

**The method:** For a clear view of what is going on in the photographs, the straws are of different colors and the hands of the performer are omitted. Get two straws and follow along with the photos and you should have no problems learning this fun trick.



At the beginning, the two straws are held in such a way that they cross each other at a ninety-degree angle at their center points. The

vertical straw, in our case the yellow one, is on the audience's side, while the horizontal one (the red one) is on the performer's side (Photo 1).

The lower half of the vertical straw is bent up, and around, the horizontal straw and placed to the right of its upper half, forming a V-shape (Photo 2). The fingers will need to hold the two straws together at their touching point since the bent straw will try to snap back to a straight position.

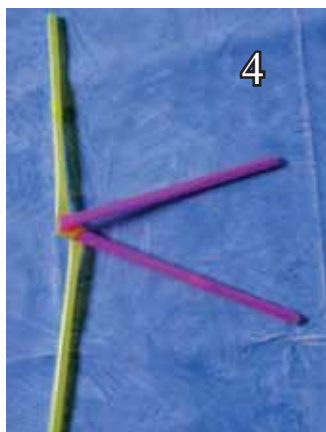


Now the right-hand half of the vertical straw is bent down again and around the horizontal straw. In other words, the vertical straw has been bent a full turn around the horizontal one (Photo 3).



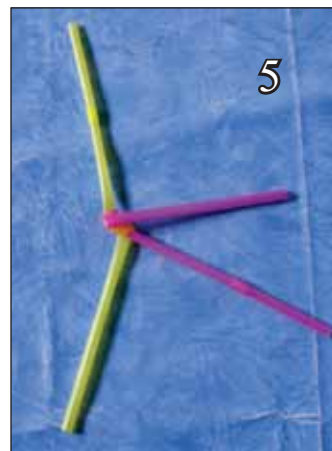
Next, the left-hand half of the horizontal straw is bent around the vertical straw towards the performer, and it comes to rest on the right-hand side of the vertical straw above its right-hand half (Photo 4).

Then, the upper half of the horizontal straw is bent again, this time in a full 360-degree turn in the same direction around the vertical straw. In effect, the left-hand half of the horizon-



tal straw has been turned one-and-a-half times around the vertical straw, and at the end of this action it is placed above its other half (Photo 5).

At this point the two straws seem convincingly twisted around each other (Photo 6). The workings of the trick are actually over. All that remains is to move the two halves of the vertical straw to the left. Then the left hand takes the ends of the yellow straw and the right hand takes the ends of the red straw, and both hands pull apart; the knot dissolves and the straws come free.



**Presentational tips:** I'd rather present the trick as a separation effect than a penetration effect, although both ways are possible, of course. The separation theme offers a wide range of subjects to speak about – funny ones and also serious short talks on separating oneself from bad habits, so-called friends, addictions, etc.. The performer may report from his own life – how he got into trouble, speaking about the consequences of his poor decisions and unwise commitments, and how he broke free from any bondages. I do not recommend presenting the effect to illustrate the theme of an unhappy marriage or partnership, since such break-ups are tinged with negative emotions, and I feel, in our presentations it is important to end on a positive outcome.

## Steve's Stuff

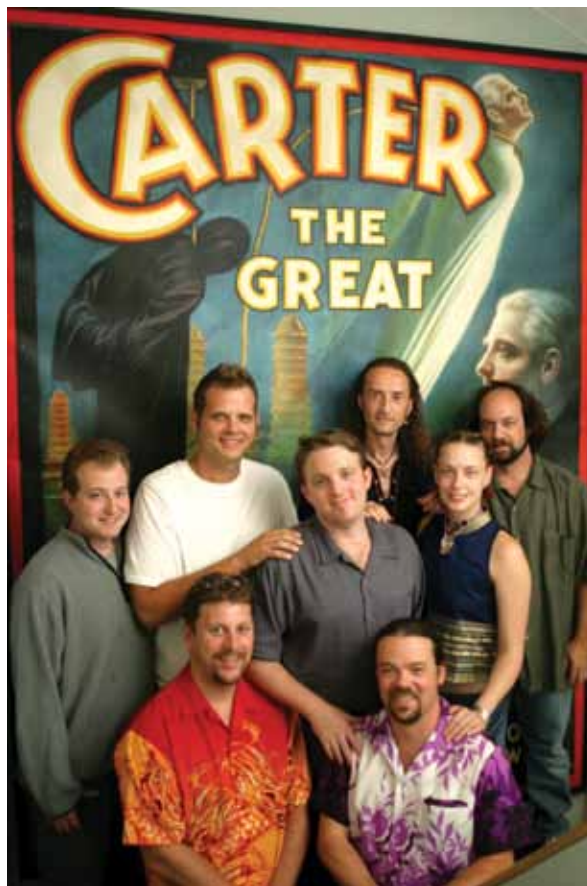
This is an old effect, but if it is new to you, it is worth learning and performing. This is a great quickie to do whenever there are straws around. The first time I tried this, I fooled myself. The straws looked and felt so twisted up that I thought I had not followed the directions correctly. I was surprised when the straws came apart!

When asked about the history of this trick, Peter told me that his friend, English magician Peter Gardner, had shown him this presentation with straws, but that the method also appears in different forms in Martin Gardner's *The Encyclopedia of Impromptu Magic* (Edwin Tabor's Pull Apart Silks) and Karl Fulves's *The Magic Book* (Passing the Buck, an effect with two bills). ☆



# MIKE SEGAL: The Complete Magician

By Joshua Jay



Clockwise from left: Lee Asher, Nathan Kranzo, Aaron Fisher, Loran Gagne, Pandora, Mike Segal, Dan Harlan, Steve Kline

Let's flash back to 1972. "Magic" Mike Segal was in grade three in his native Montreal. At school, another boy approached Mike and said, "Hey, watch this." The boy caused a bus ticket to appear from nowhere. Next came an even more extraordinary moment. The boy (showing wisdom in magic far beyond his years) gave Mike the bus ticket.

"I have to learn how to do that," Mike thought. "I want to do magic." Over the past thirty-eight years, Mike has dedicated his life to doing just that.

That moment in 1972 was brief but significant for eight-year-old Mike. A magical moment and an act of kindness make for an ideal pairing. Mike Segal, more than any magician I have ever encountered, has adopted this pairing – magic and "giving back" – and this has led to an unusual, fulfilling life.

Mike was struck by the appearing bus ticket effect, and sought out the secret at his local Montreal library. He didn't find it, but he found plenty of other secrets to satisfy his curiosity. Around that

Dan and Dave Buck — "Deep in the Canadian forest and far from civilization, a crescendo of laughter and joy fills the air as an aura of excitement and mystery fills the sky. This happens once a year; if you witness it, you'll have been lucky enough to have been a part of Sorcerers Safari."

time Mike's family relocated to Toronto, and this was where Mike first discovered his love for being onstage. He loved performing magic live, but also began to participate in plays and in the local theater community. In high school he discovered something else: he befriended and started dating an outgoing, compassionate girl named Jen Batten. Their feelings for each other were serious, but magic put a strain on their relationship. "We had different life plans," Mike remembers. "She wanted to get married and have children, and I wanted to be an actor and magician. We broke up amicably and went our separate ways."

After high school graduation, Mike enrolled at York University. He chose acting as his career path and earned his Bachelor's degree in theatrical performance; this was a decision he remains

thankful for. "My degree has helped me in three major ways: a director's eye, discipline, and voice training." And for anyone who has seen Mike onstage, his theater background is apparent. Magic Mike is a commanding presence – his voice carries, yet he's speaking softly, directly to you.

"When I got out of school," Mike reflects, "I started auditioning for plays. It occurred to me that there were thousands of out-of-work actors and only a few out-of-work magicians." (Apparently times have changed.) Mike realized that his old hobby, magic, would help set him apart at acting auditions. When he was required to perform a piece of his choice, he chose to do magic. And it worked! He was cast in several plays, and even had parts created for him around the magic he performed. The skills of adapting magic into theatrical productions that he learned as a young man would, some twenty-two years later, play a principal role in his career's crowning achievement.

A pivotal event occurred shortly after Mike graduated university. For the first time, he brought together three elements of his life: magic, theater, and working with youth. At just twenty-two years old, Mike founded Magic Unlimited Theatre Productions Ontario, a children's theater company. "After university I couldn't get grants for magic. But if magic was incor-

porated into a play, then it was deemed okay by the people who give grants.” Clever – and it worked. Mike worked with hundreds of kids in this program, teaching them onstage skills, confidence and, of course, a few tricks.

“This is when I first became motivated to prove to people that magic was a legitimate performance art. Which is why, twenty years later, I would start a magic camp.”

When Mike wasn’t working with his children’s theater troupe, he was working with the most famous magician of his era: Doug Henning. “Doug was the first real star of magic that I ever met. I mean, he was big. When he came back to Toronto to film his CBC version of *The Magic Show*, I was a production assistant. That really means I was a glorified ‘gopher,’ but I got to spend quality time with him.”

Mike realized that Doug embodied everything he wanted to be in a magician (and Mike’s long hair during the period reveals that he adopted more than just Doug’s magic). Mike observed how Doug worked his magic toward the camera, and the difference between live performance and television magic. Long after *The Magic Show* had been filmed, the desire to be part of onscreen magic was still there, in the back of Mike’s mind.

Mike Segal’s work ethic rivals the busiest magicians in the world. He is, and has always been, ambitious. So at just twenty-two years old, Mike hustled and landed a television show in the greater Toronto area. His first show, *Brownstone Kids*, ran for over five years, totaling over one hundred live, onscreen performances. That led to *Breakfast TV*, a weekly show that ran for two years. *Breakfast TV* was shot live. That’s right – magic on live television.

On his first live appearance he did the Sub-Trunk, but quickly realized the golden rule of magic on television: bigger isn’t always better. Zoomed in, cards and coins are as big as cars. From that moment, the magic had a more intimate feel. “You have to understand, that’s every week for two years!” Mike exclaims. “I ran out of material in a month. I started doing my Friday spots on television, and then I would go straight to the magic shop and get something new to work on for the next week. I burned through a ton of material, but I also grew tremendously as a performer.”

In many ways, *Breakfast TV* was ahead of its time. “I actually got into a heated argument with another local magician at the time. You see, I was using – how shall I put this – the television medium to its advantage, meaning I would ditch and steal out of frame. Some magicians considered that cheating. But I have always argued, ‘magic by any means possible.’”

Doing magic on television has obvious benefits, but the biggest break from *Breakfast TV* came from his past. A friend of his longtime ex-girlfriend Jen Batten saw Mike on television and alerted Jen that Mike was appearing regularly on the tube. “She watched me a few times,” Mike says, “looking for a ring on my finger. When she didn’t see one, she called my office and we arranged a date. The rest, as they say, is history.”

Jen now works full-time with Mike, managing and coordinating his career. Jen and Mike have a daughter, Samantha, and seeing all three working together at Sorcerers Safari Camp is a rare example of three people who are, in many ways, one.

With a family to support, it was time for Mike to get serious about his career. And few magicians ever get as serious (or as busy) as Magic Mike Segal. Comedy clubs were booming in the Eighties

Lee Asher — “More than fifteen years ago, Mike Segal started one of the most influential organizations the magic community has to offer today. This was no accident, nor was he randomly chosen. Luck or not, Mike Segal saw into the future, and then willed his destiny into action. That speaks volumes about Mike Segal. That was a long time ago.

Today, drawing top talent from around the world as well as campers from far reaches of the earth, Sorcerers Safari has gained the status as the premiere magic camp.”

in Toronto, and this seemed like a logical place for Mike to develop his act. After just a few performances, he realized his outlook on magic was entirely backward. “I used to be a ‘feature’ act. That meant a twenty-minute set – I was a middle guy in the set list. I would have to arrive thirty minutes before the entire show started to set up my guillotine and other props. Then I would change, and wait backstage to go on. The acts before me arrived after I did. Meanwhile, the headliner would arrive during my set and have a drink at the bar, and then waltz onstage and do his thing. Clearly, I had to become a headliner.”

But how does one become a headliner? The first step was to rethink everything. “It started as a convenience thing, but it taught me a big lesson. I swapped out all my big props for things that would fit in my jacket pockets. What I realized, then, was that I was no longer hiding behind my props. Now it was me onstage, and that was empowering for a young performer.”

The stage time paid off. He was able to get more entertainment value out of less magic, embellishing what used to be a two-minute card stunt into a hilarious ten-minute bit. He was headlining, and it led to bookings.

“I did 320 shows one year. No kidding. I averaged about 250 shows a year in those days, and it was a bit of everything: private parties, comedy clubs, assemblies – anywhere.” A lion’s share of those shows was for children. “If you want to work forever, do a good kid’s show. The word of mouth will keep you busy indefinitely.” Mike even toured with some of the larger children’s entertainment troupes: Lois & Bram, Bananas in Pajamas, etc. It was a



Early performing days with Tom Burt

Aaron Fisher — “The Sorcerers Safari is simply the best program I’ve ever seen for helping young magicians develop their talent – and have the most fun imaginable.”

Shawn Farquhar — “It’s hard to put into words the uniqueness of Sorcerers Safari. Imagine being a young person with an interest in magic and sharing a full week in the outback of Ontario, Canada, with some of the finest technicians, performers, and entertainers in the world of magic. The days start early and the campers are filled with questions and enthusiasm; I have never experienced this kind of environment in any other magic event in the world.”



lucrative, fruitful period, but it was also time away from his family. Now Mike’s fees are substantially higher, and he’s working less and earning more. He still averages more than a hundred shows a year. When I ask how he keeps it fresh, his answer is vintage Magic Mike: “When I perform, I think about all the people who are seeing me for the first time, and that makes it the first time for me doing magic for them.”

In 1997 Mike received an interesting call. Acclaimed director John Woo (*Face/Off*, *Mission Impossible 2*) was directing a film and wanted to bring Mike in as a consultant. Relying on the skills he acquired at university and honed during his audition years, Mike was able to assist Woo by teaching actor Dolph Lundgren some card sleights for the film *Blackjack*. Mike’s hard work in the theatrical world had paid off – he got to work with one of the most sought-after Hollywood directors in the industry. Mike reflects on his work on *Blackjack* as one of his career highlights.

Other accolades abound: Mike was nominated for two DORA awards (the Canadian equivalent of the Tony Awards), a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Canadian Association of Magicians, and even a command performance for Ringo Starr. But in many ways, Mike has allowed his greatest creation to outshine his own career: The Sorcerers Summer Safari.

Mike may not be a household name to magicians, but his magic camp has become one. An in-depth article on Sorcerers Safari appeared in the June 2007 issue of *M-U-M*, and features of one kind or other have appeared in every other major magic magazine. But those articles always focus on the camp, and not the man behind it.

Those who have worked with Mike are not surprised. “He’s such a generous, selfless person, that I think he prefers to put the emphasis on the camp, and the kids,” says Steve Kline, one of the most instrumental organizers at camp.

But for Mike Segal, the emphasis *is* the kids. “You can’t teach people who are stuck in their ways about magic. I learned that a long time ago. So, I thought I would start with a new generation.”

The reason Mike started his magic camp wasn’t entirely altruistic. “Some years I would spend six months on the road. With Jen and Samantha at home, it became tougher to go away. I wanted to give back to magic, but I also wanted to find a way to do that with my family. Summers were perfect, because the three of us could do it together. The summer Sam turned five was the first year we put on Sorcerers Safari.”

The camp turned fifteen this year; Mike is still amazed at its success and impact. He tells stories of campers and staff – people who found their future wives at camp, kids who formed long-lasting friendships, young magicians who would grow into well-known professionals, and campers who would return to donate time as counselors.

One of Mike’s favorite campers was eight-year-old Bilaal Rajan. Bilaal was a painfully shy camper, who had aspirations to do all sorts of magic, but he needed lots of help opening up onstage. Mike and his staff helped Bilaal develop his onstage skills, and it paid off, literally. Bilaal took the skills and values he learned at camp – giving back, motivating others, interacting with others, and formed his own foundation. Bilaal has raised more than \$50,000 to help tsunami victims in India.



Mac King, Gary Darwin, Mike Segal, Lance Burton, and Jeff McBride

Camp seems to affect everyone who attends – even guests like Wayne Houchin. “I find it hard to articulate exactly why Sorcerers Safari is so special,” Wayne told me. “It has something to do with the kids and their energy, and something to do with the unbelievable talent of the instructors, staff, and special guests. The respect and love we have for one another is magnified by fresh mountain air and the opportunity to learn and grow together.”

“My main love is for performing,” Mike admitted to me, when I posed the difficult question of whether he prefers teaching kids magic or being onstage. “I love assisting kids, and doing the camp, and I’ll always have that. But for me, the greatest thrill is being onstage and making people laugh.”

Magic Mike Segal is the complete magician. I use the word “complete” because words like “best” or “favorite” are subjective, dependent entirely on one’s tastes. But “complete” is easier to define (and much harder to become). In forty years of performing, he has clocked thousands of shows for every kind of audience imaginable. He has worked with masters of entertainment, from Doug Henning to Jim Carrey. He has crossed over to television and consulted on films. And he did it all with the support and participation of a wife and daughter. Most impressively, he finds the time to give back, through his camp. Mike’s camp is Mike’s legacy, and with it he has affected more youth in magic than anyone else in our industry. He is the complete magician. ★

## JOSHUA JAY ON MIKE SEGAL

I titled this article “The Complete Magician,” which some of you may associate with a book of the same name I wrote in 2008. That book was a big break for me, and it was my way of giving back to the youth in magic. I consider myself a passionate supporter of teaching and mentoring young magicians, and I owe that passion to one person and one place: Mike Segal and Sorcerers Safari.

In 1999, I was eighteen years old. Mike called and, in a rather unorthodox move, asked me to be Guest of Honor at the third annual Sorcerers Safari Camp. Actually, he asked my father out of courtesy. He and my father talked often about my visit, as I was away that year, performing and lecturing anywhere I could.

My experience at camp during the summer of 1999 was, for me, transformative. I was not only invited to perform and lecture, I was invited to be part of a family – and that’s exactly the vibe of the camp. It’s a family affair, with Jen organizing, Samantha in charge of the girl’s cabins, and Mike worrying about everything. The past guests come back year after year, not only because they love camp, but also because they love Mike. We all love Mike.

Mike also touched me deeply in 2005, the year I lost my father. He remembered my dad well, and got to know him through our annual visits to the Columbus Magi-Fest. “Josh, I want to ask you something,” Mike said to me via phone. “I’m going to be offering a yearly scholarship to a young magician from the Magi-Fest. Since your dad was so well-liked and so kind to everyone at that event, I’m thinking of calling it the Jeffrey L. Jay Memorial Scholarship. Is that okay with you?”

I don’t often get emotional, but I will remember that gesture as long as I live. And Mike’s generosity is the kind that inspires others to give. I now subsidize that charity, paying for airfare, food, and magic props for the recipient each year.

Years ago, I swore off writing features on magicians. I am frequently asked, and I always politely decline even my closest friends (sorry guys). But Mike is truly the only the guy in the world I would say “yes” to – because he has done so much for me, and so much for magic. Here is my interview with Mike:

Josh: You have an extremely impressive number of shows under your belt – lots of what is called “flight time.” What was the best show you’ve ever given?

Mike: One of the best experiences for me was coming up in the comedy club explosion in the mid-Eighties. I also opened for a few rock bands. These were truly humbling experiences, and they didn’t go well at first. It took a lot of thinking, and re-jigging to make it work. When it did finally work, and the audiences really liked what I did, those were the most satisfying shows. I shared an agent in Canada with Jim Carrey, and I shared stages and green rooms with Kids in the Hall, Howie Mandel, Bryan Adams, Martin Short, Joe Flaherty (Count Floyd), Peaches, Feist, Barenaked Ladies, Corky and The Juice Pigs, Lance Burton, Penn & Teller, Criss Angel, and Siegfried & Roy.

J: And the worst show?

M: Opening for a rock band here in Canada called Platinum Blonde. It was the most grueling tour I have ever done. I seriously thought of getting out at one point. But I did learn about riders in contracts, and that bands can perform drunk, but magicians really shouldn’t. But once I had reworked my set and things were going well, and I had the audience on my side, there wasn’t anything more satisfying. Those were huge crowds, too.

I did big illusions for the rock bands, and maybe slightly

smaller scale for the clubs. Now most of my stuff is in between. Platform is my main performance venue these days. I don’t do large-scale illusions anymore. I really don’t have the desire or the energy to do that type of show. Plus, I don’t feel as rock-and-roll as I used to.

J: But you kept the long hair – just to remind us that you *were* rock-and-roll.

M: Yep! I kept the hair for as long as I could; but it’s one thing to have long hair, and something else to have long hair and be balding. We actually cut my hair at camp last year. Greg Frewin, Shawn Farquhar, Steve Kline, and Lee Asher got me up on stage and proceeded to shave my head. That was the beginning of my short hair. I hadn’t had short hair since I was a little kid.

J: Let’s talk about your influences in magic. Do you have a favorite magician?

M: I love the comedy guys. Kohl & Co. and Carl Ballantine were big influences when I was young. I had never seen anything so funny and magical. Now Mac King, Johnny Thompson, Penn & Teller, and Mr. Mysto – they’re all really funny and they all do really excellent magic.

J: All those guys are comedy magicians. Now, I was just watching some newly released footage of Dai Vernon lecturing at the Magic Castle. He goes off on a tangent for several minutes, complaining that most magicians aren’t funny and therefore shouldn’t try to be. “Leave it to the comedians,” so to speak. Do you agree? What advice would you give a magician who wants to be funnier?

M: Make the comedy the main focus. Connect with the audience first, and have something humorous to relate. Use the magic as a supplement.

J: What do you mean by “supplement?”

M: Don’t just make the comedy about the tricks (although that does work sometimes, too). Make it about the human condition. Make it relatable for everyone, as universal as possible.

J: You have a humble wisdom about you. I see you work with kids and you never, ever speak down to them, yet you really connect.

M: Enthusiasm and passion are two things that kids pick up on subconsciously. And I learned long ago, if they like you, then whatever you’re doing will mean more to them.

J: The same is true of performing, right?

M: Absolutely. If they like you, then they will like your show more, and what you do more, too. And if they don’t like you? Well, then it’s an uphill battle, and that’s exhausting. Engage your audience. Make them understand that yours is a one-of-a-kind live experience. Make even well-rehearsed bits seem spontaneous. Make them think this is all happening now for the very first time. Be as surprised as they are. Be in the moment.

J: I get a strong sense that you want to make a difference with your magic.

M: I have always wanted magic to be an appreciated art form, because it isn’t, which is sad. And it sure wasn’t when I was coming up. The only way that can happen is to expose more people to it. A person can go to a club and see an awful band, but that person won’t leave hating music in general – he will only hate the crappy band he saw that evening. But when someone sees a bad magician, they often write off all magic as bad, and that’s a real shame.

J: So what can we as S.A.M. members and magicians do to change that?

M: Get out there and perform as much as possible. I think we need to show people that magic can be what we all know it is: fun, funny, entertaining, and mature, and at times even mysterious. ☆



I think the best way to describe Johnny Thompson would be to quote Lance Burton: “To recount what I have learned from Johnny these past twenty years would require several encyclopedia-sized volumes. From teaching me the cups and balls, suggesting music for new routines, inventing new stage illusions, to giving me jokes from his own act, Johnny is a living oracle.

“Johnny’s performing career has encompassed television,

## A Chat with Johnny & Pam

**Christian:** What is the favorite thing you like about each other?

**Johnny:** Pam is such a wonderful actress. I was so enamored with her work. Watching her was enthralling. I first saw her at a magic convention and thought, “That is the perfect girl.”

**Pam:** His hands. I love watching his hands at work. I still love watching him perform close-up magic.

**C:** What is your most creative time? (When I interviewed Johnny and Pam, we were sitting in their living room at 11:00 p.m., and they gave no indication they were slowing down.)

**J:** Always at night...you know, nightclub hours.

**C:** What makes your marriage work, what’s the magic?

**J:** You have to learn to bite your lip a lot. (Laughter.) But seriously, we are always talking and exchanging ideas.

**P:** You have to be able to say, “I’m sorry.” You have to learn to let the little things go. Oh...and he has to set his own props.

**C:** What is your favorite magic trick you like to watch being performed?

**J:** Without a doubt, the Richiardi broom suspension. I think I watch it at least every six weeks.

**P:** I like watching any trick that includes some nice tight men’s bodies.

**C:** What do you dislike about this business? (This question raised both of their temperatures a bit.)

**P:** We see way too much stealing in this business. People just think that you can take anything from someone else’s act. Johnny is kind of like a sheriff of magic and will let people know when they have breached that line.

**J:** The ethics of the industry can be tiresome. We have lost some friends because of my stance on ethics.

Las Vegas showrooms, nightclubs, and theaters. Johnny and Pam have performed in Europe, Asia, South America, North America, Africa, and on the high seas. Over the years the Tomsoni & Company act has gone from simply being a great act to a classic act. Johnny has influenced a whole generation of magicians. His influence can be seen today and, I predict, will be seen a hundred years from now.”

First, let me say that interviewing and spending some time with this very dynamic couple was like breathing pure oxygen. It is difficult to explain in the printed word how lovable and fantastic they are in person. They tenderly jabbed at each other during the interview trying to decide who would answer the questions first, who had the better answer, and who had the correct answer.

—Christian Painter

**C:** If your magic library burned to the ground, what are the first three books that you would purchase?

**J:** *The Expert at the Card Table*, *Stars of Magic*, and *Respect for Acting*.

**P:** *Beginners Luck* by Samuel French, some crossword puzzle books that haven’t been crossed out and used – (she looks over at Johnny).

**J:** (Laughing) Okay, sometimes I get them wrong and have to scribble on them a little...

**P:** Scribble a little? I can’t even read them after you... (We never did get to Pam’s third book.)

**C:** If you weren’t a magician what would you be?

**J:** A riverboat gambler. Well, that’s what I wanted to be when I was eight years old. I read *The Expert at the Card Table* and practiced it endlessly. A little later I learned there’s not a lot of jobs for an eight-year-old card cheat.

**P:** I can’t think of John doing anything but magic. He still studies magic today. He’s still always reading, watching, and learning.

**C:** What advice would you give to a magician who wants to make it today?

**Johnny and Pam (together):** Quit and get a real job. (Huge laughter fills the room with that response. After the laughter dies down, Johnny becomes really serious.)

**J:** This is a really tough question. (He ponders the question for some time as the rest of us enjoy Pam’s warm hospitality. It seems that we may not get an answer to this final question. But then, just as we are leaving, Johnny comes up to Katalina and tells her the following.)

**J:** I really wanted to give you a good answer on this. I think it is an important single question. So here it is: If you really want to make magic your profession, then you must become a master of your craft. When I was in the Harmonicats, I would watch every other act that performed. I learned about structure, timing, and audience reaction. Being a master involves more than just learning the tricks. The magic must be learned to perfection, but you must also master being an entertainer. Learn, learn, and keep on learning.

## Unprepared Serpentine Silk

By Johnny Thompson

Grasp a twenty-four-inch silk by a pair of opposite corners; the left hand should grip the end of the silk between the outer knuckle of the first and second fingers. Spin the silk inward, toward you, into a "rope," until it will not twist any further (Photo 1). The right hand loops the silk down and up, behind and over the back of the left hand. As this is done, separate the fingers of the left hand into a "V," the first and second fingers forming one leg of the "V," the third and fourth fingers forming the other (Photo 2). The right hand draws its end of the silk through the "V" so that it can be gripped between the outer phalanges of the left second and third fingers (Photo 3). Following this, release the right hand's grip on the silk.



Turn the left hand over so the back of the hand faces you (Photo 4), as the right reaches through the loop of silk dangling below the left hand. The first and second fingers of the right hand grasp the end of the silk being held between the first and second fingers of the left hand (Photo 5); the right hand begins to draw its end

toward the right (Photo 6). Both ends are now drawn down through the large loop of silk hanging below. The two hands continue to pull the ends in opposite directions; both ends should remain parallel with the floor (Photo 7). A bight of silk begins to form now at the center, above the loop; the circle of silk beneath it will begin to shrink as the apparent knot seems to be drawn more tightly.



This is the point in the handling that will require some practice until the knack is acquired. As you continue to draw the ends away from one another, you must keep the bight balanced atop the silk. This requires a bit of finesse; the weight of the false knot is balanced atop the silk and leans somewhat toward the performer. Failure to maintain this precarious position will immediately become evident; if the bight tips forward toward the audience, it will unroll off the top of the silk and the entire false knot will dissolve. With some

practice, this outcome can be avoided and you will develop a "feel" to consistently produce the desired outcome.

Continue to pull the false knot taut, up until a point at which it begins to rotate backwards, over the top and towards you. If you continue beyond this point the bight will flip over towards you and again, the false knot will fall apart.

Experience will indicate the point at which the false knot is sufficiently tight to remain stable. When you have stopped pulling, release the left hand's grip on its end, and allow the apparently knotted silk to dangle freely from the right hand (Photo 8). You can now perform the effect with the silk hanging from the right hand, or if you prefer, you can transfer the silk to your left hand.



Assume for the sake of description that you have transferred the silk to your left hand. The end of the silk is gripped between the first and second fingers. In preparation for the effect, the thumb contacts the pad of the second finger in readiness for a finger snap. The right hand makes a magical gesture as the left second finger and thumb simultaneously snap sharply against one another. This causes the silk to jerk upward (Photo 9), which in turn causes the bight to shake loose (Photo 10). The effect is that of the knot instantaneously untying itself. ★

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# BLAST FROM THE PAST

Many magicians consider the faro shuffle to be a sleight of high difficulty, and for that reason they avoid any effect that uses it. To master this sleight, you need three things: good instruction, a conscientious practice regimen, and the knowledge of what to do if you miss. *You* will have to provide the willingness to practice; the other information you need is out there if you know where to look for it.

Gaining confidence with the faro shuffle is another problem; you can practice all you want, but actually performing a routine that relies on a perfect cut and an accurate shuffle in front of impartial spectators is a challenge. Many routines require repeated, accurate faro shuffles (such as my own routine *The Way of the Duck*, Paul Gertner's *Unshuffled*, or any of Harry Lorayne's excellent *Aces and Kings* spelling routines). How do you get enough "flight time" with the faro shuffle that you feel confident with it?

One solution is to find solid routines that don't require a perfect faro shuffle. In the June 1966 issue of *M-U-M*, Ken Krenzle contributed such an effect, an unusual, commercial trick that laymen will remember. (Another often overlooked effect that doesn't require a perfect cut or a perfect weave that stuns laymen is Paul LePaul's *Gymnastic Aces*.) When I was in my early teens, I saw *The Magic Bullet* performed on TV by a West Coast magician named Jim Cooper. I had worked on the faro shuffle and was competent at it (I learned it from the description in Harry Lorayne's *Close-up Card Magic*); I worked out how the trick must have been accomplished, and I performed it often. The trick is also a favorite of my wife Lisa.

What follows are Ken Krenzle's original instructions as they appeared almost fifty years ago. The photographs are of my hands. (You can see Ed Mishell's original illustrations in George Schindler's column in last month's *M-U-M*.) I have added some additional information to Ken's text. You'll find those comments in brackets. —**Michael Close**

## The Magic Bullet By Ken Krenzle

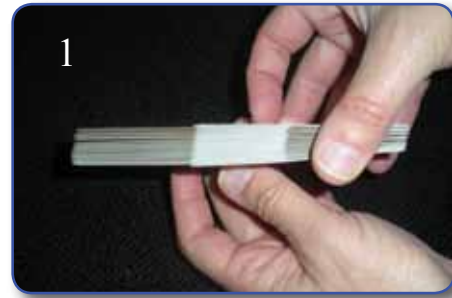
It is with some measure of reluctance that I am parting with the full details of my favorite magical creation. Some prefatory remarks will be in order to those who may have seen the effect published in Dutch in the magazine *Triks*. Credit is mistakenly given to Persi Diaconis, who learned the effect from me. Persi himself expressed great surprise at this error, because he had only demonstrated it for Henk Vermeyden, and had not claimed it as his invention.

I devised the trick by blending the principle of Peter Kane's *Flying Aces* (in *Hugard's Magic Monthly*) with Marlo's principle of the *Incomplete Faro Peek*.

**Effect:** A peeked-at card is lost in the pack, which is then held and likened to a revolver. The peeked-at card is magically shot from the gun!

**Method:** The Ace of Spades is removed from the pack, and attention is focused on its large central pip. It is mentioned that the apex tends to give it the shape of a bullet. Lay the Ace of Spades aside momentarily and give the pack a faro shuffle. In doing so, it is unnecessary to ensure a perfect weave at the top and bottom of the pack, but be sure that the central portion (three-fourths of the cards) is meshed perfectly. A perfect split at the twenty-sixth card is not important either. The two packets are interwoven about three-quarters to one inch (Photo 1).

[With the Ace of Spades removed, the deck will contain fifty-one cards. If you cut to the twenty-sixth card with your



right hand, the lower portion will contain twenty-five cards, and thus can be shuffled into the upper half. (That is, the upper half will straddle the lower half.) A cut at twenty-six is unnecessary, however. Just make sure that the upper half is larger than the bottom half, and weave the bottom half so cards from the upper half straddle at the top and bottom. Also, the weave need not be perfect; only the central portion needs to weave perfectly, and even inexperienced shufflers can get a perfect weave in that section. But what if you really louse up the shuffle? No problem. Just bridge the cards together, square up, re-cut, and try it again. There is no heat or time constraint on this shuffle. Just keep talking.]

Invite a spectator to select a "second-story man," or burglar, by saying stop as you gently riffle the upper right corners of the upper tier of cards. The lower tier is held in the left hand in the standard peek position (Photo 2).

When he stops you, you open the cards a bit wider so that he may see the index (Photo 3). As the entire right side opens up slightly, the left little finger moves in to retain a break in the lower packet.



[A bit of finesse can be added here. Contrary to what many card magicians think, little-finger breaks are not invisible. Without care (and the necessary shade), they can be seen by an observant spectator. Holding the elongated deck vertically, the right first finger riffles back on the upper right corner of the upper section, stopping when the spectator indicates. The forefinger pulls back on the cards it still controls, allowing the spectator to

# Effects from the M-U-M Archives

see the card at the stopping point (as shown in Photo 3). Now, both hands move, returning the deck to a horizontal position. During this large action, the right forefinger pulls back further, allowing a break to open up in the bottom section (Photo 4). The left little finger immediately takes control of this break and the right hand moves away. The left hand turns at the wrist, bringing the vulnerable gap towards the body, where it cannot be seen (Photo 5).]

Allow the open packet to spring back, apparently losing the selected card. The upper packet is now swiveled to the right so that it is now perpendicular to the lower one; but be careful not to un-weave them (Photo 6).



Comment that your magic bullet will find the second-story man, but that you require a "card gun." Insert the Ace of Spades

face up into the space provided by the break held by the little finger. Push it in from the back until you meet resistance; only a small portion will project (Photo 7).

[It's important to keep the left hand turned inward as you "load the gun," otherwise the spectators will see that you are inserting the Ace into a pre-held gap. Insert the card gently, and watch the front edge of the swiveled packet. You will meet resistance when the edges of the Ace and peeked-at card touch. If you push with too much force, you will eject the selected card. Even done gently, a portion of the white border of the selection will probably protrude, and you can casually square it back with the swiveled portion. As soon as the Ace is positioned properly, release the little-finger break.]

Ask that the name of the card be given as you "fire" the gun by snapping the edge of the Ace. Hold the cards securely, yet loosely, as you snap the edge. The selected card will be propelled several feet, much to your own gratification!

[There are two ways to eject the selection. I've always performed the effect by holding the "gun" parallel to the tabletop and snapping the Ace with the nail of my middle finger, in a flicking action (Photo 8). This will shoot out the card a distance of a couple of feet, spinning as it flies. Obviously, you'll need some performing real estate to perform the revelation this way, although you can control how far the card flies by adjusting the intensity of the flick. The other option is to hold the "gun" at a forty-five



degree angle and strike the card with the fingers of the right hand (Photo 9). With practice, you can shoot out the card, spinning, and it will boomerang back to your awaiting right hand, which catches it. This is the way Lisa learned this trick.]

In revealing this effect I only request that you give it the practice it deserves before attempting it publicly.

[Other than the faro shuffle, this is not a difficult effect. You will have to experiment with the "loaded gun" configuration to determine the proper pressure of the grip of the left-fingers, how far the "bullet" is inserted, and the force of the "flick." The Magic Bullet is a fine trick, and is certainly representative of Ken Krenzel's creativity and his generous nature. Ken released several books and was a frequent contributor to magic publications. I urge you to seek out more of his creations.] ☆





### PROMPTING



I have emceed many shows, introducing acts that I have never met before or know anything about. I prefer not to come out with little slips of paper with scribbled cheat notes with the acts' introductions. Having worked in television, I know that the ultimate solution is to have a teleprompter on stage, but a teleprompter can cost thousands of dollars, and that is not possible on a magician's budget. Enter the iPad and a great app called Promtr.

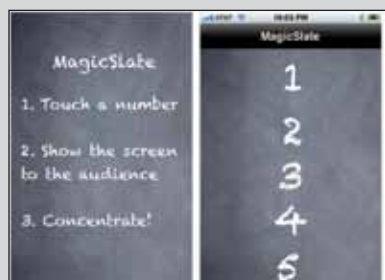
Aaron Alexander of Pixel.info has come up with the easiest program I have ever seen. He has thought of everything. Type in your speech and tap it into standby. Writing isn't big enough? Simply pinch out with your fingers to make the font bigger. Is the scrolling too fast? Rub the screen with two fingers to slow down or speed up the words. You can even reverse the type so you can use an angled mirror or glass like the professionals do.

Everything has been carefully planned for this app by guys who actually use this app while they make their videos. A special stand available from the Apple Store called the Apple iKlip Universal Microphone Stand Adapter for iPad can be attached to a mic stand and placed in the front of the stage.

Most people can't adlib. If you're one of those people, it is much better for you to plan out what you are going to say. If you are a magician who makes promo videos or instructional videos, this app is a must. Future updates will include the ability to remotely control the teleprompter with your iPhone or iPod Touch via Bluetooth or WiFi. Promtr is available in the iTunes app store for an underpriced \$1.99.

If you want to use the prompter for making videos and want it to work like a professional unit in which a piece of glass is held in front of the camera lens and the words are projected on the glass, check out this YouTube video ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=-HZhQ6x3Y-U](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-HZhQ6x3Y-U)); it teaches you how to make this device using the iPad cardboard box for around \$5. I made one and it works great.

### BLACKBOARD OF THE 21ST CENTURY



Magic Slate is an app that has potential. Turning your iDevice into an old-fashioned slate, you show that you have drawn the numbers one to five on the board. You turn away and a person touches one of the numbers. Without her

showing you the device, you tell her which number she picked. You can also do this with you in another room. You can also call a friend anywhere in the world and he will know the number. The app comes with two methods to accomplish this feat. A new companion app called Assistant! gives you a third method.

On its own, the trick is one of those effects in which the method is more interesting than the actual effect. However, I can see this as a utility device that can be used in conjunction with other effects. I've made some notes on this; if you want to see what I've thought of, email me with the subject line "Magic Slate" and I will tell you what I've come up with. Magic Slate works with the iPod and iPhone, and there is an HD version for the iPad. The app is free in the iTunes app store. Assistant! is ninety-nine cents.

### BETCHA LIKE THIS



Having breakfast with Diamond Jim Tyler is a real treat. In his effort to perform in every state in the United States, he recently visited Rhode Island. He is an encyclopedia of bar bets and stunts. I suggested that he write a book or an app on the subject and he informed me that he already has! Bamboozlers is an app that has about seventy-five bar bets, brain teasers, and such that he has collected over the years. The nice thing about this app is that if you learn other tricks from bar mates, you can add them to the list and make your own notes. This is a fun collection; I was surprised to see some stunts that I had not known about. Bamboozlers works with the iPhone, iPod Touch, and iPad and is available in the iTunes app store for \$4.99.

### MAGIC CANDLES



If you have a need for some realistic candles that are fire safe, check out our friends at thinkgeek.com. They have some Bi-Color LED Blow On-Off Candles. They flicker and glow in yellow or blue light, and if you blow on them, they will go out. If you blow again, they will turn on. Made of wax (with some electronics inside), they are perfect for séances or to create a mysterious atmosphere on a stage.

I really like these. Check out sizes and such at Think Geek. The candles range from \$12 – \$15. ★

*Found a cool gadget, app, or website for magic applications? Share your discovery with Bruce to include in a future column. Email him at [SAMtalkBruce@cox.net](mailto:SAMtalkBruce@cox.net).*

# Illusions of Grandeur

An Illusion for Little Girls?

by David Seebach

Okay students, open your textbook (the Owen Magic Supreme catalog, number 12) to page 139. You'll find the Paper Doll Machine. Even if your interest in illusions is more of the armchair nature than their actual performance, you really need the elaborate (and pricey) Owen catalog. It is a treasure of photographs and drawings of the great illusions, from the historical past up to the present day.

One of their signature unique offerings is their #5098, the aforementioned Paper Doll Machine. I believe it was imagined initially by an Owen employee named John Good. John was a tinkerer and laborer, but he had the right mind to figure out all manner of things. Was his inspiration the well-known Rabbit Wringer? After years with Les, Gertrude, and Alan, John left to work for Rich and Nick at Collectors' Workshop. Sadly, John ended his own life shortly thereafter. I saw him frequently at the Owen workshop and talked with him, but I never knew him well.

The prop has elements of a Rube Goldberg creation, with flashing lights, moving parts, and a pair of rollers that operate much in the fashion of one of those Adams Money Makers we've all owned. The illusion pictured in the catalog is the original model, serial number 001, I suppose. I bought it from Owen's in 1983. I know that at least one subsequent model was built with a crank for hand operation, rather than mine, which utilizes 120v AC current.

The original effect went like this: To demonstrate his latest invention, the magician puts a little girl's doll (a Barbie?) into the prop via a hopper on its top. A dial is set and the rollers are engaged. A flat doll emerges. Next, the magician's lovely assistant enters the prop via the top hopper; the dial is adjusted and the rollers turned again. A life-size paper doll emerges. The illusion is then opened, permitting the audience to see it is empty.

I will point out here that this is a very convincing "empty." Spectators see straight through it. There are no mirrors or doll-house-type deceptions. And the base is quite shallow without a "belly" or bevel.

Now the performer places some scraps of fabric and trim into

the hopper and sets the dial to a new setting. The rollers turn, and a flat costume, made of the cloth just tossed in, emerges. The illusionist attaches the flat costume to his flat assistant and feeds both back into the machine through the rollers. Voila! His assistant rises from the contraption, wearing her new stage outfit.

The illusion requires only the magician and an assistant and there are no bad angles or lighting requirements. It certainly offers a different plot than any of the standard magic act mutilations.

Why hasn't it become a latter-day Zig-Zag Lady or Sub Trunk? I think there are two major reasons. One is that it's pretty big. The legs get removed, the hopper comes off via four loose-pin hinges, and then it all goes into a fairly large, heavy, and unwieldy ATA case. And it begs for a performer with personality, not a daredevil or macho-man.

I think this illusion would be difficult to perform without accompanying patter. A silent performer, working only to music, would have a real challenge here. And, I'd add, no superstar illusionist has done it, so the performers who can only pick something that has first been presented by Henning, Copperfield, Blackstone, and their like haven't seen its potential.

Back in the 1980s I had photographs taken of two of my cast members and then blown up – almost life-size – for this routine. The blow-ups were printed on a sturdy

fabric so they'd last and work well within the rollers. I also replaced the fabric of the rollers. This fabric was black, like the Adams novelty. We discovered it was hard to see that the rollers were turning, so we installed material with a diagonal black-and-white pattern. And the factory-delivered lights on the illusion were so bright that they created a blinding effect. Lower wattage bulbs fixed that.

Costs at the time necessitated that the photo enlargements were in black-and-white, not color. We had the ladies wear black clothing and then used markers to give their faces and legs some color. The outfits they were going in – a simple black skirt and sweater – was printed individually so it was removable via Velcro. (Imagine a little girl taking the paper outfit off her paper doll and you get the idea.) Removing the garments revealed the assistant in lingerie and this



Owen Magic  
Paper Doll Machine



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always elicited a good reaction.

The actual assistant was underdressed, of course, as she got into the illusion and had to remove the outer layer of costuming to reappear in a different outfit. This is probably the world's smallest changing room for such a maneuver. Although they do not resemble each other in any way, the method of concealment here is exactly the same one used in Origami. Coincidence? I have no idea.

The illusion's "wow moment" is probably early on, when the prop is opened up after the assistant has become a paper doll. As the effect progresses, the audience will know what's coming, so there's little surprise. As described it does not have a strong, applause-cueing climax. So, you wouldn't close a show with this act (as I learned the hard way). However, by altering the script and making this a production, you can achieve a very surprising finish.

Our earliest effort had me advising a shy male assistant on how to please a girl, since he had no dating experience. I showed him how my marvelous machine could conjure up wine and flowers to impress a lady. I'd page through a popular magazine (*People*, *US*, etc.), locating a photo of an item; I'd tear it out and feed it into the rollers. Then, reaching inside the hopper, I would produce the item from the photo. After seeing this done twice, the shy assistant produced a copy of the swimsuit issue of *Sports Illustrated*. He selected a photo he liked and fed it into the prop. A bikini-clad woman appeared for him, making him very happy.

Another time, assistants went "on strike" during a show because they had not gotten a meal break; the illusion became a "Take-Out Machine." I displayed menus; my assistants could choose from Chinese, chicken wings, burgers, pizza, etc. I recommended the spicy wings, but they opted for Chinese and pizza. Menus were selected and introduced via the rollers. Reaching into the hopper, I produced a pizza box and those cartons associated with Chinese food. The assistants exited and I admitted that I hadn't eaten either. I wanted the wings, and this time a woman appeared in the well-known Hooters waitress attire.

At a recent Abbott's Magic Get-Together, I convinced the very

likeable Gene Anderson to play someone who "knew nothing about magic." The machine could make him a magician, producing everything he'd need. When asked what a real magician required, he mentioned a hat, some colorful flowers, a bunny, and those rings that link. One-by-one, using pages from the Abbott catalog, we produced a top hat, a feather bouquet, and some rings. He insisted on a bunny, too, and a beautiful Playboy bunny materialized. He left his new magic props and exited with the girl.

For Halloween, we had fun with costuming and an assistant who wanted to dress up as "a bride." Through a mix-up she got a bride's costume, but it was the Bride of Frankenstein! This routine included a short male assistant becoming the famous monster via a wonderful Boris Karloff mask, and a female assistant becoming the Bride, complete with the electric-bolt and beehive hairdo. The climax utilized a play-on-words, with a "bunny outfit" being the Playboy style.

In all the many incarnations, the musical cues have always played only when the machine is "working" and the rollers are operating. We chose snippets of famous classical melodies as interpreted by the zany Spike Jones. Raymond Scott's "Powerhouse" would be another good choice.

You may see that this would be a good prop for corporate work. A client's product could be created, improved, or manufactured in front of the audience. The assistant's appearance is the surprise finish.

Owen Magic has built only a very few Paper Doll Machines. Few illusions offer the performer such wide latitude in effect, mood, and scripting. With no element of danger, it is suitable for any audience and it's self-contained so as to be presentable under all staging conditions. It's colorful and visually interesting in an almost cartoon manner.

And no one in the crowd will be saying, "Oh, I've seen *that* before." ★

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# Treasures from the Salon de Magie



by Ken Klosterman

## VIRGIL'S TALKING SKULL



In the 1940s, one of the largest and most popular large-scale illusion shows was the team of Virgil and Julie. In addition to performing across the United States, they also undertook a five-year world tour, and on that journey carried twenty-five people, twenty illusions, 150 costumes, and nineteen full sets of scenery. One of their features was a Spirit Cabinet routine with Julie as the medium, and some associated “spirit” tricks.

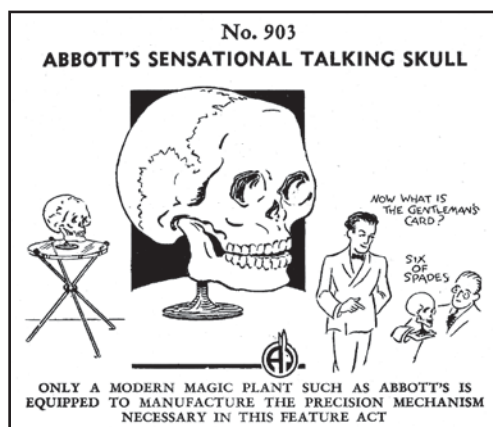
In his constant effort to keep his shows fresh, Virgil (Virgil Harris Mulkey), placed an order with the Abbott's Magic Company in 1947 for the Sensational Talking Skull, one of the company's most mechanically complex props and quite expensive. The average American earned \$1.50 or less an hour in those years. At \$95, Abbott's skull was not an item purchased by the mere hobbyist or tyro.

Furthermore, the life-size skull was a “special order” item, made by Abbott employee Jesse Thornton. The catalog listing the skull read: “Present day [World War II] conditions of shortages of both material and help do not permit us to make this article in quantities and have them in stock. This skull will only be made to order and we do not promise prompt delivery. You may receive your order in two weeks, but this is the best we can promise you.” Although the war had ended in 1945, the skull remained a special-order, custom-made item that often took more than two weeks to produce.

Any delay seemed like a year to regular Abbott customers. But the wait was worth it. And so was the price, even if the skull did not actually talk. The apparatus, though seemingly simple, was constructed with the utmost precision. Thornton, the resident mechanical genius of the Abbott organization, handcrafted each skull, carefully weaving together sets of gears and motors to bring about its eerie actions. The skull could an-

swer questions by clicking its jaw - once for yes and twice for no. Three clicks meant that the answer was uncertain. In addition, the skull could click-count to identify cards selected by the audience.

In short, the Abbott skull was the poor man's Balsamo, the sensational skull trick made popular by its inventor, Joseffy. Created before 1908, Balsamo was the first self-contained animated skull. As discovered by John Gaughan and Jim Steinmeyer when they restored it for presentation by Max Maven at the Los Angeles Conference on Magic



History in 1997, Balsamo has a maze of intricate gears and machinery. The Abbott skull runs on a mechanism that is complex, but less involved than Joseffy's mechanical masterpiece. Both skulls were automatons; that is, once started, they ran through a fixed routine of clicks and movements while the performer timed his instructions, remarks, and questions to fit the preset timing.

Virgil altered his skull's mechanism to perform a different routine than the one supplied by Abbott. However, he featured the Talking Skull for only a short time, later deciding that it did not particularly fit his full-evening spectacular. As a result, the prop is in remarkably good condition. Its mechanism, which is in the metal base of the skull, has not deteriorated with time, so with the proper command from a suitably patient master, the prop readily clicks its jaws yet again.

Virgil and Julie toured the U.S. and Canada annually through 1978, and eventually retired to the home they had built in 1965 overlooking Boston Harbor in Olympia, Washington. Virgil passed away October 12, 1989. ★

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## Roger Blakiston (AKA Jolly Roger)

# Unlimited Possibilities

### INFORMATION OR IMAGINATION

*"Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand." – Albert Einstein*

Having spent most of my life entertaining the little people, I have come to the conclusion that there is more information available to children's entertainers than ever before. In my younger days there were no color televisions, no computers, no Internet, no DVDs, and no iPhones or iPads, but there were books and lots of brick-and-mortar magic shops. The television magicians who appeared regularly in the UK were Robert Harbin, David Berglas, Al Koran, Chan Canasta, and David Nixon. They were considered "proper" magicians. Magicians were still working the birthday party circuit, but many had regular day-jobs, as it was generally only the wealthy who would consider booking a magician for their child's party. A large number of magicians had the word "uncle" in front of their name, which I always found rather odd. They did not at that time seem to have the respect that they have today, and among the general public they were frequently

thought of as elderly gentlemen in tail coats who would fumble through their shows to the faint amusement of the children and adults present. They were often called "conjurers" rather than "magicians." The advertisements in the newspapers at the time would read: "Uncle Johnny will come to your child's party. Magic, Punch and Judy, hand shadows, film shows, and balloons!" It was quite common for a magician to take a projector to a party and show a cartoon on a screen as part of the entertainment. I am talking about the 1950s and early 1960s.

Times have changed, and there has never a better time than now to be a children's entertainer. There are far more children's magicians who make a comfortable living than there are full-time professional magicians for adults. With the current state of the economy and unemployment, it is a great time to be self-employed. These rich pickings are not just confined to the UK and the USA. I have friends in Croatia, the Netherlands, Malaysia, and Australia who all have full datebooks doing children's birthday parties, schools, daycares, libraries, etc. If you visit magic forums like The Magic Bistro and The Magic Café, you will find that the section on kid's entertainers is the most frequented.

With all the work out there, there is also the competition. So how do you stand out from your competitors? It is easy to spend hours perusing the magic forums and on-line magic stores for information and education. I would actually encourage you to do this to see what is going on out there in cyberspace. However, I would also advise caution, as this can be a daunting task, and you are likely to find it quite overwhelming. How do you know what to believe and what not to believe? If a dealer claims to have come up with an incredible new children's effect, how do you decide whether or not you should invest your hard earned money on this product? What works for one magician does not necessarily work for another.

*"Think left and think right and think low and think high. Oh, the things you can think up if only you try!" – Dr. Seuss*

In my youth, I constantly bought new props that looked showy and that the dealer told me would be great in any show. Then I met the late Ken Brooke at his studio in Wardour Street in London's West End. Ken was demonstrating a trick to a potential customer, and I thought it was terrific. I wanted to buy it. However, here is the rub. Ken would not sell it to me. Imagine that! I was prepared to part with my money for a piece of thread (Nemo Rising Cards), but Ken said it was not a good trick for my personality. That could not happen today at an on-line store. The truth is that Ken was right. I think it is quite ridiculous to think that just because a dealer is selling a fancy prop that may be a gem in the right hands, that it will necessarily be a great addition to your own show. I dislike expressions such as a "must have" effect, or "every magician should own one of these!"

So how on earth do you know what will work for you in your shows, and what will not? I suppose one way to answer this is trial and error. In other words, you buy everything that is out there, regardless of the cost, and see what works and what does not. The tricks that don't work you can then sell on eBay, or put in the next magic auction. I know many entertainers who actually take this approach, but it can get expensive!

So your mind is now buzzing with information that needs to be processed. This is where imagination comes into the equation. If you see a trick you like the look of, whether it be on-line, at a magic convention, or even in a brick-and-mortar magic store, try this little exercise before you take out your wallet. Create a picture in your mind of what you may be able to do with this effect. Look at the props involved and stretch your imagination to greater limits. See yourself performing this in front of an audience of children. Consider all the possibilities, and envision the reactions you are likely to get. Don't hold back with this creative process. I am not telling you to immediately come up with a clear-cut routine complete with patter. Just consider your own personality and style, and attempt to run with it as your imagination wanders. If this prop is demonstrated by a dealer and it seems dull, be careful not to dismiss it. One man's garbage is another man's miracle! I will not pretend that this is an easy exercise, because it is



Jolly Roger's home theater

actually quite a hard thing to take away all the external influences.

*"It's not what you look at that matters, it's what you see."*  
— Henry David Thoreau

If you have ever been in a position to sell a house, you know that a realtor tells you all sorts of things that need to be done to make it more saleable. This may have nothing to do with the structure of the house, but simply the way you have your furniture arranged, the fact that there are dishes all over the kitchen, or that the lawn has not been mown. The reason for this is that many buyers have no imagination. They cannot comprehend that once they buy the house, all the furniture will be gone, there will be no dirty dishes in the kitchen, and it will be a simple task to mow the lawn. It is the same with a magic prop. Never take it at its face value, and, dare I say it, never perform it in exactly the same way that it says in the instructions or on the accompanying DVD. You don't want to be a clone. You want to be your own wonderful and unique self.

If after this exercise your mind is buzzing with ideas and the whole routine seems to fit your style, then I think you are getting a hint that you should get out your wallet. However, if your sense of where to go with a routine with the prop remains stagnant, then I suggest you move on. It will still be there if you get a sudden inspiration at a later date. I am also a big believer in using non-magic props in your magic show. I love browsing through discount stores, antique shops, and even the Goodwill store! I also enjoy garage sales. There are so many unique treasures at these outlets that lend themselves to the creative magician. I encourage you to try the same imagination exercise that you do with the dealers who specifically sell magic props.

I was a big fan of the late Edwin Hooper of Supreme Magic. I know that many of the items that were manufactured were adapted from products you may well find in your local store. If any of you own some of the metal props of his like Run Alien Run, Run Ghost Run etc., take a flashlight and look inside the metal. You may well see some printed writing on there, because some of them were made from old biscuit tins!

*"I saw the angel in the marble and carved until I set him free."* — Michelangelo

The other misconception shared by many children's entertainers is that the



Jolly Roger's magic props

props used in an act have to be colorful and showy. The truth is that entertaining children has nothing very much to do with what the props look like. The props are merely a vehicle for you to project your wonderful and entertaining personality. You want the children to laugh at your silly antics and to be baffled by your clever magic. Most important of all, you want the children to be entertained. Always remember that you are an entertainer first, and a magician second. You can have masses of expensive and colorful props, fancy backdrops, tables with your name silk-screened professionally on the front, the latest and greatest sound system, and a tailor-made costume. However, if you are not entertaining, then your investment is of no value.

I have recently converted a garage in my Sedona home into a magic theater. I have my own stage, lights, and sound. You will see a picture of it with this column. This is where I practice my new routines and brush up on old ones. I know that many of you will have a magic den in your home, and I suggest that this is where you retreat while working on your show. I advise you to design the room as a creative rehearsal space, complete with a large mirror. Here is another suggested exercise: Go into your den and find a prop on your shelf that you have never used. It may even be something that you bought at an auction and discarded because you did not know what it was. Try to build a routine from the ground up with this prop. Let your imagination run away with you; you may surprise yourself what

you come up with, especially if you put no limits on your creativity. Also try the same exercise with something that is not a magic prop. It could be a pet's toy, an old telephone, a pencil, a CD, a pair of socks, a picture frame, in fact it could be any object that you have lying around your house. This may be a little harder, but the possibilities of performing magic with everyday objects are limitless.

To summarize, we live in an information age in which we are bombarded with so much "stuff" that we need to be extremely selective about the material we use when preparing our shows for children. There are some advantages to having so much information, and this was not always the case. Whether this information is used wisely comes down to the imagination of the individual performer. Look and listen to as much of what is out there as you can, but at the end of the day, you are an entertainer, and having an entertaining show in the eyes of the children is all that matters. Always be true to yourself, and always listen to your audience, which in your case will be children. This is far more valuable than listening to advice from other magicians. Magicians can sometimes pull you down, whereas children can build you up when you are entertaining them. At the end of the day, if the children in your audience are smiling, shouting out, laughing, and clapping, then you have succeeded.

As always, I welcome your comments. You can email me at [ComicMagician@cox.net](mailto:ComicMagician@cox.net). ★

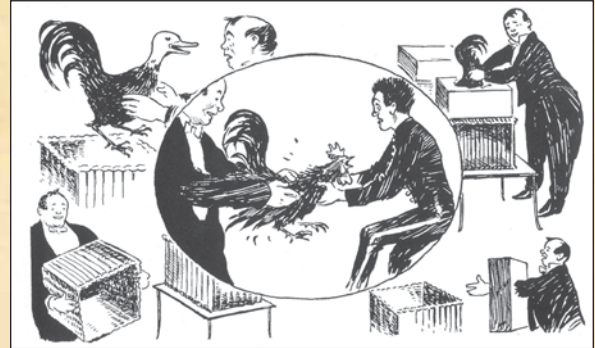
# The Nielsen Gallery

## Servais Leroy - "Bosco's Ludicrous Mishap"

Dimensions: Half-sheet 21" x 29" • Lithographer: The National Printing Co. • Date: 1910s • Nielsen Rating: Rare

The illusion featured on this month's poster represents what magic authorities believe is history's first recorded magic effect. It involves the decapitation of a goose and the magical restoration of its head, an effect performed by the magician Dedi for Cheops, builder of the Great Pyramid, more than five thousand years ago.

When Cheops heard of Dedi's ability to decapitate and restore heads, he ordered the magician to court and offered him a condemned prisoner with which to conjure. Dedi declined the offer and used a goose instead. According to historian Milbourne Christopher, "He cut off the goose's head and placed it to the east of the great hall and its still-quivering body to the west. Dedi pronounced a magic spell; the two parts of the bird melded together, and the restored goose cackled."



The modern-day conjuror who resurrected this famous illusion and entertained theater audiences with it was Belgian magician Servais LeRoy. His approach differed somewhat, because he presented it as a comical farce. It was first popularized (using doves) by vaudeville magician Imro Fox when he appeared with LeRoy and Frederick Eugene Powell in an act called the "Great Triple Alliance." Here's the effect:

Two empty pans were shown; each stood on four short legs. Fox produced two doves, one white and one black, from beneath an empty silk. He tore off their heads and put a head and a body in each of the pans, which he covered. On removing the covers and taking the doves out restored to life, he found he had made a mistake: the white dove had a black head and the black dove had a white head. To repair his mistake, he tore their heads off again and replaced them in the pans; this time the proper body and head were together. When the covers were removed, the doves were as good as new with their proper heads in place.

The version featured in this month's poster was the next iteration popularized by comedic magician Leon Bosco, part of the team of LeRoy, Talma, and Bosco. In this version the pigeons were replaced by a goose and a rooster. It was called "Mr. Duck and Mrs. Rooster."

As part of a larger livestock production act, the audience saw a duck and a rooster and watched in horror and fascination as Bosco tore their heads off and placed the bodies of the birds in a box.

Some magic passes were made and the birds were restored to life. However, somewhere along the line the bumbling Bosco got the heads and bodies mixed up; the duck now had the rooster's head and the rooster had the duck's head.

No harm came to the birds; the feat was accomplished by tucking their real heads under their wings with dummy heads and necks taking their place. It was these that Bosco ripped off. After placing the birds in the box, hidden duplicate birds, prepared in advance – one duck with a rooster's head and one duck dressed from the neck down in a rooster suit – were produced. In writing of the effect LeRoy said: "It was unusually funny to look at; when we tried it out at the Empire Theater, Sheffield, England, even I and my assistants had to laugh with the audience. We could not use a real rooster because this noble bird lost all his courage when dressed as a lowly duck, and insisted on sitting down to think it over. The ducks, however, apparently thought they had been promoted to something or another and proudly strutted off the stage."

LeRoy permitted Thurston to include it in his show, where it became a great success. Thurston paid \$100 for the effect and also requested permission for its use by Dante in his number two show, but LeRoy declined. From his home in Keansburg, New Jersey, LeRoy wrote to Thurston on August 24, 1923:

"Under no consideration whatever will I allow my effect of the DECAPITATION of duck and rooster to be used...I believe you remember you are the only man to whom I have sold the effect and it is distinctly understood you alone are to use same. There is very special value to my BOSCO in this act and for that reason I HAVE ALWAYS REFUSED TO SELL SAME...the last time was only a few weeks ago. This is a vital matter and let me hear from you quickly...I know the Dante show is shortly to open...let it not be started including my effect of Mr. Duck and Mrs. Rooster."

Given current sensitivity guidelines and animal rights activists such as the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, one can hardly imagine such an act being performed today. Still, in its day it was a popular and hilarious routine that, like much of magic, required audiences to suspend their disbelief and hope that in the end the magician would set matters straight. ★

—Tom Ewing

(Sources include: *Servais LeRoy, Monarch of Mystery*; *The Complete Life of Howard Franklin Thurston*, *The Illustrated History of Magic*.)

# LE ROY, TALMA & BOSCO

AND THEIR OWN BIG COMPANY



BOSCO'S LUDICROUS MISHAP

# INFORMED OPINION

## LATEST PRODUCT REVIEWS

Compiled and Edited by W. S. Duncan

### MAGIC: PAGE BY PAGE BOOK By PATRICK PAGE

Available from: [www.PatrickPageMagic.co.uk](http://www.PatrickPageMagic.co.uk)  
Price \$70.00

#### REVIEW BY PAYNE



My favorite type of magic book is that rare volume in which a hidden gem can be found on any random page. It could be a trick, a sage piece of advice, or an amusing or historically relevant anecdote. This is one of the reasons why *Magic: Page by Page* rapidly became one of my favorite books.

Here's an example: I just opened it up and found myself in the middle of Easy Money, a previously marketed

effect of Mr. Page in which five blank pieces of paper magically transform into money. Another page flip and I find myself at a chapter titled "Things You Should Know about a Stacked Deck," which is a concise essay on the various attributes of a sequentially ordered pack.

I found *Magic: Page by Page* to be a marvelous and very useful book. Even if you have no interest in learning the ins and outs of a stacked deck, there is certainly more in this volume to choose from. It really does, as trite as it sounds, have something for everyone. Though perhaps not everyone: mentalists and illusionists will find little pertaining directly to their genres of magic. But for the rest of us, *Magic: Page by Page* is a treasure trove of commercial magic suitable for close-up, parlor, and stage. And all of it honed to perfection through years of real world performances by Mr. Page himself.

I only had the privilege of seeing Mr. Page lecture once. It was late in his life, perhaps only three or four years before his death in 2010. But I was quite taken by his direct approach to magic and the wonderful anecdotes he had to tell. So I was pleased when I heard that a book of his work was to be published. I must admit to being a little disappointed upon first seeing the volume. After all, Patrick Page had been involved in magic most of his life and had already published several books and motifs on the subject – *Bell's Book of Magic* and *The Big Book of Magic* being two of his better known works. So I was expecting a large volume along the lines of *The James File* or *Greater Magic*. At 327 pages, *Magic: Page by Page* is a third of the size of *Greater Magic* but is still the second largest magic book in my collection – Taschen's monstrous volume, *Magic*, being the first. At twelve and a half inches in height it won't fit on any of my magic bookshelves. After an extensive rearranging of said shelves, I was finally able to make a home for it resting lengthwise across my collection of equally preposterously oversized books from the Miracle Factory.

Still, it is a gorgeous book. From the glossy full-color heavy stock dust jacket to the clean modern layout of the pages, it is

a work of art – a fitting tribute to the life of this outstanding performer. While its rather unorthodox size makes it a tad difficult to read (I found putting it on a bookstand helped immensely), its oversized format makes the hundreds of photographs that illustrate this volume easy to see. And while not a complete collection of Mr. Page's work, it contains (according to its editor, Matthew Field) "everything Pat wanted to be in it." Included is material previously published in lecture notes or booklets. I believe the chapters on the Misers Dream and the Topit originally appeared in pamphlet form. Other items appeared in magazines, and other effects have been transcribed from the old Trik-a-Tape series. So it seems that Mr. Page tried to give us the best of his best, which may be why every trick in this book is of such a high caliber.

Mr. Field ends his Preface by writing, "It is my sincere belief that the material in this book is a good representation of the extraordinary magic of Patrick Page, and that the material itself will be of inestimable value to performers of every level of proficiency working in every type of venue." This is a sentiment that I whole heartedly agree with, and is probably the main reason that this book was flying out of the dealer's room at the recent Blackpool convention.

It is early in the year, but I believe that this will be on the top of many a reviewer's book-of-the-year list. I highly recommend this one.

### MAELSTROM BOOK By TOM STONE

Available from: [www.hermeticpress.com](http://www.hermeticpress.com)  
Price \$55.00

#### REVIEW BY PAYNE

I freely admit that I am a big fan of Mr. Stone's work and that my review of his previous volume, *Vortex*, may have been a tad bit too effusive in its praise and admiration. I gather from the Foreword to his most recent book, *Maelstrom*, that he finds such praise to be rather unsettling. So I will attempt to rein in my enthusiasm.



Let me start by saying that if you found Mr. Stone's previous work to be of interest you will no doubt hold his most recent literary endeavor in the same regard. *Maelstrom* is a fitting companion piece to his earlier volume. Like *Vortex*, *Maelstrom* contains a divergent array of effects, ideas, and routines. There are close-up tricks, stand-up routines, demonstrations of mentalism, and enough off-beat ideas to keep the reader coming back to this book time and time again for inspiration and insight.

You should be aware that some of the work has appeared elsewhere. Some of the routines have been previously published

in magazines such as *Genii* or were available for download from Mr. Stone's website. I find it handy to have the routines bound up nicely in a book or two, rather than have them flung to the four corners of my magic library in various forms and formats. It's much nicer to thumb through a book in search of an effect than it is to hunt through stacks of old magazines and piles of printed out PDFs. I must say I was quite pleased to find his work on the Multiplying Bottles and Ramsey's Cylinder and Coins in this edition, because I know I will repeatedly refer to his insights on those two effects in the future.

Some of the routines in this book are works in progress. The plots have pretty much been worked out, but the mechanics are still in the development stage. Of these, my favorite is a trick called Brutus's Gift. This is an intriguing plot in which a spectator is asked to select one of five boxes. The four un-chosen boxes are opened and each is found to contain a large knife. The handles of these knives are colored to match a glove that was attached to the outside of the box. The selected box is opened but is found to contain no knife. The magician then falls forward. A knife, whose handle matches that of the glove on the selected box, is seen to be plunged into the performer's back. Several possible solutions are provided on how one might accomplish this effect. But it is left up to the reader to decide which one might work best. Or better yet, to develop one of his own.

I like this concept a lot. It's almost like open-source software. What could really take it to the next level would be a website where purchasers of the book could go to post their solutions to the unfinished routines so that others could build upon or further refine the ideas, thus making it truly open-source magic.

I could go on and on about this book. But I stated at the beginning of this review that I would refrain from doing so, as to not raise Mr. Stone's ire or further insult his artistic sensibilities.

*Maelstrom* is a fine book and I highly recommend it. Not so much for the routines it contains, though they are excellent, but for the access to Mr. Stone's thought process and his openness in allowing us to see how he goes about developing his routines. It's genius.

**THE JINX COMPANION BOOK**  
**BY CRAIG CONLEY, GORDON MEYER,**  
**& FREDERICK TURNER**

Available at: [www.mysteryarts.com/jinx/](http://www.mysteryarts.com/jinx/)  
Price for print book \$18.00; PDF download \$9.00

**REVIEW BY JIM KLEEFELD**



This might be the book that starts you on a vibrant path toward new and more creative magic. Or it might be a complete waste of your time. The three authors decided to spend a year reading and studying Annemann's *The Jinx* magazine, all 1,028 pages of it, and comparing notes. The result is pretty much what you would expect; they decided it was a great magazine that had a ton of original and brilliant ideas in it. This book is a compilation of sorts of their opinions on those ideas, tricks, and surrounding material.

The book contains four divisions, each with several short sections that have numerous categorized references to *The Jinx*

material. The sections include such things as Forces, Living and Dead Tests, Rope Tricks, Bar Betchas, Trick Decks, Two-Person Codes, and the Cards Across effect. Within each of those sections the authors list the tricks or routines they found in *The Jinx*. Each reference includes the title of the trick, a short descriptive paragraph, and *The Jinx* issue number (but not the page number).

The tricks are referenced only, not fully explained. If you want to find out how a trick works, you have to have a copy of *The Jinx*, seek out the issue number, find the trick within it, and read it from the original source. So if you are looking for a good card force, for example, and you have a copy of both *The Jinx Companion* and *The Jinx* at hand, there are fourteen references you can track down to see if one is right for your needs.

The authors have done a herculean task in researching every word of *The Jinx* to mine the best material; they sorted carefully through it and pulled out the best of the best for you. But will it prove useful? Well, first, you have to own *The Jinx* (it is still available in several hard copy and digital formats). Second, you have to be willing to sit and file through this book and *The Jinx* in order to find and read what you are looking for. And third, you have to be willing to navigate through the authors' somewhat arbitrary and uneven categories. Those categories include such topics as "tricks that require courage to perform," "what to look for if you only have one hour," "magic that is in movies (of the day)," and "now-famous tricks that originally appeared in *The Jinx*." It is a book of discovery, but not so much for the reader as it was for the writers. I applaud their intense research. It is the kind of investigation and mind-expansion that we all should be doing. But I wonder how much you will benefit from reading their work instead of doing something similar yourself.

*The Jinx Companion* could be a fine place to start to rekindle your fire, if indeed your fire needs rekindling. If you sit with both this book and *The Jinx* and actually go through the cross-referencing needed, you will undoubtedly find lots of insight and some great performing material. It is not for everybody, but for those of you who have the time and inclination to see why what is old is often new again, this is a nice journey at a very reasonable price.

**DIVERSITY CIRCUS BOOK AND DVD**  
**BY DOUG SCHEER, ILLUSTRATED BY MICHAEL KLINE**  
Available from: [www.DiversityCircus.com](http://www.DiversityCircus.com)  
Price \$24.95

**REVIEW BY PAYNE**



Doug Scheer is a performer from the Detroit area who is well-versed in the art of children's entertainment. These days he focuses mainly on school assembly programs; he has eleven different shows from which to choose. Doug is a man after my own heart; all of these shows are thematic, character-driven programs with an extraordinary attention to detail and superb scripting. I have heard it said that no one can wrap

a presentation around a message the way that Doug Scheer can, and after seeing this book and DVD combo I have to agree. But before you get too excited by thinking that Mr. Scheer has finally released one of his excellent programs to the magic community at large, you should be made aware that this is definitely not the case.

*Diversity Circus* contains no effects. It is not a script, nor are

there any instructions for tricks to be found on the DVD. Instead *Diversity Circus* is the book and DVD combo pack that he offers to the public as part of BOR sales after his show.

Now I know many of the magicians who started reading this automatically jumped to the next review on the page after reading the last few sentences and discovering there weren't any tricks to be found in this offering. So I would like to take the opportunity to thank the few of you who are still with me for sticking around. It is you, the ones who know that magic is far more than just tricks and props, whom this package is aimed at.

So what is *Diversity Circus*? The DVD contains a high quality, professionally produced recording of the full forty-five minute assembly show presentation, which was recorded in front of a live school audience. The accompanying booklet is a glossy, full-color, sixty-four page comic of the performance interplayed with a dozen interactive tricks, puzzles, stunts, and activities, my favorite of which is an updated version of Sam Lloyd's classic "Get Off The Earth" puzzle in which you use the DVD as the interior moveable circle. I can honestly say that the first thing I thought of when I saw this was, "Doug Scheer must die. He's far too clever for his own good." It's one of those ideas that will have you forever kicking yourself because you didn't think of it.

If there are no instructional attributes to this item, why did he release it to the magic fraternity? I know many of Mr. Scheer's compeers asked him the exact same question. Many felt that he was being rather cavalier in allowing other magicians access to this material, because it would allow the more ethically impaired among us to copy his outstanding act.

Mr. Scheer feels strongly that the best way to raise the perception of the children/family entertainer is to produce not only a high quality program, but also a well produced line of product to go along with it. While most magicians are content to offer simple coloring sheets, poorly produced pamphlets, or magic kits filled with cheap tricks, Mr. Scheer has decided to take the high road by offering this custom one-of-a-kind souvenir of his performance. Coloring sheets probably won't make it as far as the car; the pamphlets will fall apart in a few days; and all the pertinent pieces of the magic kits will become lost or broken. This book and DVD set will undoubtedly end up in the child's collection of favorite books and playthings.

Anyone seriously considering upgrading their BOR sales items should obtain a copy of this book to see where the bar has now been set, which is pretty high. Anyone seriously considering doing school assembly programs should purchase this so they can see what can be done. Mr. Scheer definitely knocks it up a notch, and the reason he isn't worried about someone replicating his program from the DVD is that it would cost tens of thousands of dollars to do so. The custom props, costumes, music, and backdrops are a wonder to behold.

Even if you're not interested in revamping your BOR items or getting into the assembly program business, this DVD is still worth your while to obtain because Mr. Scheer is just a lot of fun to watch.

### COMEDY HELPER AND COMEDY HELPER 2 BOOKLETS By STEPHANE BOURGOIN

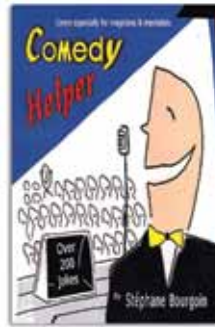
Available from: [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com)

Distributed by *Murphy's Magic Supplies*

Price \$19.95 each volume

### REVIEW BY NORMAN BECK

*Comedy Helper* and *Comedy Helper 2* are small books of lines



that a person could use in his or her act to (presumably) add humor. My mother taught me years ago that if you can't say something nice, then don't say anything at all. So I will just say that the paper used in these booklets burns very well, and could effectively be used for starting a fire in the fireplace.

Here are some examples of the material:

"Money is like a sixth sense: without it, you cannot fully use your other five."

"Sometimes I wonder how nudists play strip poker."

"There are two kinds of spectators who could help me with this trick: men or women."

Please, please, please...if you are going to do magic and get paid for it, don't buy a book full of jokes thinking that the one-liners will make you funny.

### ESSENTIAL MAGIC CONFERENCE 2011 8-DVD SET By LUIS DE MATOS, ET AL

Distributed by *Murphy's Magic Supplies*

Price \$150.00

### REVIEW BY JIM KLEEFELD



Perhaps the only thing better than spending quality time with experts in your field is spending quality time with friends. Watching *The Essential Magic Conference 2011* DVDs is something like both. Thirty-three of the field's

top experts got together last summer for a teleconference in which they offered their thoughts, ideas, and routines on magic. The list is a veritable Who's Who in international magic: Max Maven, Gaetan Bloom, Topas, Luis De Matos, Eric Mead, Dan and Dave Buck, David Kaye, Marco Tempest, Rudy Coby, Akira Fujii, Dani DaOrtiz, Ava Do, Peter Lamont, Apollo Robbins, Bruno Copin, Chris Power, Christian Engblom, David Berglas, Marvin Berglas, JJ, Jonathan Bayme, David Britland, Jordan Gomez, Lu Chen, Lennart Green, Peter Wardell, René Lavand, Richard Wiseman, Stan Allen, Mike Caveney, Paul Daniels, and David Copperfield. The conference organizers recorded those live sessions and packaged them as a set of eight, two-hour-plus DVDs. If you did not "attend" the teleconference, this is the next best thing to being there.

The conference is virtually all on video here, presented much as it was originally, albeit differently sequenced. Every presenter gives a concise twenty-minute lecture on a specific topic with a tight script, so the sessions, though numerous, flow quickly. Don't mistake concise, though, for light. Almost every presenter makes sincere pitches on important clear topics and gives practical advice. The topics are relevant and meaningful and the advice is rock solid. In fact, there is enough material here to guide you through a career or hobby in magic no matter where you stand now or what your aspirations are.

The sessions are interspersed with plenty of performances,

PowerPoint presentations, and video enhancements. In other words, you will not be sitting listening to talking heads all day, but will see a wealth of top-notch magic that emphasizes the topics discussed and the points made. There is so much good material here that you could watch it all the way through at least a few times and gain insight and find new ideas each time. I recommend that you watch no more than one single disc in a day or you will gloss over and miss things. And with these concise lectures, if you miss a little, you miss a lot.

Everyone will have their favorite highlights depending on what you want to do in, or get out of, magic, but I'll share a few of mine. Max Maven discusses the value of Straight Line theory and how we often ruin the power of the magic by deviating from logical action. Peter Lamont extols the virtue of directing your audience's attention by defining the effect for them. David Kaye gives strategic reasons for promulgating kid show performances. Rudy Coby emphasizes creating your magic based on a strong character and original material. Ava Do describes the value of gathering information on your audience before performing for them. Mike Caveney shares the history of The Million Dollar Mystery and then presents a full performance. Bruno Copin shares expert tips on thread work.

Dan and Dave Buck explain the importance of studying disciplines other than magic in order to enhance your magic. Richard Wiseman shares object lessons in the psychology of perception. Marco Tempest advises you to collaborate on your magic with specialists outside of magic, and later demonstrates a mind-blowing routine that combines new technology with sleight of hand.

Apollo Robbins describes the psychology of perception and how different environments are more conducive to focus. Topas promotes that magic should be based on a reflection of human desires. Stan Allen makes and embellishes twenty-three observations, almost all of which are succinct and helpful, such as "Remember your job description" and "Selling is simply solving somebody's problem." Luis De Matos generously shares his "comet mystery" theory and a profound secret routine of vanishing a random spectator's car at the theater. This is the kind of trick that makes legends and is desired by anyone who sees it; in years past the secret would have died with the performer. You will be amazed. I can't believe he tips it.

Want more? There are interesting panel discussions on kid show magic and digital magic, plus terrific performances by Lu Chen, Paul Daniels, Bruno Copin, Max Maven, FISM-winner Jordan Gomez, Gaetan Bloom, and more. And David Copperfield takes us on a forty-five-minute video tour of his famous, secretive magic museum.

I cannot imagine anyone in magic watching these DVDs and not finding something that will seriously help or inspire them. The presenters are passionate, intelligent, and well-prepared. Nobody will like all sixty-six presentations, but every magician will love some of them. Whether you are a casual hobbyist, a full-time pro, a seasoned veteran illusionist, a serious finger-flinger, or an astute historian, there is something on this set for you to revel in.

There are a few minor glitches and missteps, but with over eighteen hours of live performances, that is to be expected. My only main criticism is the inclusion of two glaring product plugs of Dani DaOrtiz and Jordan Gomez. It was tacky and unnecessary to insert these two video ads in an otherwise pristine package. If there is any other flaw in the package, it is the omission of hard copy material. There is a PDF of *Opus* magazine, and a useless 216-page file of all the random comments sent in by live viewers. I would have loved to see readable or printable PDFs of some of the lecture outlines or PowerPoint charts used by the presenters,

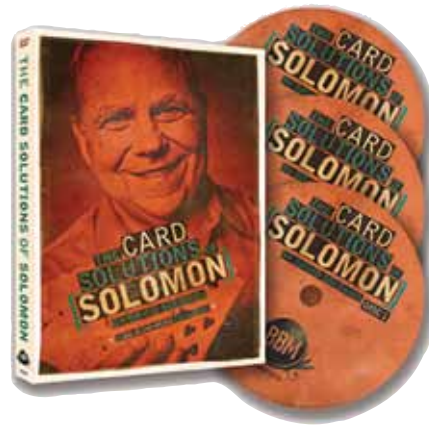
especially such helpful items as Topas's chart that paired human desires with magic plots, or the historic documents unearthed by Mike Caveney and Bill Kalush. Maybe I'm old-fashioned; I could always cue up that portion of the video and copy the written material down. But having some nice reminder visuals already done for you would have been a very easy add-on.

This DVD set was sent to anyone who registered for the Essential Magic Conference 2011. If you missed the live conference, the set was made available post-conference to anyone who was not registered, albeit at a higher price. Anyone who watches this set will probably want to sign up for EMC 2012. I know I'm there.

### THE CARD SOLUTIONS OF SOLOMON DVD BY DAVID SOLOMON

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies  
Price \$50.00

#### REVIEW BY ANTONIO M. CABRAL



The title *The Card Solutions of Solomon* calls to mind his friend Simon's *The Card Ideas of Simon Aronson*. Me, I prefer "ideas" to "solutions" when referring to tricks or plots. Certainly when creating a magic trick there are problems that arise applying various methods, handlings, and strategies. However, if the plot or trick itself is the "problem"

needing a solution, maybe you shouldn't be doing the trick. Dave Solomon is, by his own admission, more of a creator than a performer, and this DVD is full of clever methods and ideas. Also by his own admission on this DVD, when he, John Bannon, and Simon Aronson get together for their famous "Chicago Session" get-togethers, they have no problem with frank analysis of (I believe the quote was "making fun of") whatever DVD they're watching that week. With the release of this DVD, in the words of the old punch line, it's Dave's turn in the barrel.

Dave Solomon earned his place as one of Ed Marlo's best students by being a very, very clever thinker. One of his biggest contributions to the card magic literature is the Ace assembly with a "kickback" ending, in which, after assembling, the Aces instantly reappear back where they started in the separate piles. This is a good trick, and the original is still a good handling. The current version of Solomon's handling, *Solmar Aces Revisited*, appears here with two lay-down sequences to try. Solomon offers a three-phase version of another perennial Marlo School favorite, *The 21 Card Trick*. Alternative methods turn this poster child for card-hackery into some very direct mindreading that will fool the guys at the club or anyone who tries to do this trick in the middle of your set. I also like Solomon's *Card in the Card Case* for its very subtle construction. A number of techniques used in the various tricks are also ones for the notebook.

The problem with this material is that while a lot of the bits and pieces are clever and intriguing, the results are often less than

compelling; the whole is *less* than the sum of the parts. Many of these tricks end up being Card Tricks with a capital C-T: the kind of stuff we magicians love to play with and show each other, but are mean things to inflict on an audience of normal people. For example, of all the complaints people may or may not have had about The Clock Trick, I doubt “Boy, I wish this had a gambling-related finish!” was ever one of them. So I don’t see the point of Casino Clock, presented here. (More important, a well-known factoid about casinos is that there are no clocks on the walls.) Blank Jazz Aces is a proper Jazz Aces (as opposed to his “O’Henry Jazz Aces”, which isn’t) with a great blank deck ending. The problem is, while the ending is great, the trick itself isn’t. Marlo’s Secret Kato is a “leaper” sort of effect in which a card moves from one packet to another, but the procedure leaves a lot to be desired as compared to, say, The Biddle Trick (aka The Invisible Card). In more than a few places, I wasn’t even sure what the hell was supposed to be going on in the trick in the first place, before getting to the whiz-bang ending. A lot of magicians like to walk each other through “capital C-T” card tricks before yanking the rug out and showing all the cards are blank, or that they have changed into Kings or whatever. This is a great way to fool magicians because (let’s face it) we’re used to being bored with card tricks. It’s not my idea of a good time in front of laymen, and it’s certainly not any layman’s idea of a good time. So again, while there’s some really cool session thinking here, too many of the tricks are “nod and smile” for my taste.

I’m not faulting David Solomon for not being a performer, so I’m overlooking a lot (including a cringe-worthy W.C. Fields impersonation). I am, however, raising yet another eyebrow at Big Blind Media for their choice of settings and tone for an otherwise well-produced DVD. David Solomon is such the antithesis of the hip-hop, street magic swagger this DVD dresses him in that it feels like parody. The “condemned basement”/Hitler’s bunker set is back again, naturally, but the setting that boggles my mind is the gym. We’re a notoriously doughy lot; I can’t think of any card worker who’s going to look appropriate performing Oil & Water in a gym. (I’m beyond relieved it wasn’t the sauna.)

David Solomon’s reputation is well-established by now, but overall this DVD doesn’t do him any favors. Again, the value here is the nuts and bolts you can take away and apply to your own card work, but I’m not sure that it’s worth the \$50. If you have the choice, you’re probably better off buying the book *The Wisdom of Solomon*, which for the same price has many of these effects and ideas and twice as much besides. That way you’ll have these ideas in a form from which you’ll gain the most. Setting them to a funky beat in a bombed-out cellar isn’t it.

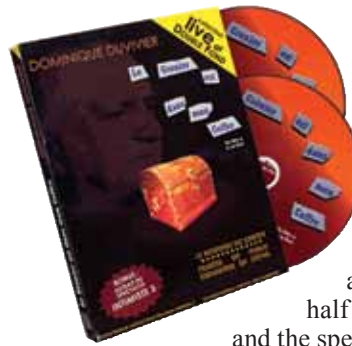
**THE ATTIC IS IN MY CHEST TWO-DVD SET**  
**By DOMINIQUE DUVIVIER**

*Distributed by Murphy’s Magic Supplies*  
 Price \$60.00

**REVIEW BY NORMAN BECK**

I don’t know Mr. Duvivier, but after asking around I understand that he is a colorful person, who leads an eclectic life. The reason I bring this up is that his colorful nature spills over into his magic, and that is a good thing.

The two volumes in this set give you twelve tricks from Duvivier’s tool chest. The DVD was shot in French, but if you want to listen in English you can. The tricks are all well done and the explanations are very clear. Not only can he perform, he can teach as well.



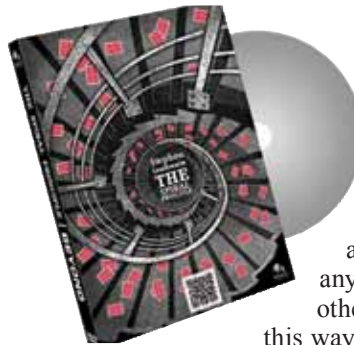
A variety of tricks are presented. I liked by far his version of Brother John Hamman’s Two Card Trick, and I like half of a trick that he calls a Double Open Prediction. I may not have liked one half of the trick, but I fell in love with the other half. Please read very closely as I will leave nothing out. The half I liked is this: A deck is removed and the spectator and the magician each take half. They each shuffle, and the shuffles are fair. The spectator selects one card from his half; there is no force. The card is given to the magician, who puts it in an unknown location in his half of the pack. The magician hands his half (which contains the selection) to the spectator and the spectator (out of sight of the magician) deals the cards face up one at a time. At some point he deals one card face down, and continues to deal the rest of the cards face up. When the spectator is done, he brings his half up and sets it on the table. The cards are ribbon spread and one card is face down; it is the selection. There is no stooge, and the card could be signed if you want.

It looks great, and I think it is one great trick. If you like card magic and don’t mind spending \$60 for only twelve tricks, I think you will be happy with *The Attic is in My Chest*.

**THE SPIRAL PRINCIPLE AND BEYOND**  
**DVD BY STEPHEN LEATHWAITE**

*Available from World Magic Shop: [www.worldmagicshop.com](http://www.worldmagicshop.com)*  
*Distributed by Murphy’s Magic Supplies*  
 Price \$30.00

**REVIEW BY MARC DESOUZA**



I was unfamiliar with Mr. Leathwaite prior to viewing this DVD, but I now hope to see more from him. The Spiral Principle is a concept that has several uses. Basically, the performer shuffles a deck and cuts it into four packets. He turns his back and invites a participant to shuffle any two packets together, then the other two, then finally both halves. In this way, there is no way that anyone can know the position of any card. The participant is asked to look at the top card, remember it, and then cut off about two-thirds of the deck and replace the selection. The participant is then asked to pick up the deck and give it an overhand shuffle. At that point, the performer spreads the deck face-up and instantly knows the card selected. He can then reveal the card in whatever manner he wishes. After teaching the basic working, Leathwaite and Craig Petty go through several revelations, including a Think Stop procedure as well as the use of equivoque and an elimination process. Petty then teaches a version of Triumph that is quite good, and which incorporates the principle in its method. The final variation taught shows how the Spiral Principle can be used to create a sort of ACAAN effect. In this instance, the card is selected and the performer reveals that he had predicted the location of the card in the deck before the card was selected. This is a very interesting application, but (for me ) it needs a bit more

work, because I don't want to deal with eight outs.

The Spiral Principle is very easy to execute and has some great possibilities. It is almost Tamariz-ian in nature and seems familiar, but I couldn't recall if I had read or seen that exact procedure in use or in print previously. If so, my bad...if not, than many of you will again be smacking your forehead, wondering why no one had come up with this before. Either way, this is well worth knowing, learning, and using.

Beyond is a very fine version of what has been referred to as the greatest card trick of modern times, Paul Curry's Out of this World. It is simple and direct and will make you think, "Why didn't someone come up with this before?" I have not read the recent large tome on Out of this World, but I assume that this one is not in there. The procedure is very straightforward. A deck of cards is spread face up on the table to show that the reds and blacks are mixed throughout, in no discernible pattern. The deck is squared and placed face down on the table. A participant on your right is asked to focus on the red cards only. She is to take the cards one by one from the top of the deck. If she thinks it is red, she is to put it in front of herself. If she feels it is black, she is to place it in a discard pile. A participant on your left is asked to do the same thing, but focusing on black cards. They alternate back and forth. When they finish going through the entire deck, you turn the discard pile face up, revealing a mixture of reds and blacks in no discernible pattern. They each turn over the target piles in front of them to reveal all reds in one pile and all blacks in the other. It doesn't get cleaner than this. Once the deck is placed down on the table, the performer does not need to touch the cards again. There is a set up required, so you will most likely not do this in a table-hopping setting, but the reset can be done in less than a minute. There is a great subtlety used when first showing the deck to the audience that makes this routine so effective. If you can add a false shuffle before this, it will enhance the effect even more. I really like this one and will be using it.

On the technical side, the DVD was shot in the Wizard Product Review "studio," so it has a very familiar feel to many of us who watch that "show." The video and audio are very clear and the material is very well taught. My only criticism is that Mr. Petty monopolizes the conversation; I would like to have heard much more from the creator's mouth. All in all, this is a very fine product and gets a high recommendation from me.

### OUTSTANDING DVD PRODUCED BY VERNET MAGIC

Available from: [www.vernetmagic.com](http://www.vernetmagic.com)

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$30.00

### REVIEW BY DAN GARRETT



If the title of this DVD doesn't grab you right away, it will make more sense when you know the subject matter. Break the title "Out-Standing" into two words and you have "Out," as in Paul Curry's Out of this World, and "Standing," as in the performance of parlor/platform stand-up magic. There are very few, if any, stand-up routines for

this classic effect of card mentalism. Curry's plot is considered by many as one of the finest card tricks to be conceived. After dozens upon dozens of variations by others, the original handling is still considered to be one of the best for a close-up performance.

For those few readers who are not familiar with the effect, a spectator takes a shuffled deck and uses intuition to somehow separate the red suits from the black suits while all the cards are face down. The DVD contains a wonderful background on the Curry effect, including its potential influence on world history when it was performed by a magician for Winston Churchill in WWII and the story was reported in the press. I personally remember the first time I ever saw Out of This World performed by Mark Wilson live on TV while I was sitting in the studio audience. It had quite an impact, and I was thrilled when I eventually came to learn how to present this perplexing miracle.

Roberto Mansilla has crafted a nice solution to performing the Curry effect in a situation where you want to demonstrate mentalism to a larger audience, say twenty to one hundred or more spectators. As the pack of cards is handed out to audience members to be shuffled, the performer stands two pieces of cardboard, one red and one black, against inverted glasses. The tableau is set. The mentalist then takes the shuffled deck and removes cards from it, inviting members of the audiences to guess whether they are red or black. He places the cards against each cardboard color according to their choice.

This simple staging allows everyone to follow the proceedings with ease. The performer can choose to involve as many or as few members of the audience as desired. The magician also removes groups of the same color to speed things along and avoid the color separation from becoming tedious. There is no switching of the colors halfway through. In the end the intuition of the participants proves to be one hundred percent correct.

There is some brilliant psychology used in the handling, and the method will completely throw anyone familiar with the original close-up version by Curry. You will need to put in some practice, of course, and pay special attention to your blocking and positioning.

There is a wonderful little bonus on this DVD that I thoroughly enjoyed. It is a brief visual history of the Vernet Magic Company, from its founding by the magician Vernet up to the present owners Michel and Greco. If you watch closely you will even get a glimpse of how the thumb tips are manufactured. By the way, Vernet is pronounced just the way it looks. The "t" is not silent.

I performed Outstanding at a recent assembly meeting and got a great response. Many were fooled. If you use mentalism or mental magic in your stand-up shows, and you like the Out of This World effect, I can recommend this DVD to you.

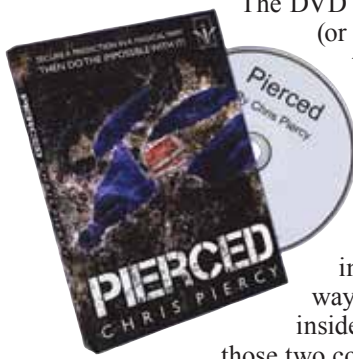
### PIERCED DVD BY CHRIS PIERCY

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$30.00

### REVIEW BY ANTONIO M. CABRAL

The basic Pierced effect involves a balloon, a pack of cards, and a folded, odd-backed "prediction card." The performer inflates the balloon and then, to isolate the prediction, shoves the folded card through the side of the balloon. After letting that effect sink in, someone from the audience selects and signs a card, which is then lost in the deck. The performer then has someone pop the balloon, and the "prediction" turns out to be the signed selection.



The DVD doesn't come with any balloons (or any of the gimmicks needed for the trick), but the idea itself is compelling, and open to a lot of possibilities.

Pierced in its most basic form has two different applications. It's a way to cause a folded card to penetrate an inflated balloon, and it's also a way to produce a signed object from inside an inflated balloon. Between those two components there's a good deal of potential to be had. Of the two, my guess is more folks will latch on to being able to produce a signed card or an apparently prewritten prediction from a sealed balloon. The removal of the card is clean and natural and looks good. The gaff is easy to make, and the other necessary item is something many magicians already own (and isn't expensive to obtain).

The DVD itself is a little rough to navigate (and the main menu looks terrible). There are a few variations of the effect suggested, but once you get the main idea, the best versions are going to come from your own brainstorming. If your idea of a good time involves balloons, you'll want to check this one out.

### THE ENIGMA TRICK By PAULINO GIL

*Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies  
Price: \$35.00*

### REVIEW BY DAVID GOODSSELL



Remember the first time you ever saw the jumping rubber bands? It is in every child's magic book today. A rubber band is stretched over two fingers, a fist is formed, given a little shake, and the rubber band jumps to the other two fingers. Other than the little shake there are no apparent moves, just a rubber band and fingers. Bam, it's magic – well, at least a pretty good puzzle. The Enigma elevates that concept. Consider this: The center of a two-foot piece of thin, white

cord is secured in the palm of one hand so that when the ends are held all four fingers are trapped. The ends of the cord are adjusted to trap just one finger indicated by a spectator. The ends of the cord are tugged and the cord jumps to a different finger. Pure magic. Pick another finger and repeat the effect.

Now take it one step further; after the single finger is selected, the cord is tied onto that finger! It still happens. The convincer is that during these actions the spectator places his extended forefinger along the tips of your fingers where they press against your palm. The secret to the rubber band trick is that the fingers are quickly opened and closed. This is impossible with The Enigma. Your fingers do not move! But wait, there's more. A thin, silver chain is placed alongside the cord in your hand. Your fingers are closed. Once again the spectator selects a finger and the cord is adjusted to trap that finger. The chain is adjusted to trap a different finger. The ends are pulled and the cord and the chain change places, each trapping the finger originally trapped by the other.

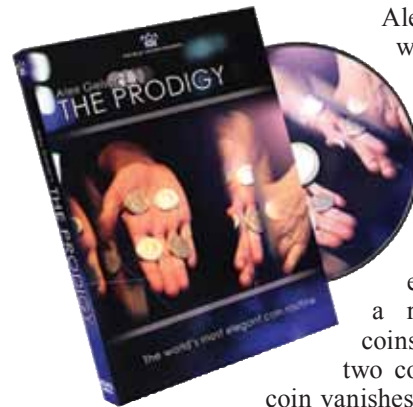
To conclude, the chain is replaced by a red cord the same length as the white cord and the fingers are closed. One end of the white cord goes between the first and second fingers. One end of the red cord goes between the ring and fourth fingers. The two red ends are tied together trapping the first three fingers and the two white ends are tied together trapping the last three fingers. The ends are tugged and suddenly the red cord traps only the first finger while the white cord traps only the fourth finger. To conclude, you hold up the red loop and the white loop together and give them a little shake, releasing one of the loops. It falls, but is caught by the other loop. They are linked!

Everything can be examined. You receive the instructional DVD, the two cords, and the chain. By the way, this is called The Enigma because when Paulino Gil performed it at The Essential Magic Conference 2010 no one could remember ever seeing the effect elsewhere. It was an enigma.

### THE PRODIGY DVD By ALEX GEISER

*Available from: www.thebluecrown.com  
Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies  
Price \$30.00*

### REVIEW BY DANNY ARCHER



Alex Geiser's sleight of hand with coins is beyond words, but I'll try to do my best. The performance begins as Alex slowly waves his right hand over his empty left hand and four half dollars suddenly appear, arranged in a square. The empty right hand makes a rubbing motion over the coins, and one by one the first two coins vanish. Then the third coin vanishes as does the final coin. The

upturned empty palm is rubbed by the right fingers and a coin appears. The second coin magically pops into view. With a gentle rubbing motion the last two coins reappear.

Two bonus effects are then demonstrated. The Boom Production has eight half dollars appear as one hand wipes over the other hand. The Sweep Change has a silver half change to a copper coin as the other hand passes over it. All these effects are demonstrated in less than two minutes.

The camera work and sound are excellent and you get to see the moves demonstrated from the performer's point of view. Alex is an outstanding teacher and he explains the moves and sleights very clearly. He also talks about focusing on the moment and allowing time for the spectator to absorb the magic.

The explanation section begins with Alex teaching the fundamental sleights he uses for these routines. These are familiar to most coin magicians: the Purse Palm and the Classic Palm. Alex shows how he is able to hold up to four coins in each of these two palms and how he allows the coins to drop singly from concealment.

After the fundamentals are covered, he teaches The Prodigy routine. And it looks great (and easy) when Alex performs it. It is great, but it is not easy. After covering the production of coins, Alex explains the vanish sequence. He teaches several methods for getting a coin into Deep Back Clip, and once again his technique

is flawless. The item called Mirage Vanish is easier than some of the other sleights. A coin on the base of the finger vanishes as the other hand passes over it. Alex also teaches the Muscle Pass as a production (a Paul Wilson idea) and a rubbing motion used as a vanish.

Alex then teaches the entire vanish and recovery sequence step by step. At one point he has two coins in Deep Back Clip and I thought to myself, "How can he possibly recover those coins?" He does it in a motivated and elegant fashion. One area where the DVD comes up a bit short: not much is offered on getting into the effects or covering angles when working in the real world.

To sum it up, Alex shares a great routine and some unique and inventive sleights. Most of the material is not for beginners (or the faint of heart), but with practice you may surprise yourself about what can be accomplished. I will recommend this to anyone who is willing to practice, and who is looking to take his coin magic to the next level.

### THE FIGURINE TRICK By LENNART GREEN

*Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies*  
Price: \$35.00

### REVIEW BY DAVID GOODSSELL



For those who know FISM-winner Lennart Green as a master of card handling this will be a bit of a departure. The essence of The Figurine is this: The performer takes a small piece of paper napkin, tissue, or cigarette paper, works it around in his fingers as though he is modeling something (more like working with clay than origami) and the paper slowly changes into a small plastic figure of a man, perhaps an inch and a half tall.

The paper is gone. As some critics have suggested, an astute spectator will correctly figure out that it was a simple switch. However, the key is not to present it as a magic trick. This is a magical happening, to be shared in an off-hand moment when magic is not expected. Such "magical happenings" are much harder to reconstruct than are magic tricks. In the instructional DVD Green makes two key observations about the effect: 1) it should be fun, and 2) don't overlook the details. That is, given that a reasonable amount of skill must be gained from practice and rehearsal, the impact of the piece lies entirely in the presentation. While Green likes to display the final figure (a miniature of a man or woman such as used in architectural models) inside a clear plastic vial, others, such as Tim Trono, have chosen to show the figurine only briefly, allowing it (causing it) to change back into shredded paper.

The latter presentation can be quite powerful, with the spectators wondering, perhaps doubting, what they have just seen. Green shows several presentations on the DVD, including using newsprint to form a three-inch figurine or an animated paper butterfly that is quite startling. He also shares a clever presentation where pieces of modeling clay are pinched, pulled, and discarded, leaving a small, plastic dog matching the colors of the clay. However, the most magical moment comes from the brief appearance of the tiny figurine. The DVD was shot in studio. It would have been so much better had video of an actual presentation for laypersons been included.

This is a Luis de Matos production. His reputation for creative

magic and that of Lennart Green lend credence to the value of this unique piece. You receive the instructional DVD plus a packet of four figurines. Paper butterflies and small plastic dogs are up to you to locate.

### ILLUMIN8 DVD AND GIMMICK By MIKE HANKINS

*Available from: www.papercranemagic.com*  
*Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies*  
Price \$25.00

### REVIEW BY MARC DESOUZA



Illumin8 is a clever card revelation that has some issues. First, it is a "redress" of another product that was marketed a few years ago. Paper Crane and Mr. Hankins give full credit, and have received permission from the creator of the other effect to market this variation. Second, Illumin8 really needs to be done in a darkened environment to be most effective. Third, it can be viewed only by a limited number of people at one time.

Does that make it a bad effect, or that you should pass this by? Not as long as you know the performing restrictions required to present it.

The basic effect involves having a card selected. The deck is cased and given to the selector to hold, along with a cigarette lighter. You hand your smart phone to another participant after enabling the camera function. The camera operator is instructed to focus on the person who chose the card, who is, in turn, asked to light the lighter behind the card case and slowly raise it. The person with the phone sees the flame morph into an image of two hearts floating in the air and tells the selector that he chose the Two of Hearts. The person with the phone can even take a picture and show it to the others. It is a very eerie sight indeed. In fact, the photo should be displayed, because that explains the use of the camera.

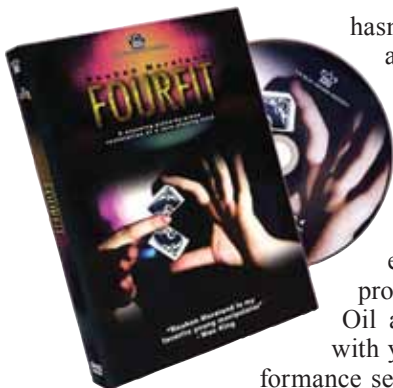
There are a few other issues I must mention. You need to play with the distance, zoom, and focus depending on the lighting conditions and the type of phone you are using. This can only be done with your own phone, which requires some minor gaffing. You are provided with a few pieces of the material needed to accomplish this. Oh, and this only works if they choose the Two of Hearts; so no repeat performances. Given the restricted conditions and the relatively high price for a card revelation, I don't really recommend this.

### FOURFIT DVD By REUBEN MORELAND

*Available from: www.TheBlueCrown.com*  
*Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies*  
Price 23.00

### REVIEW BY NORMAN BECK

I don't know Reuben Moreland personally, but I remember him from a recent magic convention in which he was a contestant. I don't remember any of the other contestants. Reuben is a young man with an incurable ailment: he has a passion for magic. If he



hasn't been told that it won't go away, then I am happy about that.

The Fourfit DVD demonstrates and teaches Reuben's take on the Torn and Restored Card. The number of versions of this effect (in regards to method) probably rank second only to Oil and Water. I will be honest with you; when I watched the performance segment of the video I had no idea what was going on. If you are a well posted magician, you would probably have a few ideas, but believe me, you wouldn't be certain about it. The production values of the DVD are very good and Reuben does a very fine job of explaining a trick that he is rightfully proud of.

I enjoyed the DVD from start to finish, and I would say to anyone who might want to do a Torn and Restored card that this would not be a bad place to start. I hope to meet Reuben some day, and I hope to get to see this version of the Torn and Restored Card up-close and personal. ☆

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# INSIDE STRAIGHT

BY NORMAN BECK

## GIVE AN INCH

If you do magic for money (whether it be full-time or part-time), you are in the service business. As performers, we have a duty to please the customer. Last week I incurred the wrath of my girlfriend Joan. The wrath was incited due to an incident concerning inches versus centimeters.

Joan was in the process of remodeling her house; the plans her architect drew up called for a seventeen-inch countertop; the cabinetmaker put in a countertop that was seventeen *centimeters*. The result, of course, was that the counter was not wide enough. How should the carpenter resolve the problem?

Unfortunately, the carpenter chose the absolutely wrong approach to solving the problem. He decided to place the blame on Joan, claiming that she had made the mistake. Joan pointed out to him that the plans specified *inches*, not *centimeters*. She reminded him that the USA was not on the metric system. The carpenter offered to meet her half way; for only \$2,000 she could have the counter fixed.


He should have talked to me before he opened his yap. This situation was not about the money; it was about the principle of the situation. I have not met the carpenter, but I know a couple of things about him. I know he is a chauvinist and I know he is stupid. Rather than fix the problem, he thought he would try to bully Joan. He told her that anyone who couldn't convert inches to centimeters could not balance a checkbook. I wasn't there to see it, but her response was, "Excuse me, but this meeting is over."

When a problem occurs, we often lose sight of what it is that we are negotiating or arguing about. The carpenter thinks he's arguing about \$4,000 (with each party paying half), but the reality is that he is risking a loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars against a \$2,000 loss. How did I come up with that figure? Joan's father was a top architect in Dallas, Texas. She is well known in the circle of people who, at some time in the future, might employ a high-end carpenter. When her house is done it will be a showplace home. The highlight of the tour is going to be the story about the screwed up countertop. The punch line of that story is going to be how the carpenter chose to handle the situation; Joan's guests are going to talk about that resolution.

The moment Joan's meeting with the carpenter was over she told her general contractor and her architect that she was less than happy. The architect met with the carpenter. Guess what? The carpenter fixed the countertop free of charge.

So let's look at what really happened. The carpenter could have turned a mistake into a very positive situation, a situation that would have allowed Joan to finish her story about the countertop with a positive recommendation. ("It was really funny. The carpenter thought the plans said centimeters instead of inches, so it was way short. But he was great and fixed it without a hassle.") Instead, his ego got in the way and he took a cheap shot about her balancing her checkbook. In the short run he may have felt he won, but in the long run this will cost him business. In the service industry there are two rules. Rule One: The customer is always right. Rule Two: When the customer is wrong, refer to rule one. ★

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## REFLECTIONS

BY GARRETT THOMAS

Hello. My name is Garrett Thomas; I am a close-up magician. I have spent countless hours performing magic and countless more in front of mirrors sharpening my skills; my goal is to perfect my art and to discover the secrets of real magic. One of the most important things I learned about the art of magic is also one of the most basic. This skill is easier than any classic force, yet executing it with confidence can be much more intimidating. It is the deceptively simple act of saying hello.

The art of hello comes naturally to some people; others find it hard to approach strangers. Saying hello is complex; it is that moment of first contact that creates the tone of the entire encounter. It is the art of intentionally communicating the desire to share something. Therefore, it is an essential skill for all magicians to master. Some magicians try to surprise people with magic right away. Others like to talk, tell a story, and set the stage. Other magicians like to get to know people and then do some magic. With constant awareness of your goals and your audience's feelings, any approach can work if done correctly. So how do you do it? What do you say?

I think that the key to a good hello is to know why you are approaching someone. What is so important about what you are going to say or do that you are willing to interrupt the lives of others? You are about to change the experience of someone; you are about to become a memory, a story, or a cautionary tale. For me the answer is simple: My magic is about sharing amazing experiences with others and about creating a sense of wonder and joy in even the most skeptical.

I want my magic to help people open their eyes to the real magic around them. So how do I do that?

Step 1: Do not interrupt life's real magical moments. Extraordinary things happen all around us. Watch and wait for natural pauses and lulls in conversation,

and then swoop in. I became a magician because I was one of those shy, awkward kids, so the way I interact with people shows that I want to genuinely connect with them. This includes not interrupting someone's intimate moment or distracting a table from the guy telling a story about his new puppy. What am I going to do that is more important than what they are doing?

Step 2: Be genuine. Make sure your presentation and persona match your goals. My magic is very informal. I like to stand out in a crowd, but still become a part of the evening. Instead of guests saying, "I was at a party and they had a magic show," I like them to say, "I was at a party and I met a magician." Or I want them to say, "The most amazing thing happened to me!" instead of "I saw this guy perform some magic." Therefore, I try to keep everything, including my hello, as "normal" and polite as possible. When approaching a group of people I do what normal people do, I introduce myself. However, because my ultimate goal is to introduce not only myself, but the idea that experiencing the extraordinary is only a matter of changing your perspective, I add a bit of a twist.

The first thing I do is to give a stranger my autograph. This person didn't ask for it and barely knows who I am, so why in the world would I do this? It is my special introduction and is familiar enough to be normal but strange enough to be remembered. My signature is not just a normal signature. It says "Garrett" when read one way, but on turning it upside down it says "Thomas." It is unusual. I even have a world record for it. My signature is the world's fastest symbiogram/complex ambigram (3.3 seconds). It is also a great way to introduce myself and genuinely shows people what I am about.

While I am signing the back of one of my business cards, I explain that my signature can tell you a lot about me. Besides the fact that it's funny looking (and that I have way too much time on my hands), it tells you that I love puzzles and

games, and that I think you have to change your perspective to see the whole picture.

This hello accomplishes everything I need. It tells people my name. It makes people want to keep my business card – and show it to others. It grabs people's attention and sets the tone for my opener by creating a genuine connection between me and the person I just met.

We live our lives from one magic moment to the next; the ability to remind people of that is one of the greatest gifts I was ever given, and one of the greatest gifts I believe I could ever give. But I can't do any of that until I say, "Hello."

Think about how you say, "Hello." That's my challenge to the readers of

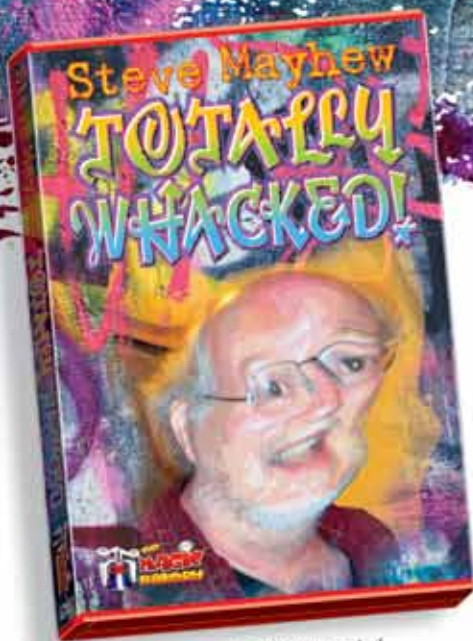


*M-U-M*. Think about your introduction. Think about your goals as a magician. Think about how you appear on stage, or in a crowd. Think about why meeting you and experiencing your art are worthwhile. First impressions matter, so make sure yours are magical. ★

[In a short period of time, Garrett Thomas has established a reputation as one of magic's finest young performers and creators. While he possesses great technical ability with cards, coins, and other small objects, Garrett is also a magician who thinks deeply about the psychology of what is "real" magic. His original effects, technical skills, and keen understanding of human psychology culminate in highly visual, entertaining, and often enlightening routines.

Garrett has released to the magic community many well-received products, including Stand-up Monte, Ring Thing, Banded, Mash Pack, and the three-DVD set *Inside the Mind of Garrett Thomas*. He lives in western New York state. —Michael Close] ★

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## Mental Breakdown



### SMALL CHANGES – BIG RESULTS

Katalina recently reworked a very old card trick, resulting in a stunning and emotional ending for the audience. Katalina has been playing with Will the Cards Match for a few months. She liked how the presentation involved many people. She liked the multiple surprise endings. What she did not like was that it was simply a card trick with no premise or emotional impact. So, she started working on it for a Valentine's Day show. Just as a reminder, Will the Cards Match involves two packets with identical sets of five cards. They are put into drinking glasses with their backs facing the audience. Using the words, Will – The – Cards – Match, you move one card from the front of the packet to the back. You accomplish this by spelling each word letter by letter and having an audience member select which glass/packet will have a card moved from the front to the back.

It does not matter which packet they select. At the completion of each word you take out the top card of each packet and place them on the table. At the finish of spelling the final word, "Match," you take out those two top cards and place them on the table. This leaves one card in each glass. The glasses are turned around to show that the last two cards do indeed match. Then all the pairs of cards are turned over to show that they all match.

This works because of a simple mathematical principle. The only thing you must ensure is that the stacks of cards are in reverse order. For example, in one glass you will have 1-2-3-4-5 and in the other 5-4-3-2-1.

Now let's examine what Katalina did to make this more of a miracle.

First, she threw out the playing cards and decided to make the effect more personal. For Valentine's Day she created cards that can be used with a dry erase marker, allowing her to change what she writes on the back from show to show. On one set of cards she drew hearts; on

another set she drew lip prints (like a kiss). The three other pairs are blank for now.

To keep with the theme of romance, she changed the words used to spell and move the cards from, "Will – The – Cards – Match" to "Kiss – Hug – Lover – Heart." She had these printed on cards so that people could see them to spell them out. She also made name tags to be placed in front of each glass. One glass she called "Fate" and the other "Choice."

For the glass, she selected two beautiful wine glasses. She felt they symbolized love and romance the best. She filled one glass with brightly colored candy; the other contained the all the packets of cards.

She used this as a close-up effect for a small group of people. However, by making the props a little larger, I think this will play well for a stand-up show.

Katalina greeted the small gathering of guests and picked up the glass full of candy, spilling the candy out on the table.

*"As we celebrate a day that represents romance, we reflect on how love is so sweet. We also wonder, deep in our minds, are our loves fated or were they really fine choices? Is love a chance or a choice? Philosophers have been debating this for millennia."*

Katalina sets up the glasses and places the labels Fate and Choice in front of each glass. She holds the two packets of five cards in her hands. *"These cards will represent our lives, choices, decisions, and resolutions. We will randomize them much like life does, mixing them to and fro. Chaos."*

As Katalina spreads them out and counts them, it looks as though they are getting mixed while in reality she is simply putting them in the correct order. The audience never sees the faces of the cards only the backs. The backs could be blank, have a design on them, or as Katalina has done – printed the word "Life" on them. Once seemingly mixed, Katalina places them in the glasses.

Katalina now displays the cards with the spelling words on them.

*"These are the words that guide our thoughts on this holiday. Hugs and kisses, we all look forward to that. Lovers are who we want to be with today, and our heart is what we will be offering them."*

Katalina places the cards down in the correct order. The order must be as follows: Kiss, Hug, Lover, Heart. There are three

couples at the table for a total of six people.

*"All of you will participate in the unraveling of events. Each of you will make choices about what is to happen. We will spell each word and as we go through each letter we will move one card in a glass from the front to the back. You each will decide which glass will be used, Fate or Choice. We will start with you and move from right to left, each of you controlling a letter. Let's start with the first word."*

At the completion of the spelling of the first word, Katalina places the two top cards on the table as a pair. As the piece continues, and at the completion of each word, Katalina places the two top cards on the table as a pair. Finally, we are left with four pairs of cards on the table and only two cards in the glasses.

Katalina moves to pick up a pair and shows that they both have pictures of hearts on them. She picks up another pair and shows that they both have lip prints on them. At this point the audience is slightly impressed and applauds politely.

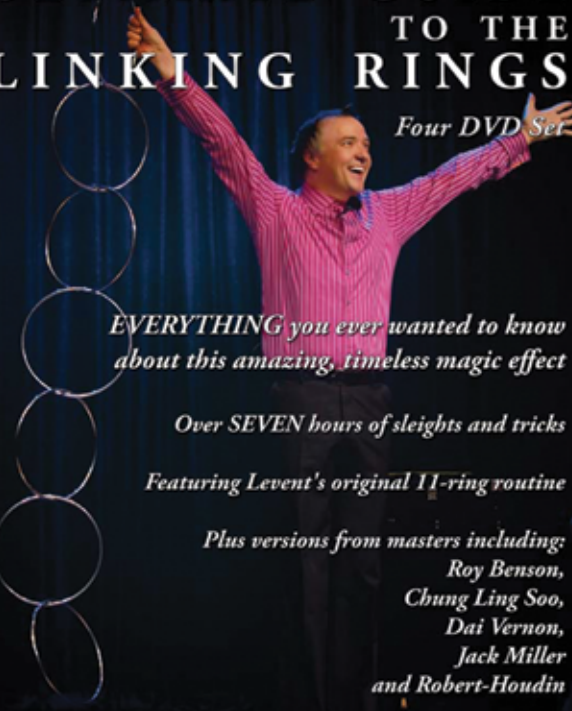
*"Thank you for that applause, but I have had little to do with tonight's unfolding. You see, you made all the selections and whether you were guided by fate or by choice, I think you will find these next three matches to be quite passionate."*

Katalina picks up the next pair of cards and turns them over. On one card is written "Thomas" and the other card "Linda," the names of one of the couples at the table. The next pair has Richard and Beth; the final pair is Carl and Holly. (Obviously, the names on those cards were filled in after Katalina had met them earlier in the evening.)

The couples offered nice polite applause to the first two matches; however, when they saw their names matched to their spouses, they were overcome with surprise and emotion. They all had very broad smiles and each one of them kissed their partner. The show became very personal for them.

This is a fantastic example of taking a simple, beginner-level trick and turning it into a miracle by changing its premise and meaning. Was this mentalism? Maybe, maybe not, however, the emotional response by the guests said that this is a very strong, poignant moment. That's good enough for me. Please have fun with this one. ★

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# The Dean's Diary



## BIG JULIE

Years ago, as I was walking through the lobby of the Dunes Hotel in Las Vegas, I overheard several gamblers talking. "Remember that guy with the card tricks? They won't let him play at the tables in the casino." I looked around to see who they were talking about, and then I realized that they were talking about *me*.

I recognized one of the gamblers as part of the group I had arrived with. Wow, wouldn't it be nice to have a reputation like that as a magician. Let me tell you how it all started.



My friend (and a former student at my Magic School) Marvin Steiner had arranged for an all-expense-paid weekend in Vegas. Marvin was a gambling junkie who was weaning himself off the habit by learning magic. It was he who introduced me to a jeweler named Julius Weintraub (aka Big Julie). Marvin convinced Julius that learning a magic trick or two would help his side business, which was arranging junkets to Las Vegas.

Junkets first started on the East Coast, in an attempt to lure gamblers away from Las Vegas and into Atlantic City. Las Vegas retaliated and provided a lot of free services to the gambler, such as a free room, food, and

beverages, along with other comps. As a junket operator, Big Julie chartered airplanes and brought groups to a specific hotel. The gamblers paid the junket operator a preset amount of money up front, and this provided them with a credit line at the tables for that amount. If they gambled for a fixed amount of time at the tables they often got extra comps for future trips.

The flying time from New York City to Vegas was about six hours. We had first class tickets. Marvin convinced Julie that I would be able to teach him a few tricks during the flight. Julie spent the flight being a charming host and selling jewelry to some of his rich guests. He didn't have time to learn any magic tricks. He told me, "Let's meet for breakfast tomorrow for a lesson."

Marvin and I had great rooms at the hotel, but breakfast was not going to happen. You may not remember this, but the culinary union in Las Vegas called a strike in 1976, a strike that closed all the hotels and restaurants on the strip. The showrooms cancelled their shows, but the gambling never stopped. The strike was on and the restaurants were closed; the hotel staff set up cold buffets in the lobby for the guests. We roamed around the strip and found some "scab" food vendors for lunch. Back at the hotel we found some guests poolside, and like the "hams" we were we, we did walk-around close-up magic for the next three days. Julie was busy trying to keep his guests happy. He finally agreed to meet me at an empty blackjack table in the casino one afternoon. When we got to the table, I took a deck of cards out of my pocket, already prepared to do a simple Four Ace trick from *The Royal Road to Card Magic*.

I started to do the trick, but I had neglected to consider the "eye in the sky" security in Las Vegas casinos. An overhead camera spotted us, which prompted two security guards to suddenly appear out of nowhere. Julie tried to explain. The guards quietly asked us to find another location. But all that the gawking onlookers heard was, "Please Mr. Schindler, not here!" And that is how I earned my reputation.

I eventually taught Big Julie how to vanish a cigarette in a thumb tip. But I never played at the Dunes again. ☆



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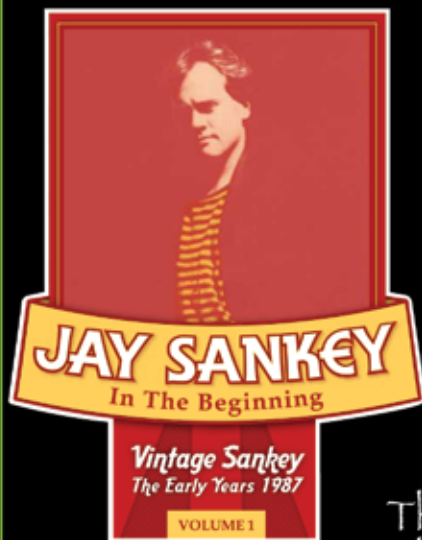


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Rod Danilewicz

## Confessions of a Paid Amateur

### QUESTIONABLE?

We who write a monthly column suffer a unique form of stage fright. At least once a year, we discover that life has gotten in the way. We're two days past deadline and have no idea what to write about. Sometimes panic mode gets the creative juices flowing. At other times we string together the required one thousand words and hope the editor can connect the dots into a coherent theme.

Those writing opinion columns have a harder time of it than the authors who focus on tricks. Everybody checks out the trick section. If there is nothing else to read in the bathroom we may, reluctantly glance at the opinion pages.

I read every column, each month – even the card stuff. At least until I get to the parts about palming a card or executing a double lift. Once in a while I run across an opinion column that should be required reading for everyone who calls themselves a magician.

Knowing many will pass them by, I try to call such articles to your attention. Mark Kornhauser recently wrote such a column; it appeared on page 13 of the March issue of *MAGIC* magazine. Please track down a copy and read it.

He is on to something that begs further exploration. In our rush to embrace the electronic age, we have forfeited the mystique that identifies us as members of a unique fraternity. Anyone with access to YouTube can do what we do now. We have become every man.

His article focuses on the live magic show. I have always maintained that the frontline troops are the part-time magicians who bring live magic to local audiences. We may be the first, or perhaps the only, magician some people will ever see in live performance.

We are the keepers of the flame, students of an ancient craft, and practitioners of a venerable art form. Perhaps, instead of rushing to buy the newest gadgets, we should take a giant step backwards. When I read ads touting electronic squeaker gaffs I am inclined to think we are approaching

the end of our creative rope.

Some argue that magic has fallen out of favor because it is *passé*. If so, why do people still flock to the circus? Partly because it is a live performance, I suppose. But mostly because the circus chooses to embrace the past; they make a conscious effort to remain good at it.

Portions of the savvy public are aware of trapdoors on Vegas stages. They know about television camera tricks and are exposed to computer graphics when they go to the movies. None of the above factor into the live shows we perform for our local audiences.

Are we making the same mistake that so many businesses make today by trying to associate our product with the youth culture? Our country's population is aging. It is the older people who often have the disposable income to spend on entertainment. For that demographic, nostalgia sells.

Would it better serve our image to stop selling *what* we are and begin promoting *who* we are? The ideal solution would be for the S.A.M. and the I.B.M. to combine forces and engage the services of a public relations firm – professionals who could create a standardized, positive, national image of who a magician is and why he or she chose to follow that path.

While we are waiting for that to happen, there are a few things we could do to help ourselves. Not a week goes by that I do not see an advertisement for a spray cleaner or diet product that works like magic. Why is it that everyone except magicians uses magic to sell their product?

Many of us who lay claim to the title have no idea who a magician is. We just do tricks. A magician is someone purported to have special powers. We are, supposedly, privy to ancient secrets handed down by word of mouth or found in dusty volumes. A magician is not supposed to be someone who walks up to you and asks if you want to see a card trick.

We might begin by educating the audience prior to the show. Give them a little history lesson that invokes the name of Merlin. Explain that much of what they will witness was first performed a thousand years ago. They will see it performed live tonight just as it was back then, without camera tricks or computer graphics.

If your props have strange designs,

In our rush to embrace the electronic age, we have forfeited the mystique that identifies us as members of a unique fraternity.

create a storyline that these ancient symbols are a necessary part of invoking the magic. Put mystery back into your performance. Make the audience believe they are privileged to be allowed to witness these miracles live and in person this evening.

Upgrade your props to make them look magical. Kids know about the five-inch rings sold in toy stores to do “pretend” magic. The twelve-inch beauties with the locking key that you use look like the real thing because they are the authentic magic rings without a gap in one ring. Even if you work for laughs, there is no reason you cannot precondition the audience to appreciate the hard work and mastery of skills required to generate those laughs.

Don't advertise a magic show. Sell the opportunity for people to experience something from their past, live on stage, something that has gone the way of record players and telephone booths. Sell them nostalgia, the once in a lifetime opportunity to travel back in time and once again experience the laughter and mystery of growing up.

The hardest part will be our own attitude adjustment, restraining ourselves from asking strangers to pick a card. We all want to show off the latest move we learned. Why not play hard to get and make our victim beg us to see it? They will appreciate what they have seen more.

Magicians perform magic. Tricks are what those ladies of negotiable affections who stand on the street corner do. It's your reputation. Are you someone whose talents and image are questionable? ★



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**260Q (2" x 60")  
Entertainer Assortment**  
Mocha Brown, Wintergreen, Tropical Teal, Goldenrod, Rose, Spring Lilac, Gray, Jewel Magenta, & Diamond Clear  
#43961 (100 ct.) \$5.25  
#77565 Pro Pack (250 ct.) \$12.60



**260Q (2" x 60")  
Neon Assortment**  
Neon Blue, Neon Green, Neon Pink, Neon Orange, Neon Yellow, Neon Violet, & Neon Magenta  
#73308 (100 ct.) \$6.45



#086037  
Qualatex  
Hand Air  
Inflator  
\$4.35



**Smile Face**  
#39270 5" Yellow (100 ct.) \$9.25  
#38968 5" Jewel Assortment (100 ct.) \$10.00  
#39282 11" Yellow (100 ct.) \$17.50  
#39044 11" Jewel Assortment (100 ct.) \$18.50



**Google Eyes**  
#93651 5" Assorted Red, Yellow, Orange, Pink, & Pale Blue (100 ct.) \$9.25



**Eyeball TopPrint**  
#84895 5" White (100 ct.) \$10.80



**POLK-A-DOT**  
26153 5" Red/Black (100 ct.) \$13.50



**Cat Face**  
#97336 6" Pink (100 ct.) \$11.35  
#97337 6" White (100 ct.) \$11.35  
#69765 6" Black (100 ct.) \$11.35



**SPIDERMAN**  
**Spiderman Face**  
#21842 5" Red (100 ct.) \$11.40



**Space Alien**  
#79711 5" Lime Green (100 ct.) \$10.00  
#98601 5" Festive Assortment (100 ct.) \$10.00



#47509  
Qualatex  
Balloon  
Pump  
\$3.25



**321Q (3" x 21")  
Special Assortment**  
Red, Yellow, White, Onyx Black & Lime Green  
#13717 (100 ct.) \$5.90



**Jewel Assortment**  
Quartz Purple, Sapphire Blue, Emerald Green, Ruby Red, Citrine Yellow, Mandarin Orange, Jewel Magenta, & Diamond Clear  
#43638 6" (100 ct.) \$7.20



**Sweetheart Assortment**  
Red, White & Pink  
#43644 6" (100 ct.) \$6.75  
#43729 11" (100 ct.) \$14.95



**Carnival Heart Assortment**  
Dark Blue, Green Red Yello, Orange, Purple Violet & Lime Green  
#13763 6" (100 ct.) \$6.75



**321Q (3" x 21")  
Bee Body Assortment**  
Red, Yellow & White  
#44032 (100 ct.) \$5.90  
**321Q Single Color**  
#13578 Red (100 ct.) \$5.90  
#13579 Yellow (100 ct.) \$5.90  
#91704 White (100 ct.) \$5.90



#68695  
Twist-N-Flate  
Qualatex  
Balloon  
Pump  
\$199.50

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- Designed by entertainers for entertainers!
- Fade out music with one button
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- *Feel* the correct button *click* every time.
- Never any digital interference
- Actual size: 2.5" x 1.5" x 0.5"



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- LED light flashes when signal from the remote is received
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