

MUM

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THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN MAGICIANS



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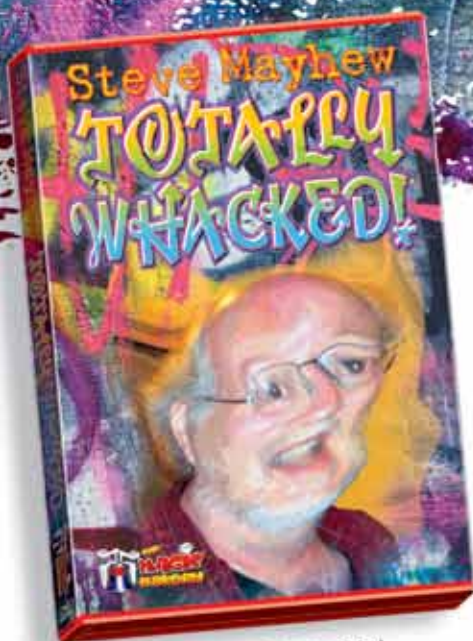
BEN TRAIN

CHRIS MAYHEW

THE UNDERGROUND SESSIONS

PAGE 36

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



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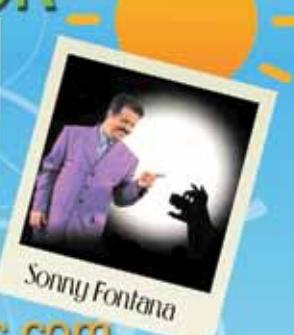
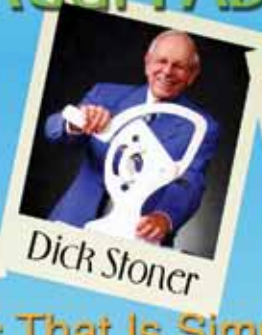
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Editor's Desk

Michael Close

The vernal equinox was three weeks ago, but the news that Spring is here has yet to reach Canada. As I write this, the weather forecast is for cold temperatures and freezing rain. So (as Cee Lo Green would say), forget Spring; let's think about summer and the S.A.M. national convention.

When I started going to magic conventions way back in the late 1970s, the main attraction was the opportunity to session with other close-up guys. This was years before the Internet and YouTube, and these sessions were important ways to learn new material. I always returned with several "hot," new routines or techniques under my belt.

At the convention this year, you won't even have to hunt around to find a close-up session; the sessions will come to you. After the dealer room closes each night, six young performers will session with conventioners. Each magician will sit at a table and answer questions and help the registrants with their magic. They will also do mini lectures each night. The six magicians (our cover subjects this month) are Tony Chang, Eric Jones, Dan Hauss, Chris Mayhew, Ben Train, and Dan White. To whet your appetite for what's to come this summer, you'll find a sampling of their magic starting on page 36.

Chipper Lowell is a name you may not know, but he is a very busy comedy magician who will also be appearing at the convention this summer. You'll learn more about Chipper in Christian Painter's interview this month. Chipper also offers an important essay on the subject of "denial."

On April 12, The Society of American Magicians took an important step to increase awareness and to provide more benefits to the magic community by launching a new Facebook fan page that is open to *all* magicians. This page will provide important announcements, breaking news, and will relay product information to the users. To see this page, go to www.facebook.com/TheSocietyOfAmericanMagicians.

Mac King and Bill Herz have teamed up to produce magic festivals in the U.S. The idea is to emulate the success of European and Asian festivals - bringing quality magic to the general public. The first festival will be June 14, 15, and 16, 2013, in Louisville, Kentucky. An incredible line-up of performers has been booked, including a gala hosted by Lance Burton and Mac King. The hope is to make this a yearly event. Except for the gala, all of the shows are in extremely intimate settings with no theater seating more than two hundred people. The performers have all been asked to perform what they perform on a normal basis for the lay public as opposed to magicians' conventions. There is one package designed especially for magicians that includes eight lectures by magicians and a ticket to the gala

show. All shows, times, and ticketing information can be found at www.LouisvilleMagicFestival.com.

If you live in the Chicago area, be sure to check out the Mercury Theatre's new production of *Barnum*, the musical inspired by the life of the world's greatest showman. In addition to high-flying aerial stunts, stilt-walking, juggling, and unicycling, the title character (played by Gene Weygandt) also performs magic. The magic consultant for the show is compeer Neil Tobin, the writer/performer behind *Supernatural Chicago*.

One of Weygandt's big musical numbers of the show is the stirring Cy Coleman ballad, "The Colors Of My Life." In it, Tobin choreographed a lyrical sequence for him containing nearly a dozen separate magical moments. *Barnum* runs through June 16 at the Mercury Theatre, 3745 N. Southport, Chicago. Tickets are available in person at the theatre box office, at www.mercurytheatrechicago.com, or by calling 773-325-1700.

My old friend Peter Reveen passed away in Las Vegas on April 8, after a long illness. Peter was a dynamic performer who toured the world as an illusionist and stage hypnotist. He was typically billed as Reveen the Impossiblist. Peter was a founding member of the Magic Castle, was awarded the DRAGON Award in 2000, and was manager to illusionist Lance Burton for twenty years. He was also a friendly and approachable person. I saw him often in Las Vegas; each time we met he greeted me with a smile and the salutation, "Hello, friend."

Lupe Nielsen wrote the following on Facebook: "Peter was one of the most likable and charismatic people I have ever known. He was amazing. Through his remarkable life he made and lost entire fortunes. Every single time he lost everything, he would tour again with his hypnosis show and make it all back. He lived big; he lived the way he wanted; and he accomplished everything he wanted to achieve in life. He was a headliner in Las Vegas, traveled around the world with his show, and even became a household name in Canada. Not bad for a kid from Adelaide, Australia!"

Reveen's health had been declining for several years; his passing, while not unexpected, leaves a large hole for those us who enjoy hearing well-told stories of the road. The world is a little less interesting without Peter Reveen in it. Aloha, Peter. ★



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President's Desk

Chris Bontjes

DENVER

At least once a month, the executive board of the S.A.M. (the elected national officers) meets via Skype to discuss issues currently facing the Society, progress toward goals, and visions for the future. The S.A.M. also has many committees that are tasked with providing membership benefits, overseeing programs, and improving the experience of membership for all compeers. These committees also meet on a regular basis and work to make the S.A.M. the best it can be.

Three times a year, the national council meets in person to discuss our progress and to vote on new initiatives. The national council consists of the executive board, the regional vice presidents, past national presidents, and representatives from each assembly.

Each assembly has the right to elect and send an assembly member to serve as a delegate to the national council – to represent and cast votes for their assembly – at each meeting. National Administrator Manon Rodriguez mails meeting notices and forms that must be submitted to send an assembly representative to the secretary of each assembly prior to each meeting of the council. Any S.A.M. member in good standing may attend a meeting, but only those elected as outlined above are allowed to make motions and cast votes.

I encourage all compeers to *Get Involved* in the governing process of the S.A.M. by reading the “Blue Book” (the reports of all the officers and committee chairs – available for download at www.magicsam.com), by sending delegates, and by contributing your ideas for the improvement of our Society. Associate members can make their voices heard in the national council by contacting their regional vice president.

In March, I had the honor of presiding over the spring meeting of the national council in Denver, Colorado. In addition to the formal meeting, the officers present take the opportunity to meet in smaller groups to discuss issues and ideas. They also take the opportunity to tour the city where the meeting is held, to perform and watch magic, and to build fellowship with members of our S.A.M. family. (In other words, we have a lot of fun, too.)

MAGIC CENTER

Parker, Colorado (just outside the Denver metropolitan area) is home to the S.A.M. Magic Center. The Magic Center houses and displays some S.A.M. archives and some magic collections that have been donated in memory of compeers who have passed away. It also houses two performance areas – one for stage magic and another for close-up magic. Both performance areas have lighting and tiered seating for maximum audience visibility.

The Magic Center hosted our caucus meeting in the close-up performance area; it also hosted a fund-raising stage show in the theater area. I was honored to perform in the stage show alongside

local Colorado magicians, S.A.M. past national presidents, and current national officers. The show played to a sold-out house of delighted local residents and generated enough money to pay the operating costs of the Center for six months.

The Magic Center Foundation oversees the operation of the facility and is a 501(c)3 organization (meaning that any donations to the MCF are tax-deductible). Compeers are encouraged to learn about the MCF and the Magic Center by visiting www.sammagiccenter.com. In addition to learning about the Center, its mission, and its vision, visitors to the website can sign up for the Magic Center e-newsletter, contact Executive Director Dan Rodriguez to schedule a visit, and make a donation to support the continued work of the MCF.

Compeers are also encouraged to consider a donation of magic props and/or memorabilia to support the growth of the Center. Contact Dan Rodriguez (dan@sammagiccenter.com) for details.

ASSEMBLY

One of the most valuable benefits of membership in the S.A.M. is the opportunity to get together with other magicians as a member of a local assembly. Assemblies meet to discuss, perform, learn, and grow in magic; everyone present at a meeting has the opportunity to learn from others at the meeting, regardless of their experience or ability level.

While it is obvious that beginners in magic can learn from their more experienced compeers, it is also true that even the most seasoned and experienced magicians can learn and grow from interaction with their less experienced compeers. A new and useful idea can come from any source; the process of sharing our own experience and ideas with others can help us to renew focus on our own performances and refine our techniques and ideas as we break them down to make them understandable to others.

Assemblies can also accomplish feats impossible to individuals, such as hosting lectures by professional magicians coming through town. These lectures help the art of magic grow as new ideas are shared and changed to meet the requirements of different performers and situations.

There are literally hundreds of thousands of magical publications, ideas, methods, and effects. It is impossible for any individual to be familiar with all of them. Meeting with assemblies and having the opportunity to visit other assembly meetings around the world affords all our compeers the chance to discover new effects and techniques that can be applied to improve their own performances.

Of course, it's not all business. Assembly membership provides the opportunity for compeers to form lasting friendships with others who share our love for the art of magic. I attend assembly meetings and S.A.M. national conventions for two reasons: to learn more about the art of magic, and to see my S.A.M. friends from around the world who have become like family to me because of our shared love for magic and for the S.A.M.

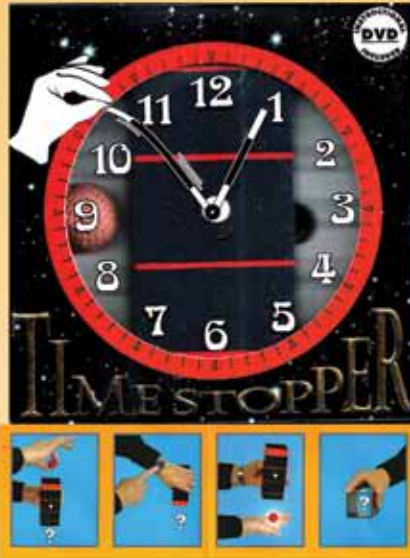
If you are currently an Associate member, I encourage you to look for an assembly in your area. This can now be done at www.magicsam.com with a search by ZIP code to find assemblies within one hundred miles of your home.

If you live in an area without a local assembly in range,

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consider starting a new assembly. It only takes ten members to begin a new group; your local regional vice president can help you to find other compeers in your area and to complete the necessary paperwork. Contact information for RVPs can be found to the right on this page.

ECHO OF THE DISTANT PAST

On May 10, The Society of American Magicians will celebrate its 111th birthday.

Our Society's twenty-four founding members met in the back room of Martinka's Magic Shop and recognized the value of meeting and networking with other magicians. Since that time, more than 47,000 magicians have seen the value of membership in our great Society. We have come a long way since our humble beginnings; this is the result of magicians all over the world who were ready to *Get Involved* and *Pass It On!* What will you do? ★

S.A.M. National Officers

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INTERNET CONNECTIONS

BY LEE ASHER

The Internet helps me connect with others who share similar interests. These associations force the examination of my own thoughts and feelings and I learn more about myself because of them. This kind of introspection allows my soul to make truthful decisions that guide my life. Recently, something serendipitous and unexpected happened and I'd like to share my story with you.

After working on a handful of projects using the World Wide Web to spread the art of magic, I conceived of the Magic Video Blog in 2008. With the underlying goal of making the history of magic relevant for an online generation, this free website provides a rich resource for those interested in our art. In order to breathe life into this project, I sifted through thousands of magic videos to find the strongest performances, culled an enormous amount of historical information, and consolidated everything in one location.

You can find this amazing repository at www.MagicVideoBlog.com. I hope you will spend a few minutes exploring the website.

The Magic Video Blog contains hundreds of videos; if you look around long enough, you will come across the famed Egyptian magician, Luxor Gali Gali (Mahgoub Mohammed Hanafi.) In the brief snippet shown from the DuMont Television Network, Gali Gali performs his most influential piece of magic – the Cups and Balls, ending with the production of several live baby chickens as a finale.

On June 14, 2009, someone named Mariam submitted a comment under the Gali Gali video on the Magic Video Blog.

"Hi. I really don't know who found that video, but whoever they are, I'm very thankful and happy to see it. For a long time I have been looking all over the net to find any pics or videos for Mr. Mahgoub Mohammed Hanafi because he is my great-grandfather. I would very much love to see more things about him if they are available. And thanks a lot for sharing this video. It brought me lots of memories."

Four days later Nabil Abu Elmagd, a second great grand-relative, posted a similar sentiment beneath Mariam's comments. She must have shared the video with her family and friends. They were both particularly cool remarks, but I paid them no attention.

Six months later, on January 10, 2010, another post appeared. This time, a gentleman named Martin Hanafi left the following sentiments:

"Thank you for finding Mahgoub Mohammed Hanafi. This is the first time that I have seen my uncle in a show. I only had pictures of him. My father was a magician, too, and this video above was my father's act (Ahmed Mohammed Hanafi). He was born in Port Said in 1911. Mahgoub Mohammed Hanafi was the seventh generation and my father was the last. Once again, thank you for putting this video on the net."

Again, highly interesting but no one could imagine the immensity of things to come. Two years passed; on September 2, 2012, everything culminated with one comment from a woman named Samira:

"I am pleased with the upload as well; I am the daughter of Ahmed Mohammed Hanafi. I was born in 1957 in The Netherlands, The Hague, and I still want to know where my father died and where he is buried. Can anyone help? Thank you in advance!"

We have a bona-fide Nancy Drew mystery on our hands!

Before responding though, Samira found my email and sent me a private communiqué:

"Dear Mr. Asher – I have posted a comment on a video you uploaded a few years ago of Luxor Gali Gali. I am fifty-five years young, and still don't know where my father, Ahmed Mohammed Hanafi, is buried. I tried to find Martin Hanafi on the Web without result.

This is the reason I posted my comment – a shot in the dark. With kind regards – Samira Endt, Amsterdam, The Netherlands"

Fortunately, both of my parents played an active role in my childhood. But as I read these messages, I could not help but imagine having had a different kind of experience, disconnected from family and history, and learning about relatives, piece by piece, from strangers on the Internet. It seemed only right to help these people in any way I could.

I gathered the emails of those family members who left comments and passed the information to Samira, with a request that she keep me abreast of the search.

A few days later, on the morning of September 6, 2012, I awoke to the following reply:

"Dear Lee – This morning I received an email from Martin Koch (Hanafi) and he told me exactly where and when our father died and is buried. I thought Germany or Egypt, but of all places, he's in The Netherlands! Furthermore, I will meet Martin in person soon. I'm one of approximately eighteen to twenty-four half-brothers and half-sisters spread around the globe. Yah, this father had some magic...I never knew my father (he left us when I was three years old), but I did see him perform when I was sixteen. Amazing! Now I can close the cycle. Thanks to you and all who sent information 'at the speed of light.'"

Savor this simple pleasure with me for a few moments, because life does not provide us this opportunity often. Samira found her late father and, in addition, many siblings she never knew existed. I discovered that a simple collection of videos created for the purpose of furthering magic and magicians performed services well beyond the scope of its original design.

Ultimately, these unintended consequences remind me of how the Internet has the remarkable ability to draw together people with similar interests. By directly participating in projects like the Magic Video Blog and helping to reunite Gali Gali's estranged family, I too, take small steps closer to connecting with who I am and where I am headed.★

Did you enjoy what you read? Connect with Lee Asher and let him know how you feel. He would love to hear from you (Lee@LeeAsher.com). Lee may also be found at www.LeeAsher.com and www.MagicVideoBlog.com.





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1

APPRECIATION TO MONDAY NIGHT MAGIC

NEW YORK, NY— It has been a few months since our assembly has reported in these pages. January was our annual auction with many nice items being auctioned off, with some of our members making space in their magic drawer, and others adding to their collection. Several members contributed effects to Albert Lasher for distribution to S.Y.M. Assembly 69.

In February we had our Free for All, with performances from many members : Doug Edwards, Harvey Berg, Jordan Linker, Linda Robbins, Scott Mero, Nick Conticello, Myron the Magnificent (Herb Scher), and Kamarr. Sadly we also said farewell to Imam Hossain with a broken wand ceremony on his behalf.

After a brief business meeting we again honored another recently passed member: Maureen Christopher. President Richie Magic then gave presidential citations to honor Monday Night Magic and its directors (Michael Chaut, Todd Robbins, Peter Samuelson, and Jamy Ian Swiss) for their contributions to magic in New York City and to Michael "Six" Muldoon for his work with Magicians without Borders.

Richie Magic proudly displayed a



MI Richie Magic presenting an Award to Monday Night Magic (From left : Richie Magic, Todd Robbins, Michael Chaut, Peter Samuelson, David Adomovich, Jordan Linker)

copy of *Magicseen* magazine with an article about PA 1's gravesite restoration work. And the night closed with performances from several members and guests.

On the third Friday of each month Doug Edwards hosts a workshop at the Gemini Diner, where about a dozen magicians are able to learn a few tricks under Doug's tutelage. Effects are offered for all abilities, most utilizing ordinary objects. Doug always has something from his collection to show as well.

And the Magic table continues its residence at the Edison cafe, with regulars Tom Klem, Jerry Oppenheimer, Scott Mero, Rene Clement, and the occasional guest. If you're in NYC stop by the Edison Cafe on any Friday from 12:30 to 2 or so. —Jordan Linker
Parent Assembly 1 meets at the Goldwurm Auditorium Mt Sinai Hospital East building 1425 Madison Avenue @ 98th street Contact Jordan Linker Linker.Jordan@gmail.com (646) 670-7235 www.sampal.com for more information.

2

ADVENTURES IN MAGIC LAND

SAN FRANCISCO, CA— It was a quiet night, one for unveiling mysteries; mages and guests gathered to enjoy an evening of adventures in magic land. Corky LaVallee gave the teach-in, a demonstration that basic principles can be applied to many seemingly different routines, allowing the mage to create a specific story that fits the effect. He performed three versions of a ball transformation theme. First he changed a soap bubble into a glass ball, then an Eight of Spades into a miniature black eight pool ball, and finally showed the effects of planned obsolescence. After 999 bounces the ball lost its bounce. It died. Hippo Lau began the

evening's regular performances with his version of the handleless clock face. Applying strong psi power, Hippo found the selected card and then showed his prediction that was correct. Rob Shapiro revealed his excellent ability as a balloon sculptor. He created a balloon dog and then indicated that the dog's gender can be changed from female to male and back. Rob's remarkable skill is bolstered by his humorous storylines. Rich Seguine involved the whole group in his presentation of a mental prediction effect. Everyone looked through a deck of cards and selected one. Rich exhibited great mind power as he called all the chosen cards. Corky returned and presented a card routine with four participants. Each selected a card; when the cards were displayed they were all Aces. For his final effect, he ably executed the Chicago Opener routine.

Safire Lin related the way a Rubik's Cube can be used in a magic routine. The main challenge is that the mage must be an expert in manipulating the cube or total failure results. John Caris, with Safire's assistance, deftly enacted Howard Adam's Predicnic, a routine using an ESP deck and coins. After cleaning out his magic closet, Rich offered many treasures to the mages present who took them home. Terrie Cardoza and Mary Caris assisted in several routines and also showed their skill at cookie vanishing. —John Caris

Golden Gate Assembly 2 meets first Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. at Community Room of Taraval Police Station, 2345 24th Avenue, San Francisco. Contact Tamaka Tamaka3715@aol.com (415) 531-9332 http://www.facebook.com/groups/249018441875771/ for more details.

4

CLOSE-UP CONTEST

PHILADELPHIA, PA— Our March meeting featured

our annual close-up contest, which brought out an amazing array of talent performing with cards, coins, dice, knives, and sponge balls. Prior to the contest, Assembly 4 President Donna Horn welcomed everyone and announced that Warner Brothers had provided her with a number of complimentary tickets for the film *The Amazing Burt Wonderstone*, which she proceeded to raffle off to a delighted membership. Those of us who were fortunate enough to see the film were very excited to see our very own Assembly 4 member Harrison Lampert featured in the bar scene and Jim Carrey's final scene with all of the principal actors. Congratulations Harrison on a job well done!

The close-up contest began with Reba Strong performing a wonderful money-themed routine that included Patrick Page's Easy Money and George Hample's BeSwitched. Jim Straub then deftly executed the One-Handed Card Trick with the assistance of Jane Armstrong. After Jim, Dennis Eleuteri performed an amazing mentalism effect involving four audience members. Second Place Winner Richard Horn then delighted everyone with the Amazing Six Card Trick with the assistance of Ralph Armstrong and Peter Cuddihy.

Following Richard, First Place Winner Eric Johnson wowed the crowd by showing a U.S. one-dollar bill in his bare hands which he proceeded to successively transform into the Japanese Yen, the Australian dollar, and the Euro before transforming the bill back to its original state. Next, Third Place Winner Ed Cohen performed a spectacular Any Card At Any Number effect incorporating the birthday of an audience member. With the assistance of four audience members, ERYX then performed Jim Steinmeyer's Nine Card Trick.

Following ERYX, Andrew Stillwell executed a slick dice matrix before making a pocket-knife change colors in an instant. Bill McElvenney then demon-



From Left: Close-Up Contest Winners Ed Cohen, Richard Horn, and Eric Johnson

strated the power of imagination by recounting the tale of how he lost his miniature toy dog when he was a small boy and then making the imaginary toy materialize from the center of a deck of cards. Joe McHugh ended the contest with his hysterical Monte version of the Benson Bowl Routine while dressed as a gangster. The close-up contest was a resounding success and everyone in attendance witnessed some amazing magic. —Peter Cuddihy James Wobensmith
 Assembly 4 meets the third Thursday at 7:00 p.m. at the Bustleton Memorial Post, 810 (American Legion) 9151 Old Newtown Road. Contact: www.sam4.org/ for more details.

7

OH, WHAT A KNIGHT

OMAHA, NE— Larry Brodahl started the session by hinting that there would be a future auction of a local collection of magical goodies. All hope to be kept in touch with developments. Next Vice President Tom Zepf introduced the guest lecturer for the evening, Devin Knight, as a magician, hypnotist, and inventor.

Devin started the lecture with an effect using a saltshaker and a light bulb, then showed us a card trick, followed by “think of a number.” He then showed a card prediction and demonstrated how these were done. Some were accomplished with easy-to-make gimmicks and others were done with hard to find objects.

He performed *Blindside*, in which he appeared to predict a chosen color from the four available to the audience. The end of the first half was the bending of a spoon with a very clever gimmick and patter that could easily fool an audience.

After a short break he continued with the “think of a card” concept and fooled most of us with a Svengali deck. Before the lecture he had placed most of his props on a table that led to a request to

show his levitation shoes. This was followed by an audience participation (blowing a kiss) effect. An additional fun item he had was a gyrotator that twirled a card (or other object). He then moved on to a spectator naming a word in an envelope. It worked perfectly. Next he placed fifteen cards on a table and covered them, asking an assistant to turn one over. He determined the selection with a clever ruse that might take some memorization. Moving in a different direction he cut a square hole in a newspaper but showed that it produced a round hole, and then he showed us a fascinating principle of some “magic” using cards and a mirror. He concluded his performance with a prediction of the chess piece the assistant would move on a chessboard.



Devin Knight and assistant Denny Rourke

What Devin demonstrated is how some principles can be adapted and developed into different effects, but he also showed how many of the miracles can be performed using simple props available in a typical household. It looked as though he kept everyone’s attention the entire evening. —Jerry Golmanavich

Omaha Magical Society meets generally every 3rd Monday at the Southwest Church of Christ near 124th St. and West Center Road, right across from where Hooters used to be. Contact Jerry Golmanavich golubki@cox.net (402) 390-9834 omahamagicalsociety.com for more details.

8

PAPER OR PLASTIC

ST. LOUIS, MO— February 28 was Liquid Magic night. First up was Dan Todd catching soap bubbles; he then produced ice from water, an effect by Andrew Gerard. Jason Stack made a Hot Rod change shapes, several times in fluid motions: first a rod, then a cube, a ball, and finally a flatted disk.

President Don Becker transformed a straw wrapper into a

snake. Larry Minth caused a sunken egg to float and money to flow from his hands right into a spectator’s. Dani Garcia, in his Ice Cream Peddler’s routine, was assisted by Lee Bazzell’s two sons. Dani caused water to flow right through Ethan’s body. It was absolutely hilarious.

March 14 was Paper Magic night. Larry Minth was the emcee. Columbus Smith performed the Buddha Paper Mystery and the Bill to Butterfly with flapping wings. Dan Todd performed his version of Find the Card, which uses six cards instead of five and requires spelling out “The Great Todd.” The chosen card is turned over first followed by the 4 Aces; the last Bicycle card was his business card printed on the blank face.

Don Becker stretched paper and proved it with a measuring tape. Our repeat visitor, Ethan Lee, performed a card effect for us. New member Jason Stack, cut and restored paper. Dani Garcia and Ethan performed a Do as I Do effect, torn and restored tissues with a surprise continuous paper restored from mouth ending.



Liquid Through Body - Dani Garcia

After the show, our new member Ron Jackson displayed his name in *M-U-M* magazine, proudly passing it around for all to see. It was a fun-filled night of magicians performing magic at Assembly 8. So the answer to “Paper or Plastic” is paper, of course. All photos are on Assembly8.com —Dan Todd
Assembly 8 meets at Mount Tabor United Church of Christ, 6520 Arsenal, Saint Louis MO 63139 Contact Dick Blowers rmblowers@aol.com (213) 846-8468 Assembly8.com for more details.

9

ALAN WASSILAK DEBUTS HIS FIRST LECTURE

BOSTON, MA— Alan the Uncanny (our own Alan Wassilak) gave an outstanding performance for our March meeting. He

lectured non-stop for two hours, engaging the audience with the different ways an effect can be presented. He emphasized that it’s not just a trick that you’re doing but a piece of entertainment that can be used to make a point, as he did with his opener. He used a pad of paper, a marker, a sponge ball, and a production (mouth) coil to make a magical point about perception versus reality.

The uncanny one took an old classic like the Magic Coloring Book and showed us that by pasting pictures over the blank pages and changing the usual patter, you can create a whole new routine with a different theme. He pointed out that there are an infinite number of options for a surprise climax for children and/or adult audiences. In his Die Box routine, Alan told a story that justified the size of the die and the box, and why the box has two compartments. The story engaged the audience and justified the prop. A simple set of maneuvers changed a double-headed coin to one with two tails or a head-tails combination.

Throughout, Alan added magic history to his lecture. He discussed Burling Hull’s youthful creativity in the early 1900s and demonstrated his own interpretation of an earlier incarnation of the prop now known as the Svengali Deck. He mentioned a Harlan Tarbell forcing deck concept and how an aspect of its construction can be applied to other types of gaffed decks. He then demonstrated a card revelation with a cheap children’s horse marionette. (The horse read a spectator’s mind and revealed the card’s identity.) He showed us that you don’t have to be an expert puppeteer to master the four-string puppet. Humanizing, or animalizing, your props helps to boost audience interest. In the same vein, he produced a duplicate of a selected card from a picture of a celebrity, and as an alternate, from the design of a jumbo court card.



Alan Wassilak

Alan’s last offering was a Twentieth Century Silks routine “proving” the existence of an

invisible rubber band. Once again, an old classic in Alan's hand done in a different and entertaining way. —Alan Ashare and Kevin Butler
[Unless otherwise announced, Herman Hanson Boston Assembly 9 meets the second Wednesday of the month except July and August at 7:00 at The Magic Art Studio, 137 Spring St., Watertown, MA 02472 Contact Jim Ellison jellison@partners.org \(617\) 2338623 https://www.facebook.com/BostonMagicians?fref=ts](#) for more details.

11 GREEN MAGIC

CINCINNATI, OH— President Leland Pennington discussed some upcoming events including elections in May, announced that the theme for the April magician of the month contest is “a strange trick that actually works,” and welcomed special guest Wanda Lewis, a co-host of the Uncle Al show, one of the longest running children's TV shows (35 years).

The theme for magician of the month was “green magic.” First up was Artie Kidwell who vanished a green silk into a paper bag and then had it reappear tied between two other silks. He then performed his Jolly Green Giant version of Professor's Nightmare with humorous patter about the lengths of green beans in the valley. John Blaylock then presented his clever card effect illustrating the legend of St. Patrick ridding Ireland of snakes. Shellina Borgman presented a “rainbow of silk” routine; she produced a rainbow ribbon from her empty hand, then a huge silk rainbow ribbon from an empty pan, followed by a pot of gold chocolate pieces that were shared with the attendees.

Professor Pryor presented a trilogy of effects: an Irish card trick in which the blue-backed and red-backed cards change to green-backed, a colored chip routine in which the spectator selects the moves and ends up with the green chip, and his mind-boggling blue box/white box effect, finally producing a green ball. Larry Payne presented a multiple-phase routine using four spectators. Don Hinton performed a selected card effect that matched the prediction on a lottery card. Leland Pennington presented a pan production of shamrock cookies. Joe Papania discussed how he learned the Elmsley count and performed an effect using it. Joe Farag was the last performer and presented

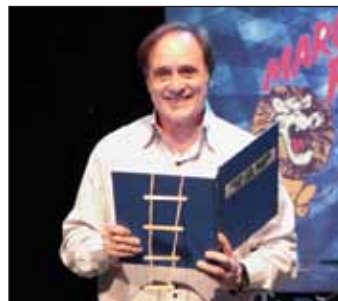
a public announcement message regarding turning off your lights using his clever lighted light bulb gimmick. The judges selected the following winners: third place – Bill Pryor, second place – Shelina Borgman, and first place – Joe Farag. —John Martini
Queen City Mystics, Assembly 11 generally meets on the second Friday of the month at Haines House of Cards in Cincinnati, Ohio.

13 BOOK MAGIC

DALLAS, TX— The March meeting started with an introduction from President Mark Jensen, who kicked off the theme of “book magic” by briefly reviewing three books: *The Big ol' Book of Magic* (Mac King), *Magic Show* (Mark Setteducati), and *The Magical Life of Marshall Brodien* (John Moehring).

After business, Derrel Allen introduced David Wall, who performed a Cups and Balls routine with the assistance of Mallari Kulkarni, Brian O'Neill, and Mark Jensen. David also gave a brief discussion of the types of cups he likes to use and resources for learning.

After a break, Mike Smith presented a Sam the Bellhop-type routine, with patter focused on the works of Shakespeare and using playing cards featuring Shakespearean characters and themes.



Book magic with Dal Sanders

Ian Richards performed a card trick in honor of his father, who hated the line, “Pick a card...” First, Ian asked Frank Seltzer to safeguard a sealed large envelope. Then Ian had multiple spectators remove cards in a variety of ways from a deck, each time throwing the cards away. Thus in this manner, he never asked anyone to pick a card, but rather to eliminate all but one! In the end, Ian was left with only one card that was not discarded, which matched a jumbo card prediction in the envelope

guarded by Frank.

Diamond Jim stuck with the book theme of the meeting by using a dictionary to aid him in a card trick. After asking Daryl Sprout to select a card, Jim looked up the word “premonition” in the dictionary. After reading the definition, Jim showed that the name of the card (Seven of Hearts) was written across the rest of the page.

Mentalists tried their hand at a number of effects including book tests, with variable results. Ted Gillam handed out pages torn from a book in order to have someone select a word, while Brian O'Neill tried to divine the names of books spectators would like to have if they were stranded on an island.

Dal Sanders showed a number of effects that he uses in his library and book-themed shows. This included a number of amusing book puns and funny gimmicked books.

Finally, Cinde Sanders performed as her character “Sister Cat,” doing Seuss-inspired rhyming patter while the magic happened. **The Dallas Magic Clubs meet on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM at Crosspointe Community Center, Theater 166 in Carrollton, TX. Check www.dallasmagic.org for directions. Contact Reade Quinton reade.quinton@gmail.com (972) 4000195 www.dallasmagic.org for more details.**

16 MARCH MEETING

ASHLAND, MA— Our March meeting was held on Monday, March 4, 2013, at the Magic Barn in Ashland, MA. Eight members attended it. The theme of the meeting was to “perform a magic effect that no one else has seen or an effect that only you perform.” It made for a very interesting and entertaining evening. There were five members who performed for us. They all did a variety of effects that would take too long to tell you about, so I'll just give you the highlights.

Cindy Evans was first to perform. Cindy performed five different effects. The most unusual to me was her rope effect in which she started with one rope, changed it to two ropes, and then changed it to one long rope. It was really great. John Chumsae performed two card effects; in one of them, a chosen, signed card ended up folded in a small wooden box. Peter Lennis did seven different effects; in one of which he located a ball that was placed by a spectator under one of

six small cups. I did three effects, the last of which was an effect in which a 36-inch black square banner was folded in half. A rabbit, a red scarf, a blue scarf, and a red scarf were placed in the fold. When it was opened the rabbit and scarves had vanished and in their place was a picture of the back end of a rabbit with yellow letters saying The End on a red and blue background. Bob Cain performed five different effects; in one of which a scarf tied onto his arm was magically removed without being untied. As I said earlier it was a very entertaining evening. —Dennis Pimenta

Assembly 16 meets at the Magic Barn, 175R Main St., Ashland, MA. Contact Dennis Pimenta pimentad1@aol.com (508) 883-3575 <http://sam16.com/> for more details.

17 COIN NIGHT

SPRINGFIELD, MA— There was plenty of great coin magic on display at our March meeting, as well as some very interesting non-coin magic as the night went on. First, the coin stuff:

Tom Gentile started us off with a “Square-Square” series of productions, told with an around-the-world story full of gags. To keep with the theme of the night, Tom made sure to produce some coins from the device, which he later used to predict the coin someone would mentally choose.

Pj Pinsonnault shared his take on Ramsay's Cylinder and Coins, a version of which he performed in his Conjuring Christmas show. Four coins, a leather cylinder, and a little piece of cork are used to demonstrate a very clean vanish-and-reproduction sequence.

Rich Pinsonnault was next with a Copper/Silver/Brass routine of Geoff Latta's. Lots of magic packed into a nice routine, which Rich handled very well. He later performed a Tenyo effect called Magical Door, in which a solid chain penetrates a small key.

Peter Lennis performed two coin-to-nest-of-boxes routines, one with a coin appearing inside a bag that was inside two sets of nesting plates. Each nest was secured by several rubber bands. The second was Nicholas Einhorn's new Deluxe Nest of Wallets, which Peter has smoothed out nicely over the last couple of months. On to the non-coin magic! Rich Gilbert showed us a well-routined, hilarious version of Woody Aragon's The Bumblebees done

to music. Basically, eight cards are shown, four blank and four with pictures of bees on them. One bee is isolated with three blank cards, and the others are made to vanish and join it, though an accidental slap has some dire consequences.

Dave Dimock shared some really strong mentalism with cards. First was *Beyond the Veil* by Patrick Page. He followed this up with *The Red Card Prediction* from *13 Steps*, in which a card selected out of a small group is shown to be the only red-backed card in a group of blue-backed ones. It's great to see Dave's showmanship and audience management skills on display!

Finally, Brian Dimock showed off a card effect in which a card is selected and remembered, and a prediction is unfolded... and shown to be wrong. Brian lit his lighter, waved the paper over the flame, and the writing on the paper changed into the selection. —P.J. Pinsonnault

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

19

MARCH MEETING

HOUSTON, TX— The March meeting started with a teaching session by Shane Wilson on peeks and glimpses. Shane shared several card effects using these techniques in a very informative and entertaining session. Dick Olson taught us how to remember and say the alphabet backwards. He gave us a special mnemonic that worked very well.

Eric Falconer had Gene Protas help out by predicting whether cards that were dealt face down were red or black. This was performed several times in different scenarios, with each one seemingly more impossible. Michael Thomas used a set of red and black poker chips to predict a pattern of cards as they are dealt down from a shuffled deck, which Michael had previously "memorized."

David Hinken had guest Sarah Runnells select and sign a playing card, which she then placed between her teeth. David did the same with a card of his choice. David caused them to switch places and then gracefully placed the cards into a Ziploc bag before handing them out as souvenirs.

Jerry Schoonover changed a

couple of selected cards from blue to red backs and finally turned the whole deck to red backs. Anthony Dinardo caused a Ten of Spades chosen by Eric Falconer to change places with two Jacks that were previously selected. Randy Stulken caused four blue-backed Kings to turn face up and down at will, then, changed two of them into Aces and all of them into red-backed cards. Joey Fratto used his metal ability to determine a word and picture David Rangel had selected from a packet of cards. Mark Melchor presented a fine handcuff comedy routine using the Siberian handcuffs. Shane Wilson supposedly shared a gambling demo on the palming of cards. He just kept on cheating, no matter what he was saying.

Gene Protas had a one-eyed Jack sandwich find the King of Diamonds, even though both were placed at totally different locations in a deck of cards. David Rangel dealt out four hands of cards from a shuffled deck to various spectators and then placed a \$100 bet on which hand was the best. I'll only say that David walked away with all of his money still intact. Scott Wells is bringing in some great lectures, so check houstonmagic.com to see the latest updates. —Miles Root

Assembly 19 meets the first Monday of every month at the IATSE Local 51 Meeting Hall, 3030 North Freeway, Houston, TX with the meeting beginning at 8:00 pm. Contact Miles Root milesroot@aol.com (832) 6076678 houstonmagic.com for more details.

21

DUANE LAFLIN, AND MIRACLES

HARTFORD, CT— We met a week early in February so that we could host a lecture by Duane Laflin. Good thing, too, because the next weekend is when the snow hit! Duane did a fantastic lecture, full of tips, tricks, and stories. A lot of ground was covered, including the best way to "pop" a silk fountain and the benefits of paying attention to production values.

For our March meeting, theme captain Steve Wronker asked us to bring in "our latest miracles," and show what we've been working on. Steve started us off by performing his just-released "Substitute Rabbit" effect, which is now available from Wonder Imagery. Peter Lennis did a good find-a-



Steve Wronker with the grand finale

card. Jason Abate displayed the new Vortex. Jon Cap did a quick billet-reading. Dan Sclare brought Tom Piekos to do a "blind" trick. He dealt out a deck to determine a chosen card, but all the cards were discovered to be blank. Later, he donned a red jacket and made a yellow hank repeatedly vanish and reappear. He explained that the trick is called Invisible Hand, and he showed the workings of the jacket. Rick St. Pierre wove a strange story dealing with "The Fourth Nail of Christ." Pat Guida had two of us shuffle a packet of cards, and then found them through his senses of sight, touch, and sound. Tom had Jon "sign" a coin, which penetrated a closed ketchup bottle. Peter returned to finish the night with a variation of Color-Vision, a water-bottle penetration, and a find-a-card. —Dana Ring

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

22

STAGE MAGIC COMPETITION IN LOS ANGELES

LOS ANGELES, CA— Our short Assembly 22 business meeting for March was conducted by Tom Messeroll, standing in for President Jim Callen. A second reading was conducted on the application for membership of Greg Johnson, who was subsequently unanimously elected into Assembly 22 membership. Congratulations, Greg. The meeting concluded quickly so the evening's program could begin. Produced and emceed by John Engman, it was stage and parlor magic night.

Early arrivals at our meeting hall were pressed into service to assemble the Pellar Stage. Although without an elevated stage, it provides curtained

wings and a large performance area when the stage curtains are drawn open. Tonight it was used by the performers competing for trophies with stage and parlor magic. Opening the show was Kim Hallinger, who featured the production and vanish of several bunnies and the production and vanish of a series of silk scarves and flags.

The second performer was Michael Mezmer, a Los Angeles area professional entertainer. Michael performed his Asylum Wrist Strap escape after being tightly bound by a volunteer from the audience. Harrison Lampert, our newest member, performed Richard Sanders's Fiber Optics, a nice multi-phase rope routine. Henry Springer had cards selected and then revealed the selections in a series of unusual and unique ways, including grabbing a card from a bag of folded cards thrown in the air. Henry concluded by producing, from sealed envelopes, the missing half of dollar bills held by spectators. The final performer was Tom Messeroll. Tom had three cards selected and shuffled back into the deck, which was then spread on a small table and covered with a sheet of newspaper. Using three "Ninja knives," Tom stabbed through the newspaper and into each of the selected cards.

It was another night of great Southern California Assembly 22 magic. —Steven L. Jennngs
Southern California Assembly 22 meets the third Monday each month at 8:00 PM, St. Thomas Moore Parish Hall, 2510 South Fremont Avenue, Alhambra, California Contact Ed Thomas magicmred@earthlink.net (213) 382 8504

25

DO YOUR OWN THING

ELMWOOD PARK, NJ— It was Do Your Own Thing night. Phil Schwartz performed Dean's Box. Phil placed a red rope and a white rope into the box. They became linked. Then one rope was placed through the sides of the box and a ring placed inside instantly linked to the rope.

One of our visitors, Chris Smith of Hackettstown, showed us how a ring can float up from his hand and the other hand placed underneath it to show no visible means of support. This is an effect called 'Invisible.' It looked convincing. Del Dixon did a rope effect: Two pieces of rope became one, and one knot tied became three knots. Then Del used a display

of sixteen assembly numbers and had one selected by Tony Gerbio by moving his finger around. The final and predicted assembly number was #25 (one of the best!).

Richard Bangs showed us Copper, Silver Brass, with a set Richard had made to his own specifications to avoid using unfamiliar foreign coins. Each time Richard placed a coin or two in his pocket, it was found back in his hand. Bob Delaney performed a beautiful Aldo Colombini rope routine. A sliding knot became two and one changed color to red. Both knots were untied. When the red knot was untied, that section of the rope was also red!

Phil Germaine did a unique card effect called Scratch-off. A selected card changed to a card with a scratch off portion like a lottery ticket uses, and when scratched revealed the name of the selected card. Phil followed with a Nest of Wallets routine, wherein a quarter travels to the innermost of three small wallets, into a folded paper. John Henderson showed a fascination for the number 7, by showing four Sevens with a blue back. Inserting a red-backed Seven, all the backs turned red! Then John added a green-, yellow-, and orange-backed Seven. All backs changed, and then became the four Queens! It's a Roy Walton effect.

Henry Carlyle, visiting from Lyndhurst, showed some good mentalism. He used four people to select cards from a shuffled deck. The first card traveled to his pocket, then other cards were given out and placed in paper bags. Three more were placed in their pockets. Henry revealed the cards, but added some showmanship by missing on one or two. Henry asked for some opinions. A good discussion followed with Ron Wohl. —Del Dixon

Assembly 25 meet the third Friday of each month at the VFW Hall, 6 Veterans Place, Elmwood Park, NJ 07407. Meeting start at 8:00 PM. Contact Phil Schwartz quackmagicphil@aol.com (973) 263-4419 www.livemagicguide.com/sam25 for more details.

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TREACHERY AND DECEIT AT SAM 31

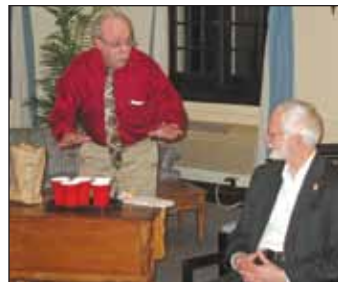
INDIANAPOLIS, IN— Since March historically has been a month of treachery and deceit, at least in the days of Julius Caesar, our theme for the month was Treachery and Deception. Before the evening was over we experi-

enced both.

Our master of ceremonies and assembly president, Steve Spence, kicked off the evening with a very nice rendition of Axel Hecklau's Just a Cup. Wearing his red hat and using a single cup and die plus a red drawstring bag, Steve introduced his effect as the Cup of Deception. His volunteer helper, Jay Newby, was never able to tell whether the die was under the cup, in the hand, or in the pocket.

Don Miller then proceeded to create a fan of cards on his hand. The fan then defied gravity by not tumbling to the floor when his supporting hand was removed. He admitted that his trick, although deceptive, was not particularly treacherous, unless one considers the possibility of a paper cut from the cards.

Jim Croop invited President Spence to a chair up front and proceeded to terrify him and delight the rest of us with Stefan Olschewski's EGGstremely Dangerous. Much to Steve's relief, and our disappointment, each of the cups poured over his head contained only air and none the raw egg. The raw egg was eventually found in a cup previously set aside in a paper bag.



Jim Croop warning Steve Spence of EGGstreme danger

Taylor Martin then reminded us of Jay Marshall's observation, "Old age and treachery will beat youth and talent every time." He then proceeded to prove his point by performing the evening's most treacherous effect, the Dante-built version of the Sword through the Neck. Taylor introduced his Italian steel sword and the Collar of Torquemada, the leader of the Spanish Inquisition. His victim, Aaron Kalinowski, was extremely cooperative considering what was happening at the back of his neck. He was also extremely relieved when the deception reached its conclusion and his neck was still intact.

Following these treacherous and deceptive performances the group engaged in a very interesting discussion of the role and appeal of

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

32

MAGICIAN'S CHOICE

LYNCHBURG, VA— The meeting started with the wind howling through the roof loud enough to wake the dead, which could have changed our meeting plans entirely – considering we were meeting at a funeral home. This would have been an excellent month to have a spooky magic or a Halloween theme as the program. The sound effect was perfect.

The actual theme for the March meeting of Assembly 32 was "magician's choice." With an almost unlimited number of ways this principle can be used in magical effects, a good number of variations were expected and members attending delivered. President Patrick Hubble was one of the performers this evening as he started out to do some type of card trick, but maybe the wrong deck was chosen because suddenly the whole deck vanished.

Bob Staton followed with a row of letter cards displayed on a stand. A prediction was handed out to a spectator to hold. Multiple choices were then made as card by card was eliminated until the final one left matched the prediction. For a kicker, the remaining cards were then assembled to spell out a magic message. Glen Rae delved into a segment of "find the lady" – his version of the Three Card Monte. Glen then proceeded to reveal several variations of handling of the cards that could be used.

An ongoing discussion took place regarding the magician's choice principle; John Jennings demonstrated how the "choice" enhanced the two strings into one effect by first allowing the spectator to pick which ends he would use. He then went through a routine with cards as he told a story with many choices being made in a young girl's life – the story ended in a display of "finding true love."

It can also be said that the

magicians of Assembly 32 have also found true love of the magical art at its monthly gatherings. Visitors are always welcome to drop in. —John Jennings

The Hersy Basham Assembly 32 meets the third Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. at Tharp Funeral Home, 220 Breezewood Drive, Lynchburg, VA. Contact John Jennings investigatofire@aol.com (434) 851-6240 for more details.

35

MARCH LECTURE HAS A FEW INTERESTING TWISTS

POUGHKEEPSIE, NY— Our March meeting featured lecturer/dealer/balloon twister extraordinaire John Reid. Although John acquired the Cresey product line, which includes their world famous mouth coils, he started out his lecture showing our assembly how to make mouth coils. John went into all the steps, materials, and tools needed to create them. Considering the amount of work going into making mouth coils, I don't think too many members are giving up our day jobs to make them! After his explanation, John showed us a number of great effects. He stressed creating magic moments and how magic can be used to make the world a better place. He taught us how to make paper roses and a number of ways to fold towels to amuse (or annoy) friends and family. He gave us some wonderful ideas on the snowstorm and performed a couple card effects such as the Knot a Card Trick.

John is also well known for his balloon creations; he showed us some of them along with telling us a very funny story about working at the White House. John spent a lot of time discussing how you can make tricks evolve and make magic stronger. At the end of the evening, he helped a lot of members make money disappear. Thanks, John, for a great evening of magic. —Craig Kunaschk

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

37

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL HITS IT BIG IN DENVER!

DENVER, CO— Magic landed in Denver on March 14

in the form of The Society of American Magicians national council. Members of the Mile High Magicians Society helped in arranging ground travel needs to the members of the council to and from the Marriot Hotel and the S.A.M. Center in Parker, Colorado. In place of our March meeting our club opted to put on a Magic Flea Market in a brand new location near downtown Denver. A host of magic items and paraphernalia were made available to not only the national council but to our local membership and magicians of Colorado. It was very well attended.

March 15 The Society of American Magicians center in Parker hosted a Magic All Star Show for the public to raise money for further development. Twelve magicians gathered from around the country to perform for a sold-out house. They were future S.A.M. National President Dal Sanders, PNP Mark Weidhaas, Joe Givan, Carol Massie Givan, Dave Elstun, Connie Elstun, Chad Wonder, Christopher Manos, PNP Mike Miller, PNP Dan Rodriguez, S.Y.M. member Kimberly Holter, and S.A.M. National President Christopher Bontjes. The show also paid tribute to our local magic treasures Bruce and Kitty Spangler, who were given a lifetime achievement award by the S. A. M. and a lifetime membership to the Society. Several M.H.M.S. club members volunteered as tech and crew.



Rod Chow shows his winnings to Colorado's own Mr. Money Dave Elstun

On March 16, after endless board meetings, the council was ready for some more fun and attended a performance of *Casino Night Heist*, a comedy mystery. The show took place at club member and magic supporter Walter Keller's establishment, the Lumber Baron Inn. The show stars Walter and two other magicians and local S.A.M. board members, Dave Elstun and Matthew Brandt. National council, board, and

committee members included Manon Rodriquez, Rod Chow, David Bowers, Marlene Clark, Jann Goodsell, Eric DeCamps, and PNP Vinny Grosso to name a few.

Finally, on March 17, the Mile High Magicians hosted skilled craftsman magician Eric Anderson, who presented a useful lecture to thirty members at our home base of Riverpointe Senior Center. It was almost like a mini March magic convention right here in the Mile High City! —Connie Elstun

Assembly 37 meets at the Riverpointe Senior Center in Littleton Colorado. Contact Chad Wonder chad@ldomagic.com (303) 933-4118 www.milehighmagicians.com for more details.

51

MARCH MADNESS MAGIC!

PEORIA, IL— Our regular meeting was fairly well attended, even considering that one of our neighboring city magic clubs, Springfield, IL, also held their annual auction the same night. President Jerry Tupper opened the meeting with updates regarding our upcoming public shows, the Heart of Illinois Fair, and the Farmer's Market performances.

Our theme for March was "Fishbowl." At last month's meeting, everyone drew the name of some common household item (not a magic prop) and were assigned the task of creating a magic trick using that item.

Doc Lowery had chosen a washer, so after lamenting his inability to stuff a Maytag into his change bag, he then proceeded to produce a large steel washer, glued to a clothes pin – a washer *and* a dryer! One of our guests (and soon to become member), Terry Meridan, did not go with the theme, but did manage to find a wallet full of fire.

Mike Tate had picked "Straw," and showed what I considered the best trick of the night, with a water bottle suspending when a straw was inserted. CJ Diamond linked steel washers one by one onto a key ring. The slow-motion linking looked really good!

Jerry Tupper "blew" us away when a straw began to crawl across the table under some mysterious gust of telekinetic power. He then threaded a string through a straw, cut them both in half, but somehow the string remained unscathed. He then demonstrated and taught how two straws wrapped around one another can penetrate. Is anyone

else noticing a pattern of selected items?

Michael Baker was next showing and teaching the Grandmother's Necklace using small spools of thread and a couple lengths of yarn. A couple variations of the trick were brought up by CJ Diamond and discussed. Another of our guests, Tim Turner, levitated a paper cup with all the appropriate showmanship.

At the conclusion of the formal meeting, Michael Siefert had some rope and a few large rings, so he could get some input on his ring and rope moves. He has some of them down nicely, and other sleights with the objects were also discussed. Michael told us how he fashioned the ring from a bathroom towel holder.

The following night was the Murray Hatfield lecture. It was well received with lots of information for everyone; he comes highly recommended by us! —Michael Baker

Assembly 51 meets the third Monday of each month at 7:00 PM in the conference room at Schnuck's Grocery in the Metro Center at University and Glen. Contact Michael Baker themagiccompany@aol.com (205) 612-3696 <http://peoriamagicians.com/> for more details.

52

ST. PATRICK'S DAY MAGIC

SAN ANTONIO, TX— March 7, 2013, Brother John Hamman Assembly 52 held its monthly meeting at LaMadeleine Restaurant. Plans are underway for the 2013-2014 installation banquet to be held at Aldaco's Mexican Restaurant in San Antonio. The assembly has booked Trixie Bond as our guest entertainer for this event.

President Paul Amerson called the meeting to order. Tonight's theme was St. Patrick's Day Magic. Starting off the performances was Paul Amerson, who performed an appearing bottle routine. John Murphy showed us a leprechaun card effect using the Hamman count, and Ed Solomon told us a story about Elves and imps. Michael Tallon did an Aldo Colombini card effect called The Three Way Miracle Prediction. Geoffrey Sadowski shared a linking cards routine and Don Moravits performed Henry Sugar by Liam Montier.

Following the open performances, Doug Gorman

performed a twenty-minute close-up show. His show included The Recalcitrant Red Die, The Horizontal Royal Wave, Coins Through the Table, The Gypsy's Curse, and the Homing Ball. He then taught his own handling of the Gypsy's Curse and provided each person instructions and the necessary cards to perform his routine. Thanks, Doug, for a great show and teaching table.

Tonight's door prize winners were Doug Gorman, Geoffrey Sadowski, and John Dahlinger. Thanks again to Don Moravits, Paul Amerson, and Joe Libby for donating the monthly door prizes for this year.

Brother John Hamman Assembly 52 meets at 7:30 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month at La Madeleine Restaurant, located at 722 N.W. Loop 410. The restaurant is inside Loop 410 on the access road between Blanco Rd. and San Pedro. For more information, contact douggorman@att.net.

56

MARCH MEETING

DAYTON, OH— March is our election month for Assembly 56. Our current slate of officers was re-elected for another year. They are: Paul Burnham, Executive Officer; Barbara Pfeifer, Administrative Officer; Craig Morgan, Financial Officer; and Matt Stanley, Security and Communications Officer.

Dave Davis started off the night of magic with his theme for the month, "What's in your bag of tricks?" Others doing some magic this month were Paul Burnham, John Love, and Scott Miller.

Fred Witwer, Millie Witwer, Jessica Reed, Larry McMechan, Shayna Reed, and Linda McMechan shared information and stories about the Winter Carnival Convention and the *Nothing Up My Sleeve Show*. Jessica was on the Friday night show at the Winter Carnival. Shayna closed the *Nothing Up My Sleeve Show*. It was a great night and fun was had by all! —Paul D. Burnham

Assembly 56 meets in various locations. Contact Paul Burnham pburnham@woh.rr.com for more details.

59

TAG TEAM MAGIC

PORTLAND, OR— You can't let the world of professional wrestling have all the fun. That

was the thinking behind February's meeting of Assembly 59. Not that we wrestled each other to the mat and twisted one another's joints at angles they weren't meant to rotate, although one or two acts might be described as twisted. The concept was this: Members would divide into groups of five. They had a half hour to devise a magic act that would include all the members of that group. Props could be whatever one had on hand or could be found in the room. The results were both hilarious and clever. For those among us who slave over effects and techniques for months before showing anyone else, it was a challenge. Collaborative, creative, and improvisational skills were a plus. All had a wonderful time and we all learned a bit more about ourselves, each other and the art of magic. Assembly 59 makes a great team however you divide them into groups.

Magic using sleight of hand was the ShowTime theme of the evening. Sleight-of-hand presenters were President Danny Schreiber, Tom Waldrop, Eartha Green, Randy Stumman, Mel Anderson, John Edsall, and Art Manning. They all performed effects that demonstrated that while the hand may not be quicker than the eye, it can certainly be quicker than the mind.

The Beaverton Elks has hosted our club for a year. In exchange for their hospitality members of Assembly 59 will perform a benefit show at the Elks on March 1. More about that after the event is held. —Glen L. Bledsoe

[Assembly 59 meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month except July/August at the Beaverton Elks, 3500 SW 104th, Beaverton, Oregon. Contact Glen L. Bledsoe \[glenbledsoe@mac.com\]\(mailto:glenbledsoe@mac.com\) \(503\) 967-9151 \[www.sam59portland.org\]\(http://www.sam59portland.org\) for more details.](#)

77

MIKE BENT BENDS US WITH LAUGHS

MASSAPEQUA, NY— After our brief meeting and having two candidates audition for entry into being a Long Island Mystic, I had the pleasure of introducing an old acquaintance from Boston to my friends here in New York. Mike Bent took the floor and presented some truly amazing ideas from his clever and funny mind. He tipped a lot of his working material to us from his many library and family shows, and we took them

all in. From fast bits like “Watch, Watch” to full out routines, like his “Snake-less Snake Can” (if Alfred Hitchcock directed a children’s magic routine!) and a production from a birthday greeting card that if marketed to the mass public, could easily shut down Hallmark for good. The cool thing about all of his effects was that they could all be hand made with things from discount stores and from printouts from a computer. With Mike it had to be just right. His “Amazing Prediction” takes a standard mentalism moment and turns it into a journey across the world. It was very beautiful reveal at the end.



Mike Bent and his little friend. (Mike is on the right)

When asked about how smart of an idea it was to go full-time into the children’s market as a magician, Mike said, “Libraries have a different theme each year. I create a whole new show from scratch. Maybe one routine would be a different version, but the rest is all new. I stay busier than a lot of magicians in my area.”

The highlights were Mike Bent’s screwy humor that ranged from inside jokes for magicians (“I got this handkerchief from the Devil!”) to jokes that truly get kids laughing without making them feel like they’re being talked down to. “You got to love doing these shows and love being around kids. They’ll know if you’re faking it. They can tell.” Next month it’s our annual auction with lots of stuff to offer to magicians in the New York Area! Until then, see you at the diner. —Lou Johnson

[L.I. Mystics Assembly #77 meets at 7:30PM on the second Monday of the month at The Community United Methodist Church. Contact Lou Johnson \[loucircus@aol.com\]\(mailto:loucircus@aol.com\) \(516\) 5992612 \[www.limystics.org\]\(http://www.limystics.org\) for more details.](#)

88

GOSPEL MAGIC/MAGIC WITH A MESSAGE

ANN ARBOR/YPSILANTI, MI— This month our club met at the Denny’s restaurant in Plymouth;

it was one of our biggest turnouts, with twenty-six members showing up. The theme was Gospel Magic or Magic with a Message, (it just happened to be when they chose the new Pope). Special guest Tim Miller wanted to start off with a new type of ‘card stab’ he was working on in which he uses a napkin and a butter knife to find a selected card. Next up was Tony Saputo with a color-changing bag, commenting on parts of the Bible, then ending with a Rosary at the last change. Then I, Randy Smith, did a routine which I picked up at our last flea market, called The Gift from God. I also did The King of Hearts trick. Next was Jim Placido who had a presentation with a message about capitalism. Dan Jones explained how some people know of the Bible and others know the Bible with the Bible Coloring Book.

Marvin Mathena performed Will the Cards Match using two sets of cards with gospel messages. Lastly, Tyler Sousa took a piece of paper and made an airplane, asking if a plane could make it to heaven. Then he tore off the wings of the plane to make a rocket and asked again if a rocket could make it to heaven. Finally he opened the paper; it was in the form of a cross; he said only through Jesus Christ can you make it to heaven. —Randy A. Smith

[Hank Moorehouse Assembly 88 meets the second Wednesday at 7PM, Faith Lutheran Church, 1255 East Forest Ave, Ypsilanti, MI. For more information Randy A. Smith, Phone: 313-562-3875 Email \[randy.remarkable@gmail.com\]\(mailto:randy.remarkable@gmail.com\) or visit \[www.aamagic.org\]\(http://www.aamagic.org\) for more details.](#)

95

MAGIC FROM WOOD

VANCOUVER, CANADA— The March 2013 meeting was held in the spacious common room of Juan and Marcia’s condo in Vancouver. The hot snacks prepared by Marcia, and enjoyed by all, included pizza and chicken wings. The theme for this evening was Magic from Wood. Starting off was Ray Roch with his famous Three Shell Game routine, which began with Ray displaying his wooden-like walnut shell with a pea inside on a cute mouse-holder stand. Ray’s classic carnival patter made for an entertaining gambling con routine that ended with a large green ball finale. Lon Mandrake made a wooden-like voodoo doll mystically rise in hand. Dennis Hewson caused a genuine wood



Host Juan Garcia performs his version of ABC Blocks using shrinking wood blocks

block with card suits on it to glide on a rope and stop anywhere at his will. Henry Tom performed a Die Box routine with an attractive genuine wood Die Box. Rod Chow utilized a wood box, a wood die, and a dictionary made from wood pulp in a convincing book test routine with Tony Chris Kazoleas. Juan Garcia showed his own version of ABC Blocks using wood blocks that ended up in different configurations, including the illusion of the blocks becoming smaller and smaller. Steve Dickson ended the evening using cigarettes made out of paper from wood to create symbols; he had members guessing the system on what number each symbol represents. —Rod Chow

[The Carl Hemeon Assembly No. 95 meets the first Tuesday of each month at members’ homes. Contact Rod Chow \[rod@rodchow.com\]\(mailto:rod@rodchow.com\) \(604\) 669-7777 \[www.sam95.com\]\(http://www.sam95.com\) for more details.](#)

104

VEGAS VISITS SALEM

WITCH CITY, SALEM, MA— On March 6, Assembly 104 finally kicked back for our belated, annual holiday party. The School of Magic was in recess, the serious business meeting was tabled for the month, and the aroma of fine cooking swirled above gathering heads as officers and members arrived. President Bill Jensen’s daughter Amanda, a talented caterer, was the author of the night’s cuisine and a buffet line enthusiastically formed towards her bounty of Italian dishes and cold cuts.

When appetites were sated and belts discretely loosened, the entertainment began on a stage that was virtually crowded – by two. Yes, two. With inspired humor and youthful energy, Kayla Drescher and Evan-Buso Jarnis proceeded to channel the personalities and

facsimile likenesses of some of magic's superstars. Balancing wild caricatures and good-natured silliness against some serious magic, our two performers paced their breathing and our collective laughter.



Kayla and Evan's "Black Art" imitates life

Evan's personification of a great mentalist presented a book test employing a painfully funny force on dumbfounded Rob Snider. It was comedy to the max. Later, an Evan-crafted, Vegas superstar was a Dickensian delight, levitating one foot at a time. And Kayla assisted in taking the gag to the next level as she lay beneath Evan's cloth, levitating one leg up and down.

Laughter followed applause and back again in waves as Kayla brought Lotta into the science lab and Evan frayed a few nerves with a card trick employing a sharply broken glass. That one turned out better than fine in a sweet display of pasteboard skill. So did Kayla's impressive routine with her Losander table, segueing from a floating feather.

The *pièce de résistance* arrived when the two took on a famous card-flinging mask changer. Kayla was brilliant, confidently producing cards as "Black Art" Evan "invisibly" handed them to her. The same principal produced water in her "bowls" and gales of belly laughs. Think Flo in the Progressive commercials.

It was an amazing night for a unique assembly, made all the more so by our two talents. They knocked themselves out entertaining us and richly deserved the unanimous standing ovation they received for their efforts.

On March 25, on NBC, Kayla Drescher furthered our pride in her gifts when David Copperfield declared her the winner of the *Today Show's* Monday Magic Finals and a trip to Vegas. —Bob Forrest

Assembly 104 meets on the first Wednesday of each month, September-June, 7 p.m., at the First Baptist Church of Salem, 292

Lafayette Street, Salem, Massachusetts. Contact Bob Forrest captainalbrightsqli@comcast.net (339) 227-0797 www.sam104.com for more details.

108

MAGICAL WINTER FOR ASSEMBLY 108

SOMERSET, PA— In January the theme was new magic. In other words, perform what magic you received for Christmas. This theme was a great addition because there were many new effects and new magic performed. In February the theme was Mathemagic, which was any effect that had math involved. There were many new effects never seen before. We all went home a little smarter.



Dody-Jane Svetahor performing at benefit

The March meeting was canceled due to a snowstorm. I thought the groundhog saw his shadow! We are not far from where Punxsutawney Phil resides, so maybe we can cause him to disappear. The theme was to show the S.Y.M. youth how to use and take full advantage to their online magazine.

Several of us went to the Real Magic Roadshow sponsored by Elmwood Magic in Pittsburgh and we had a good time. The dealer shows were very informative. We hope the weather treats us well for our April meeting. —Dan Miller
The James Swoger Assembly 108 meets the third Monday 6:00pm for SYM and 7:00pm for SAM at Wheeler Brothers in the Somerset Industrial Park Contact Dan Miller millermagic@centurylink.net (814) 733-4978 for more details.

110

EASTER/PASSOVER CONTEST

NEW CUMBERLAND, PA—The first order of business was our "Ducky" Waterman Contest. This is the contest between all of those who finished first in any of

the previous year's contests. Since the other first place winners were either not present or had forgotten to bring the props necessary to repeat their winning performance, Frank Bianco was declared the winner for his fine performance of changing single dollar bills into five-dollar bills.

There were five performers for the night's Easter/Passover-themed contest. Joe Noll did a version of a Don Alan card location in which a wind-up chicken finds the chosen card. Jack Ritter did a "Benny Bananas" routine based on the boomerang optical illusion. John Sergott did a Color Divination effect with crayons using the "old" method found in most beginner magic books and a new version using a cell phone.

Al Bienstock showed us a type of Gung-ho Box that was shown empty, but when closed had a short string of beads hanging out. When the beads were drawn out (about five yards worth) Harvey the rabbit was found on the other end. Frank Bianco showed us a Dean's Box that he constructed that had the spirit of a rabbit in it also. The rabbit linked ropes even when their ends were held by two spectators and managed to thread a ring onto a rope whose ends were outside the box when the ring was shown lying on the floor of the box.

The contest winner was Frank Bianco followed by Al Bienstock and Joe Noll.

Our guest, Eric Gerow, skillfully performed a card effect in which a freely selected card was lost in the deck and found by knocking to the table a small packet of cards held between the helper's fingers, leaving the helper holding his chosen card.

Mike Snyder had come prepared to give a workshop talk on Making Money with Magic; however, time was fleeting and attention spans flagging, so Mike was only able to cover a small portion of what he had wished to discuss. We are hopeful that he will be willing to present his talk at a later date because we liked what we were hearing. —Joe Noll

Joe Homecheck, AM Assembly 110 meets second Thursdays, 7:00pm at John's Diner, 146 Sheraton Drive, New Cumberland, PA Email: Secretay@SAM110.com

112

MEMORIAL MEETING

CONCORD, CA— At a very special evening, indeed, more than

thirty members and friends came together at our February meeting not just for a little magic and fun, but to honor the memory of our own Bob Steiner.

A large number of members told tales of Bob or spoke of how he had influenced them at some time in the past. Speakers included Mac McCarthy, Jerry Barrilleaux, Dale Lorzo, Larry Wright, CaroleYvonne Kula, Joe Biernacki, Lance Snead, Doug Kovacich, Michael Douglass, Fred Nelson, Cheryl Fiedler, Mike Buchele, and Germar.

Also in honor of Bob, the theme for the evening's performances was "Mentalism and Psychic Magic." Joe Biernacki opened with a prediction effect in which the last man standing out of seven held the only envelope with the predicted message, the others being entirely blank.

Ric Ewing amazed the audience with a demonstration of his ability to "see" the chosen number of a large die hidden in a box, even with his back turned to the assistant and the audience. Jerry Barrilleaux, in a routine called Beat the Professor, called up four volunteers and offered them the opportunity to choose, exchange, or keep any one of five envelopes. Somehow, Jerry always ended up with the envelope containing a twenty-dollar bill while others always ended up with play money.

Roy Porfido also exhibited his powers of prediction by matching one of several animal cards chosen by a spectator. Germar followed with a comedy prediction of a mentally chosen number. Dale Lorzo demonstrated his psychokinetic abilities with a block of wood with a hole through the middle and a piece of rope. Dale was able to stop the block from sliding at will and also removed and replaced the block even when the ends of the rope were held by two volunteers. Doug Kovacich concluded the regular presentations by performing a card prediction he learned at the recent Al Lampkin lecture.



Lance Snead performs broken-wand ceremony for the late Bob Steiner

Larry "Zappo" Wright presented the "Trick of the Month," two different tricks really. The first was a prediction effect in which he correctly identified the color of a business card, one of three, chosen by a spectator. In the second trick, Larry showed how he never loses at the "Rock, Scissors, Paper" game. The evening concluded with Lance Snead bringing to the stage a volunteer who magically bent a quarter in his own hand through the power of mental energy.

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

112
TRICK OF THE MONTH

CONCORD, CA— This month, Ric and Kara Ewing graciously hosted our meeting in their home, with the living room neatly set up as a stage area.

Trick of the Month was presented by Rod McFadden who performed "The Happy Horoscoper," a Phil Goldstein effect. Rod showed 12 cards with signs of the Zodiac and asked a spectator for her birth sign. Every card back was blank except for the matching card. It read "Happy Birthday."

Doug Kovacich was first to perform an effect related to this month's theme, "Classics of Magic" with a demonstration of the Egg Bag, in which an egg magically vanishes and reappears, even in the hands of the spectator.

Bob Holdridge then performed a puzzling effect where two cards with blue circles and one with red are placed under a cloth. The two blue cards are removed but when the cloth is removed, the remaining card turns out to be blank instead of red.

Jerry Barrilleaux entertained with a version of Al Schneider's Coin Matrix and a story of four magicians with only two blankets, who couldn't locate a hotel room and ended up sleeping in the park.

Loren Lind beautifully demonstrated a perfect French Drop.

Ric and Kara performed a Monte style effect using coloring books. Ric placed three books, one filled and two uncolored on the table, then moved them around each other and asked the audience to identify the filled in book. Even in slow motion, it was impossible.

Rod McFadden demonstrated his abilities with a deck of cards, presenting both "Cutting the Aces" and "Turning the Aces."

Roy Porfido provided some humor by asking Kara to select one of three cards displayed in his hand, and to let her mind go blank before revealing the card. Mysteriously, the card was blank rather than her mind.

Bill Marquardt presented a stand up version of Dai Vernon's "Triumph" that he learned many years ago as a teenager.

Bob returned to present an illusion known as the "Ball Box," from a book by Blackstone. The effect is similar to the classic die box using a ball instead of a die.

We also received short lessons on false cuts from Ric, and a force known as the "Business Card Force" from Rod.

—Bill Marquardt
Assembly 112 meets third Wednesday of the month VFW Building, Pleasant Hill, CA (tentative) Contact billmarq@toadworks.com

115
WORKS IN PROGRESS

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA— Our March S.Y.M. meeting started with some handkerchief magic. Attending our March meeting were Landon and (Dad) Brian Allan, David and Nathan Clauss, Dan Rowan, George Buckley, Mark Davis, Dan Hall, David Feng, and Ed Schmitz and daughters Ashley and Elizabeth. Guests included Wanda Harlow and Everette Anderson, who provided complimentary Pepsi colas to all those attending.

The evening started off with David Clauss leading the S.Y.M. teach-in with some handkerchief magic. Items taught were largely taken from the *Mark Wilson Course in Magic* and included The Dissolving Knot, Knot Thru Arm, Penetrating Handkerchief, Broken and Restored Match, and Vanishing Wine Glass. After a brief business meeting and S.A.M. membership presentation to our newest member David Feng, those attending shared some magic with the group.

The theme for the evening was "New Magic In Progress." Dan Rowan showed Rupert the Magic Rabbit from his book *Magical Rope Artistry*. This is a routine inspired by Dan Garrett's Judy the Mouse. Dan formed a rope into a rabbit and then animated the rabbit causing it to levitate ala the

Zombie. S.Y.M. member Landon Allan did some sponge ball magic and received some tips from Dan Rowan. Dan Hall showed some variations on sponge-ball vanishes, including his handling of a thumb clip vanish taught at a prior meeting by Wes Isefi. Ed Schmitz showed Einstein's Favorite Trick from Steve Beam's many self-working card volumes. This is a small packet trick that involves locating a spectator's chosen card with a down-under deal.

George Buckley shared how he was trying to incorporate his new Capt'n and Coke into the 26-cent trick from the October issue of *The Linking Ring*. This is a copper/silver routine using a quarter and penny. George also shared a quarter in bill routine showed to the group by George Schindler at his lecture last month, also a ring routine with a Jardine Ellis ring, and ball holders he had made for a three-ball routine. Finally, David Feng showed an effect called the Advocate. In this effect a spectator's named card appears reversed in a borrowed shuffled deck. All in all it was a very full evening of magic shared by those attending.

Assembly 115 usually meets the first Friday of the month beginning at 7PM at the Forest Lakes North Pavilion Building. For more information, please contact Mark Davis at 434.962.3019 or whiteoakcanyon@gmail.com.

120
MISCELLANEOUS MAGIC

CHAMPAIGN, IL— The club show at the Cunningham Children's Home went well.

Andy Dallas told us about demonstrating his variation of the No Tear Paper Tear to Mark Mason who liked it enough to market it. Congrats to Andy. Rob Thompson will be doing a lecture for our March meeting.

Chris Bontjes told us of giving a talk at a teachers conferences concerning teaching with magic and entertainment methods.

Jim Percy opened the magic with his Hangman Book Test. Justin followed with Ghost Card and Anniversary Waltz. Jim returned with his Thought Bubbles. JR showed off his Copper/Silver/Brass, Pencil Through Quarter, and an amazing array of One Handed Ties, some of which resulted in knots. Andy Dallas demonstrated his 3/4 Egg Bag. See you at the meeting.

—Ken Barham

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

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MIKE GAGNE'S GREAT ESCAPE

WALLINGFORD, CT— March is "Installation Month" for Assembly 127, and as the business meeting got underway, the 2013 Slate of Officers were sworn in by Chick Kelman: President Jeff Doskos; Vice-President Dave Wyskiel; Secretary Dick Hodes and Treasurer Mike Gagne. The officers in turn performed in the after-meeting magic, as well as other volunteers.

The after-meeting show began with lots of action as Treasurer Mike Gagne presented, for the first time, his straitjacket routine. Chick Kelman and Ray Lorenzo did the restraining buckles and after a few minutes of intense struggle, Mike was free and slammed the straitjacket on the floor, to a good round of applause. He hopes to add this routine to his show.

Guest Frank Karrass performed a puzzling three-pile prediction effect, with the assistance of Dave Wyskiel.

Secretary Dick Hodes followed with a mental routine. While volunteer mind reader Dave Wyskiel turned his back, a card was selected for all to see. Dave then turned around, looked at all the cards, and picked the correct card. Ray Lorenzo performed a puzzling Four Ace routine.

Vice-President Dave Wyskiel came through with the theme for tonight's magic: "Anything With a President's Head." Using what he called "My Handy Dandy Engraving Plate," he inserted the "plate" into a pad of blank paper.



Mike Gagne's Great Escape

After rolling the pad with appropriate colored magic markers and opening the pad...a real dollar bill. The convincing ending came when Dave tore off the bill for inspection.

Wysklel then presented a coin prediction effect. He showed a number of coins, kept one, and then had an assistant flip several coins over a number of times. At the end of the routine the coin the spectator covered with his hand and the one in Dave's hand both matched. They were both face down—tails. Dave then explained the mathematical principle involved.

President Jeff Doskos also did a convincing coin effect. With an interesting patter story and guest Matt Martin to assist, Matt initialed a Kennedy half-dollar, Jeff then vanished the coin, only to find it had reappeared in a nest of wallets. A strong climax to an interesting night of magic. —Dick Hodes

[Assembly 127 meets on the third Tuesday of each month at the First United Methodist Church, 941 Old Rock Hill Road, Wallingford, Conn. Contact Dick Hodes for more details.](#)

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MARCH ASSEMBLY REPORT

PENSACOLA, FL— Twenty members of the Gulf Coast Magician's Guild gathered for the March meeting. The theme for this month was "Flea Market" and any magic you wished to perform. Only one member loaded up a table with items for sale or trade. It can only be assumed that the other members were happy with their purchases of magic and didn't have a junk drawer full of items that just didn't live up to the description in the advertisement.

Ronnan Carrero was home on spring break from John Hopkins's and was able to make the meeting. Also previous member Daniel Ricks who hasn't been seen for sometime is back in town and was able to attend this month's meeting also.

Our Prez Nate Nickerson mentioned several upcoming movies about magic that would soon be on the circuit. Keep your eye out for them. One was *Now You See Me*. Nate is also doing a regular gig at one of the local Pubs on Monday evenings.

The easter egg hunt for the City of Pensacola is being held this

Saturday March 23 and hopefully some of the members will be on hand to do some walk around magic.

Al Grimm must give up writing the newsletter and Nate asked for volunteers to take over the project. Sadly there were no takers; however, Javier Arrillaga in Miami who maintains our website has volunteered to take on the project. This was voted on and approved by the members present. It was also decided to make it an electronic issue unless there is a member that does not have access to the Internet who will be sent a hard copy.

Jason Simons had the coffee going and the table laid out with snacks for our break. This was followed by the raffle of some nice magic some were lucky enough to win.

Jason was the first up performing a neat card routine with helpers Ben Vath and Isaac Brady. Two predictions turned out to be the selections that vanished from the deck.

Nate "Card Sharp" Nickerson performed some unbelievable card tricks that blew everyone's mind. You can tell he really knows his craft.

Last but not least Dave "Basket of Tricks" Kloman performed some of his rapid fire comedy magic which he is noted for. You can always count on Dave for some unusual routines. —Beau Broomall

[Assembly 129 meets the third Thursday of each month at 6:45 pm at the Bayview Senior Center, 2000 East Lloyd Street, Pensacola, Florida Contact Beau Broomall \[beaumagic@bellsouth.net\]\(mailto:beaumagic@bellsouth.net\) \(850\) 994-1060 \[gulfcostmagiciansguild.com\]\(http://gulfcostmagiciansguild.com\) for more details.](#)

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RINGING ROPES

ELMHURST, IL— Your scribe now winters in Florida and is writing this report based on notes supplied by club president, Don Clancy. This meeting's theme was "Magic with Rings and Ropes." Don Dvorak was up first with his take on the grandmother's necklace principle, using a rope wash-line, some freshly laundered items, and a wand. He demonstrated how to magically remove the clothes in a flash if a sudden rainstorm occurs. Next, Rudy Alfano did Tenkai's classic escape

trick, The Thumb Tie. His version included eluding Don Dvorak and Bob Syrup when they had him trapped behind a silk handkerchief. Martin Mercy followed with a new ring-on-rope and a very original rendition of The Bow Knot. Then our VP, Joe Vyleta, performed the now rarely seen triple cut and restored rope, The Panama Rope Mystery, created by Ted Collins back in 1941 and featured in *Tarbell #2*.

Gordon Gluff, one of our members with a seemingly endless repertoire, contributed a solid-through-solid effect in which the two ends of a plain length of rope remained visible at all times; nevertheless a solid brass ring made its way onto the center. This was followed by the linking of a large (10 inch) ring onto the same rope. Jim Geppert added some color to the proceedings by magically knotting a number of brightly colored rings to a long rope. To wrap up this themed meeting, Bob Syrup performed a transition effect with hair-loops (yes, those things the ladies wrap around their pony tails). Bob held on to his red one and gave a blue one to Jim Geppert. Before you knew it Bob had the blue and Jim had the red. He explained you do not need hair to do the trick – a great relief to many of the members. Next month, I'll be back in Illinois and be able to report the events first hand. I again offer Mr. Clancy my thanks for sending me the information necessary to write this report. —Tony Noice

[Assembly 148 meets every third Monday at 7:30 PM at the Evangelical Lutheran Church \(downstairs\) on the corner of Spring Road and Vallette, Elmhurst, IL Contact Tony Noice \(630\) 993-3740 \[www.SAM148.com\]\(http://www.SAM148.com\) for more details.](#)

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MANY UPCOMING EVENTS

BEAVER, PA— The Mystic Magicians of Beaver Valley (157) are celebrating sixty years of existence. A moment of silence was called for the passing of a special member, Ray Witkowski, to a debilitating disease. This meeting was the first for the bylaw changes for the Financial Aid Committee. Magic Mob at local magic shop The Cuckoo's Nest went well with publicity in paper and Magic Magazine. Looking forward to upcoming events: Battle of Magicians in Canton,

OH, in May, Eric Buss in Zelianople in March, and the SAM Convention in Washington, DC, in July.

Teach and Learn was on "Professor's Nightmare" with Ray Lucas demonstrating. Several members added ideas on methods, any color rope, and how to count ropes. Jack Greenberg emceed nine members' performances. Don Moody did a card trick where he asks participant to pick a card, replace it. Don looks thru deck and picks four cards. Asks for a quarter so "George" can pick which one. He then placed the marked quarter in his pocket and brought it out in a stapled coin holder. Ray Lucas started with a blank deck of cards that numbers and faces appeared on as he shuffled them; then they returned to all blank.

Tom Chidester presented a bottle shape with a ball bearing in it. He had a button to press and bearing came out, pressed again, it stayed in. Rich Howard had a prediction envelope, asked for number from 1 to 52. Counted out cards to that number. Card and prediction matched. Jim Weyand showed four colored bunnies. Participant chose one, Jim guessed it by elimination. Jim Tate had 4 cards with 2 red kings face up, then 2 black kings face up. During his talking the cards became 4 aces. Doug Ries placed 12 postcards on table from different countries. Participant placed cell phone on one, removed it, repeated this after counting 5,5,2,3,3. Doug was able to tell one left. Eric Davis presented a \$1 bill with a silver scratch off sticker on it. Scratched off, became a \$20 bill. He then changed a Sweet and Low sugar packet into a \$1 bill, then a quarter. Bill Cornelius did his version of Professor's Nightmare with one piece of rope, cutting it during trick, and restoring. —Judy Steed

[The Mystic Magicians of Beaver Valley meet the second Thursday of every month at the Towne Square Restaurant in Beaver, PA. Contact Judy Steed \[heyjude1943@msn.com\]\(mailto:heyjude1943@msn.com\) \(330\)-525-5389 for more details.](#)

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CLOSE UP MAGIC

COLORADO SPRINGS, CO— Card tricks abounded with Jordan Myers (Ambitious Card), Brian Lassek, our newest member, (predicted card with a note on the back), Bruce Black (Poker Face – found a lost card), Dean, Quig Wysong (found the top of five

cards that he had never seen or touched), and Frank Klein (Disappearing Deck).

Both Jordan (Fork) and Brian (Spoon) tortured silverware that, through various mental exertions, became bent and twisted. Brian did an exquisite Torn & Restored Cigarette Paper in which he could show his hands clean and the restored paper floated freely alone.

Jerry Meinzer showed a news article that he then cut in half at a point chosen by a volunteer. Not only did Jerry predict exactly where the article would be cut, but he also divined a freely chosen word from that cut sentence.

Larry Scott Marks, our rubber band fanatic, showed linking and unlinking rubber bands (Crazy Man's Handcuffs), interlinking rubber bands, torn and restored rubber bands, and vanishing rubber bands.

Jack Hart and Dave Wintermute did rope tricks including Short & Long Rope routines, Professor's Nightmare, the Knotty Rope, and Rope Thru Neck.

Larry Mahan stuck a nickel (with a tack) to his head and used his hand puppet peepers who did imitations (fish & clam) and a card trick. Larry's 3D camera (Drum Tube) transformed a 2D frog into a 3D critter. After putting a volunteer's quarter in a bottle, he offered to reimburse, but his change, wallet, and the pen to his check book were all also in a bottles.

Bruce followed up with the classic Four Coins through the Table routine in which the number of coins decreased by one when they hit the table and one went through the table to his waiting hand.

Mark Weidhaas did a pretty Chop Cup routine with a martini shaker. The ball that plugged the pour spout traveled back and forth from his pocket to the bottom or top of the shaker. Eventually it turned into too many lemons to fit in the shaker and he finally got his martini sour out of the shaker.

Frank Klein hypnotized his Hong Kong Clinging Rings so that one stood up while in the palm of a volunteer. He then touched it with the other ring and they stuck together.

Tom Paine's "Completely Examined Finger Chopper" let the chopper drop, the cigarette flop, and the volunteer's fingers didn't stop. —Dr. Dave Wintermute
Magical Assembly 170 (Pikes Peak Prestidigitators) meets on the fourth Tuesday every month in the Community Room of the

Sand Creek Police Station at 4125 Center Park Dr. Colorado Springs, CO 80916 – Come and visit when you can. Contact Dr. Dave Wintermute bWintermute@juno.com (719) 494-0171 for more details.

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JIMMY BROWN LECTURE

HIGHTSTOWN, NJ— Our March meeting included a lecture by one of the club's professional magicians, Jimmy Brown. Jimmy has been the house magician at The Magic Forest Theme Park in Lake George, New York since 1983. It is a great treat to have a "worker" sharing tips from his over fifty years of performing close-up, stage and kid magic.

Jimmy's audiences are often, but not always, children, but his lecture included a wide variety of effects that can be used in many performances. He started the lecture with Everybody Wins, an effect originally marketed by Edwin Hooper of Supreme Magic decades ago, which as Jimmy presents it, can be used for any audience.

Next, he showed Pull-a-Part Straws, an amazing ice breaker with two straws that is an ideal impromptu effect for presentation in a cocktail lounge or at the dinner table. Switching to cards, Jimmy showed a nice ESP effect using Zener cards. He caught everyone off guard with an appearing cane and "IOU 9 cents" utilizing flash paper.

Jimmy breathes new life into the Imp Bottle, an effect which might have been your first magic trick, but you have probably never performed it the way that Jimmy does. Makes you want to reconsider some of those old favorites. His Torn and Restored Dollar Bill uses a peanut brittle snake can, which is a new way to perform this classic effect and with a surprise ending.



The magic of Jimmy Brown

Jimmy finished up with some of performance philosophy and uses of sound systems. Jimmy feels strongly that when performing one should always dress like a magician, and he's always playing that character.

It was a very informative night because Jimmy distributed over thirty pages of lecture notes for free to attendees. Thanks, Jimmy. —David Zboray

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

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DINNER MAGIC

SEATTLE, WA— Michael Jacobs performed a very nice straw penetration, a great impromptu effect. Michael also presented a great prediction effect in which a random dice role turned out to be an indicator of where a predicted card was located. Fred Turner presented a very visual card transformation in which fire was held over an indifferent card and it visually melted into the spectator's selected card.

Bill Murray did a multiple card revelation effect revolving around a very detailed story line he has been working up for a while. Bill incorporated some ideas the group talked about from a previous meeting. Chuck Kleiner did a very nice "zombie spoon" routine for the dinner magic theme. The effect was very visual and would be a great impromptu effect for around the table. Larry Dimmit performed another great mentalist routine involving remote viewing in which he was able to tell what type of scene a spectator was visualizing.

John Cameron performed a very nice prediction routine involving a very special deck of cards with various wines printed on them. After a mixing up the deck the spectator selected card was found to match the actual bottle of wine that John had with him. George Zuk did a nice quick effect using three packets of sugar with different food items written on them. George was able to divine which packet had been selected after a spectator had mixed them up. Mark Paulson performed a

very nice mind reading effect in which he had a person choose a card and turn it face down in the deck and place the deck back in the box. Without opening the box, Mark was able to tell what card had been selected.

J.R. Russell led the group in a mind mapping exercise; everyone brainstormed various magical ideas for "dinner magic." The group came up with various types of dinner magic as well as specific effects for each grouping. The club plans to continue to expand on the ideas presented. —Jim Earnshaw
Assemlly 200 meets at 7:00 p.m. at the Mercer Island branch of the King County Library on the first Thursday of the month. Contact Jim Earnshaw at jimearnshaw@live.com or (206) 225-6715 or at: www.emeraldcitywizards.org for more details.

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SELF-WORKING MAGIC IN AUSTIN

Austin, TX— Self-working magic was the theme of Assembly 206's March 18 meeting in Austin, Texas. Vice President Dan Page led the activities, demonstrating several fun coin and card effects that were both amazing and relatively easy to master. He also used a change bag to produce (and juggle) colored scarves, demonstrated an easy self-reading envelope prediction, and escaped from handcuffs and chains.



Connie "Paprika" Leaverton assists Assembly vice president Dan Page with a chain escape

Page, also known as Cranius Astounding, walked through each of the effects during the second half of the meeting, explaining in detail how to present them for best effect. He was assisted in part by veteran professional Kent Cummins, who also demonstrated a beautiful routine with an exquisite Arabian-themed magic coloring book.

Magician J.D. Stewart also dem-

onstrated a self-working card effect, one in which the spectator — not the magician — identifies a selected card. Although the effect is well known to magicians (and even many “muggles”), J.D. provided a new twist that involved much running about, shrieking, audience participation, and laughter.

Secretary Jake Dyer reminded members to support the club’s Facebook page, and to reach out to the assembly officers if they would like to promote an upcoming event using that social media outlet. The Facebook page can be found at www.facebook.com/SocietyOfAmericanMagiciansAssembly206. —R.A. Dyer
Assembly 206 meets at the Omni South Park Hotel, 4140 Governors Row Austin, TX 78744. Contact R.A. “Jake” Dyer jakedyer@yahoo.com (512) 658-0017 for more details.

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FIRST ANNUAL LMC MINI-CONFERENCE

LOUISVILLE, KY— The Louisville Magic Club first annual mini-convention was held on March 18. This mini-convention included several dealers of magic and members who had items to sell. Lectures were given by Terry Kelly on balloon animals and sculpture, Pete Miller presented cards in a close up presentation, Ken Abbott gave a presentation on coin magic, Roger Omanson presented mentalism, Bill Alexander gave presentation of card magic, and Bob Escher and Sherrill Nunnley gave a history of our club. The members learned much this night and the fellowship and availability to purchase magic items was a unique opportunity. —Tom Crecelius

The Louisville Magic Club, Assembly 215, meets at the new location of Kosair Charities Headquarters located at 982 Eastern Parkway. Contact Tom Crecelius medimag@cs.com (812) 633-7684 www.lmcmagic.com for more details.

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FEBRUARY MEETING

WILLIAMSBURG, VA— President Michael Heckenberger opened the meeting with eleven members and seven present. We welcome Frank Edens and are delighted that he plans to join the

Assembly. We also welcome guest “Chip” Gaggett who performed later in the evening. Ron Grossman will be joining S.A.M. Huzzah! Treasurer Howard Karnes collected annual assembly dues.

Amy Goldberg reported on the on the magic show and teaching program that Michael Heckenberger, Penn Russell, and Harold Wood put on for middle and high school Presbyterian Youth Fellowship Groups at the Williamsburg Presbyterian Church on February 10. A hardy round of applause to Harold, Michael, Penn, and Amy!

Harold Wood was first up in to perform. He asked Amy to name a suit from an invisible deck. She chose diamonds. Then he spread a deck face down on the table. Amy selected a card and showed it to the audience. It was the three of diamonds. She placed it face down in the deck. Earlier Harold had placed a 3” by 5” card on the table. He asked me to read and say what was written on it. It was the name John. All the cards had different names written on their backs. John was on the back of the three of diamonds. How does he do that?

Cameron Konitzer told us that very day of our meeting was his one year anniversary of joining the assembly. To celebrate he would perform an escape from a straitjacket a la Houdini. After much exertion, struggles, and grimaces he completed his escape. Three cheers for Cameron. Ron Grossman help from Harold, Howard, and Cameron performed a pick-a-card routine.

Chip Baggett performed an amazing pick-a-card routine. Let’s hope we see him at more meetings. Michael exhibited his great dexterity with cards which were sorted in three stacks. In first stack was the Ace of Hearts; the second the Two of Hearts; and the third the Three of Hearts. As he picked up each stack, the Heart



Watt Hyer Wins Annual Magic Award!

card would either rise to the top or descend to the bottom. Just amazing! —Phil Thorp
Baker-Temple Assembly 226 meets at 7:00 p.m. on the 4th Wednesday (except December and January) room 009, Williamsburg Presbyterian Church, 215 Richmond Road, Williamsburg, VA 23185 Contact Phil Thorp pthorp@widomaker.com (757) 229-2329 <http://sites.google.com/site/samassembly226gmail.com> for more details.

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MARCH MAGIC MADNESS

LAKELAND, FL— The day after we “sprung ahead” had the local magicians at the IHOP still adjusting to eating dinner while it was light outside but it didn’t slow down the fun and conversation before the meeting began. As the sun started to set the meeting go was called to order by President Jerry Kardos. We discussed last month’s lecture and ways to increase membership so we can arrange more lecturers in the future. Al D’Alfonso conducted a drawing to benefits our treasury with prizes furnished by Bicycle Cards “Play More Cards” campaign.

The magic was kicked off by Dean Bob Macey who showed some displacement moves inspired by David Stone’s lecture. Next up Al showed Mier Yied’s Dunes Prophecy and predicted what poker chips Bob chose.

Beverly Kenemuth showed how she is able to conjure up some Native American mystic powers and make salt appear and disappear. Rick Shapter then was able to pull cards out of his pocket that divulged Elmo Bennett’s chosen selection. Jerry was back with a magical candle that helped him by scorching Beverly’s selected card without affecting the others. Elmo then took the same deck, ripped up the selected card, then showed it magically restored.

Sensational Sammy did a prediction in which he divulged a line selected by Elmo from a newspaper. Then he shared his presentation of the computer age cards for the group. Ravelli then brought out his magic rope and we watched as knots appeared and vanished before our eyes. He then filled into an entertaining ring on rope routine.

Mike Peterson demonstrated an impromptu oil and water effect

that wowed us. The night was closed out by card expert Ed McGowan who pulled out a four of a kind chosen by Beverly while we watched with amazement.

March proved to be a great start for springtime magic in Central Florida. Be sure to come visit us if your plans bring you to the area for vacation and join in the fun. —Al D’Alfonso

Jim Zachary Assembly 266 meets the second Monday of the month at 7PM at the Lakeland I-HOP, I-4 & US 98 Contact Al D’Alfonso keeper0499@emnarqmail.com (321) 437-3814 for more details.

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SHOW & TELL BY THREE MEMBERS

BOCA RATON, FL—At our March meeting we had three members who demonstrated and showed us how the tricks worked. This was helpful for many of our new members who are new to magic. Herb Arno who is a top performer of sleights showed some simple effects including a puzzle with pennies that was quite unbelievable! He called it The Bermuda Triangle. He also demonstrated a basic coin palm.

Manny Riskin showed us some excellent rope effects, rubber band tricks, and a clock effect with cards.

Phil Labush was our third performer; he is known for his “money magic” and showed his versatility with a deck of cards. Lots of good tricks were learned. —Marshall Johnson

The Sam Schwartz Assembly 274 meets on the first Monday of each month at the JCC in Boca Raton, FL. For information call Marshall Johnson (561) 638-0043. Email marshj4magic@aol.com

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MAGICAL MISCELLANY

GREELEY, CO— Our March meeting featured entertaining performances prompted by its theme: “When I Do This, People Go ‘Wow!’” During a brief business meeting over lunch, President Lloyd Worley combined ideas (mostly from Ron Dutton, Rich Nakata, Jim Pope, and Lew Wymisner) to design a library-based magic course for us to give older children.

Tim Pendergast contributed a

book review on a recently-reissued (and corrected) classic, *The Royal Road to Card Magic* by Jean Hugard and Fred Braue. Tim also recommended the parallel set of DVDs by Rudy Hunter.

Tim went on to explain how he constructed his close-up table. The base was purchased: a lightweight, folding metal stand for a keyboard, which adjusted for height and width. The top was a shadow-box picture frame. Tim replaced its glass with a board to which he attached a trimmed-to-fit close-up pad.

Show time! Lloyd enlivened the whole program by playing occasional recorded trumpet fanfares, applauding crowds, and people cheering.

Gary Hickox opened with an energetic version of Woody Aragon's *The Other Half*, to the



Tim Foolery at his table

mock consternation of Brian Hallisey, who also had planned to perform it.

Right in Marilyn Dutton's hands, Tim Foolery performed a stunning Henry Evans's *Rising Card*. He recommended as a better value the similar cards sold as Henry Evans's *Automatic Kings*.

The Great Loudini showed two tricks and added his usual witty commentary: the mental photography deck, and the Cobra self-cutting deck, for which he had found a heavy shot glass with just the weight needed to slow it down. Ed (Mr. Magic) Hurtubis played a good-humored chop cup "game" with James Lopez. It was a pleasure to see a chop cup routine presented not as a difficult puzzle or an unfair challenge, but rather as fun for the spectator. Ed's double climax was large sponge balls.

With energy and enthusiasm, Rich Nakata whipped the cover off an Abbott Botania, which still had gorgeous bright feather flowers. Worley the Wizard used the grandmother's necklace principle in an elaborate ropes-through-neck Harry Potter routine, complete

with recorded commentary and background music.

Our Dean closed by teaching his mentalism routine using Paul Curry's great *Out Of This World*. His patter deflects it being a card trick, quickens the pace, and mentions three false explanations: a memory system, Herbert Benson's "relaxation response," and measurable telepathy. And the climax is not too perfect.

—Ron Dutton

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

GO TO: WWW.MUM-MAGAZINE.COM
and use the easy submission form to file your report

COMPETE IN THE S.A.M. CONTESTS OF MAGIC AT THE NATIONAL CONVENTION JULY 3-6, 2013

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

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

Paul Critelli
858 Iroquois SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506

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

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING DEADLINES:

- * All requests for an application packet must be in my possession by or sent on or before **May 20, 2013**.
- * All applications and DVDs must be online as instructed in the application packet by **June 3, 2013**.
- * Do not put any act online or send it to me in any form before you read and complete and submit the application form.

Good Luck!

Paul Critelli
Chairperson – Contest of Magic
Society of American Magicians

DE YIP LOO

Magician, inventor, and builder, De Yip Loo, died March 6, 2013, at the age of eighty-seven. He came to the United States in 1936, at the age of eleven, to join his father who had settled in Minnesota. The rest of his family remained in China. He became known as "Louie," and was the first Asian American performer to appear on WGN-TV's *Bozo's Circus*.

Loo went to Chicago at the age of fifteen and got a job at the Nankin Restaurant as a bus boy. Blackstone stopped in the restaurant between shows at the nearby Oriental Theatre and struck up a conversation. He asked the young Loo if he wanted a job in show business. The manager of the restaurant encouraged him to take it, because he was such a lousy bus boy. He worked for Blackstone as a personal valet to Harry and stage assistant for a year until Blackstone started touring for the U.S.O. and had to cut down on his troupe.

Loo soon returned to show business as a stage man for Dante. He stayed with the Dante Show for three seasons. Soon after becoming a U.S. citizen in 1945, he was drafted into the Army and joined the Quartermaster Corp in visiting Korea, Japan, the Philippines, and Okinawa. After the war, he experimented with all kinds of magic to see what would be right for him. He started getting experience as a club act, night clubs, burlesque, and Harvester Shows. He refined his magic act as part of Red Skelton's 1949 tour.

Loo's big break came on September 11, 1961, when he performed on the debut of *Bozo's Circus*. While donning a Chinese dragon robe, he did tricks involving vanishing chickens and pagoda illusions. In 1980, Loo performed on the Bozo show for the twentieth, and last, time.

In 1985, Loo launched the *Shang Po Magic Show*, a show that included his wife and daughter, which traveled extensively across the country and even South America. He billed himself as the world's "Number One Chinese Magician." A typical program included classics such as the Egg Bag, Die Box, Confetti to Goldfish, Head Chopper, and the Serpent Silk.

Over the course of his sixty-year career, Loo has been credited with inventing, rebuilding, and improving illusions used by such magicians as Harry Blackstone Jr. and Doug Henning. De Yip Loo retired from show business after suffering a stroke in 1998.

[A longer tribute to "Louie" will appear in the June *M-U-M*.]

RAY WITKOWSKI

In March, 2013, the Mystic Magicians of Beaver Valley, PA Assembly 157, lost a valued and special member, Ray Witkowski, to amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease). He was 56. Ray was a fantastic balloonist and magician and was known nationally and internationally. He performed for many years with his assistant and wife, Debora. He was a long-time member of both the S.A.M. and the I.B.M. for many years. He performed at the White House on an Easter occasion. He published books on balloon artistry. He and Deb took over and ran a magic business for the last few years. The Mystics and all who knew him are going to miss him. —Judy Steed

ELDON D. WIGTON

The S.A.M. mourns the death of Life Member Eldon D. Wigton on March 3, 2013, at the age of sixty-three. Eldon Wigton was a twenty-seven-year member of the S.A.M. from Delaware, Ohio. Billed as "Dr. Eldoonie, world's fastest magician," Compeer Wigton was well-known throughout the area as an entertainer, as evidenced by many of the tributes listed online with his obituary in *The Columbus Dispatch*.

He earned his master's degree in agricultural education at Ohio State University, and spent much of his life teaching agricultural mechanics at the college and vocational school levels. "Dr. Eldoonie" then pursued a second full-time career as a magician, delighting many audiences in his region of Ohio. —Michael Douglass

PETER REVEEN

Peter James Reveen, best known as "Reveen the Impossible," passed away peacefully at his home in Las Vegas, Nevada, on April 8, 2013, from complications due to diabetes and dementia. Reveen was a world-renowned entertainer who performed an acclaimed hypnotic show; he presented more than six thousand live shows around the world for more than fifty years before he settled in Las Vegas as Lance Burton's manager. Reveen was responsible for Burton's move from specialty act to Monte Carlo headliner in 1996, securing for the magician a long-term deal at the custom Lance Burton Theater that opened with the Monte Carlo, when it was still rare for a venue to carry a performer's name. Reveen remained involved for most of Burton's years at the Monte Carlo, which ended in 2010.

Born in Adelaide, South Australia in 1935, his career in the entertainment industry began as a magician at the early age of eight years old. By 1955 he became a full-time entertainer. Although his fame as a hypnotist would quickly rise and continue to eclipse his achievements as an illusionist, his passion for the magical arts remained the predominant force that influenced and shaped his career. "Magic has always been my biggest hobby," Reveen stated. "My love and dedication towards the magical arts helped to fulfill my dreams as a child and taught me how to be a great entertainer."

Best known for demonstrating the powers of the "super-conscious" mind, Reveen enjoyed great success in Canada starting in the 1960s. He combined his supernatural memory demonstrations and advanced knowledge of hypnotism with theatre, showmanship, and promotion to create a fascinating and hilarious performance that audiences found irresistible. His success began to skyrocket. Requests for private sessions led him to release voice recordings on LP, cassette, and later on CD. He received his first gold record in 1967 following the first 100,000 sales of Relax with Reveen.

Reveen is survived by four sons and his wife, Coral. In 2011, he proudly announced that his son Tyrone would be his successor, to continue the Reveen legacy as "The Next Generation." ★

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

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NEMCON 32 HONORS PAUL GERTNER BY BILL HOAGLAND

Nearly two hundred magicians attended the 32nd Annual New England Magicians Conference (NEMCON) Inc. on March 9, 2013, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Cromwell, Connecticut. Sponsored by the Tom Prete Assembly 127, the full day of magic included a close-up show, three lectures, a busy dealer room, and a "Stars of Magic" evening show.

The close-up show and lectures featured Paul Gertner, Ken Scott, Tom Burgoon, and Oliver Dodd.



Tom Burgoon



Paul Gertner



Father Cyprian and Eric DeCamps



Eric Dittelman



Oliver Dodd

Before show time, NEMCON Chairman Bill Hoagland acknowledged committee members and introduced the following S.A.M. national officers: National Secretary Marlene Clark, Treasurer Eric Lampert, Past National Presidents Richard Dooley, Craig Dickson, and Father Cyprian Murray, New England Regional Vice-President Joseph Caulfield, and North Atlantic Regional Vice-President Eric DeCamps.

Eric presented a special award to Father Cyprian Murray for his untiring efforts in restructuring and bringing artistic integrity to S.A.M. international magic contests. Last March, the national council voted to rename the stage contest "The Father Cyprian Murray Stage Contest."

Our Honoree for NEMCON 32 was Paul Gertner. Chairman Hoagland presented Gertner with a plaque for his outstanding contributions to magic. As America's premier corporate magician, Gertner is famous for his first place honors at FISM and the Las Vegas Desert Seminar. He was a frequent guest on the *Tonight Show*.

Busy performer Jim Spinnato emceed the evening show. Jim performs his comedy hypnotism act in colleges and casinos, and for corporate clients all along the Eastern coast.

Oliver Dodd showed why he received first place in the Youth Division at the New England Magic competition. George Saterial performed a classic pantomime routine with a large grandfather clock as a focal point. Paul Gertner performed, in his usual impeccable manner, several routines using assistants from the audience, including a classic bill effect. Ken Scott has a unique brand of comedy; his hilarious routines with volunteer assistants were pure entertainment. Semi-finalist in *America's Got Talent*, Eric Dittelman, performed his comedy mind-reading act. Tom Burgoon closed the show with his comedy and magic.

Registrants who stayed at the Crowne Plaza Friday night were treated to *An Evening with Paul Gertner*. He presented *Braindrops*, his theater piece that combines technology and magic.

Adding to the fun of this year's NEMCON, the producers of the soon-to-be-released movie *The Incredible Burt Wonderstone* gave out T-shirts and had a cutout in a large poster so a person could become "Burt Wonderstone."

Assembly 127 Treasurer Mike Gagne, who has successfully collected magic memorabilia for the Tom Prete Scholarship Fund Silent Auction, organized the event to help defray medical expenses for David Oliver. Mike explained, "David is part of our magic family and we want to help." Contributors included Lance Burton, John Calvert, and Jeff McBride.

DR. CONUNDRUM'S CABARET OF MIRACLES

On stage there is a shape covered by a white sheet with the Red Cross emblem on it. The background music suddenly becomes upbeat. We hear the "Rubber Ducky" song and an announcer's voice welcomes us to the *Dr. Conundrum Cabaret of Miracles*. Dr. Conundrum steps into the light wearing wine-colored scrubs and a white lab coat. He sports thick round spectacles and speaks with a German accent.

"Welcome to the Cabaret of Miracles. I'm Dr. Conundrum. Con-nun-drum. It's not a time share in Florida. It's not something guys carry in their wallets, hoping to get lucky once every three months. Conundrum is a puzzle...a mystery...an enema, uh, I mean an enigma!"

Thus begins an unusual evening of comedy and magic spun from the golden days of vaudeville with an appeal to modern audiences. For a little under an hour the wacky Doctor and his man-child (bipolar) ward Hans carry on with gags, innuendo, and slapstick intermixed with strong magic and mentalism. The result is something unique for audiences in Atlanta, both for fans of magic and for those cynics who don't normally care for magic.

The magic and mentalism in the show are both very visual and interactive. The audience becomes part of the show, timidly at first, perhaps, and then soon joining in on the fun and laughter. The jokes range from cheesy to raucous. Adding to the theatrical experience are music clips and sound effects strategically placed to enhance the laughter and the upbeat mood of the show.

The show stars Merritt Ambrose as Hans and Dan Garrett as Dr. Conundrum. Merritt was the 2011 Greater Atlanta Magician of the Year (voted by the combined S.A.M. and I.B.M. membership), and many readers already know of PNP Garrett, but perhaps not this side of him.



Dan Garrett and Merritt Ambrose

Photo by Victoria Skye

To find out how all this came about, we asked Merritt (who produced the show) and Dan (who wrote and directed the show) a few questions.

M-U-M: What sparked the idea for this show?

Merritt: I originally sold the show to a nightclub in mid-town Atlanta called the Koo Koo Room, as a two-man, sophisticated parlor show patterned after entertainment held in aristocratic homes a couple of centuries ago. I used close-up magic to amaze the management, spark their interest, and get our foot in the door. I asked Dan to come aboard and direct the show.

Dan: We soon realized that two magicians doing a show one after the other didn't make sense. There should be more interaction between the two of us. So I enlisted the help of a couple of friends of mine, one of them being a person with skills on a par with Bob Fitch or Johnny Thompson. He asked to keep his name out of this, and I can't say that I blame him, because he pointed the way for us

to unleash Hans and Dr. Conundrum upon the entertainment world. We don't want him to receive death threats.

Merritt: The advice we received made us realize that we needed to invent a couple of characters with some sort of relationship. Even though we could both perform strong magic effects, we needed some off-the-wall aspect for the show to be different.

Dan: We put together lists of over a hundred words and ideas for names for the show. Somehow, I accidentally hit on the name "Dr. Conundrum." Like the name implies, my character is a bit of a mystery, a so-called Doctor, probably a quack who claims to have the brain of a brilliant neurosurgeon. I think he keeps it in a jar. Creepy.

Merritt: My character Hans is Dr. C's ward, accidentally discovered by the doctor floating *au naturel* down the river in a basket. Hans has amnesia and thinks he is a small boy. His simple mind is trapped in a man's body. We play two very dysfunctional characters, and most likely each has a dark past (at the very least, a few skeletons in the closet).

M-U-M: What type of magic is in the show?

Merritt: We had some strong magic in our original sets, but we eventually stuck with the effects that really drive the show, the comedy, and the callbacks. I do a floating table, a routine with a coffee cup and a borrowed bill from my street act, and I go into a trance and the spirits tell me cards that the audience has peeked (Tossed-Out Deck). This is just a sampling. We don't want to give away too much.

Dan: I do a jumbo rising card effect with Hans and his spirit friends. Through my character's obsession with fire I transform into a Germanic game show host in a gag-filled mental routine with matchbooks. We have a hilarious version of the Indian Rope Trick. As a show finale, the doctor puts an audience victim, uh, I mean "patient," into a Wellington See-Through Guillotine.

M-U-M: Tell us something about the comedy.

Dan: The comedy aspect of the show is on an equal balance with the magic. We want the audience to laugh, to forget that they are being deceived by magicians, and to be caught off guard with the magic.

Even though we never use profanity in the show, except when we have performed in comedy clubs, there are mature themes and double entendre throughout. So, it isn't kid friendly. Ironically, there is nothing in the show worse than what kids see every night on network television. We have different versions of the script as well. There are naughtier versions for comedy clubs and cleaner versions for magic conventions, etc.

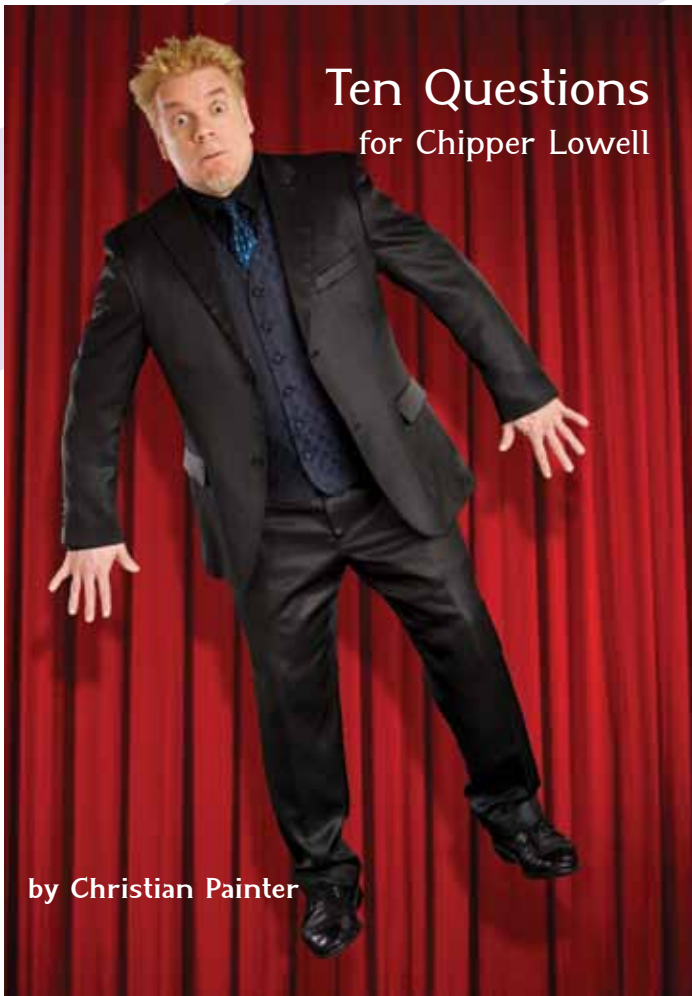
And the show continues to evolve. It is an order of magnitude better than when we began.

Merritt: We don't have a permanent venue but are playing several spots in the Atlanta area at present. The show is suited for a more intimate audience of 50-125 people. Since the word has gotten out, we have been invited to do more shows outside Atlanta.

Dan: Merritt is our marketing expert. He uses social media and the Internet to help promote the show. For most shows tickets are available online. And we have a promotional video you can watch at (www.cabaretofmiracles.com). ★



Photo by Michael Messing



Ten Questions for Chipper Lowell

by Christian Painter

Chipper's upbringing might not be the "norm" for most of us. He grew up traveling with his show business parents on various circuses and arena shows throughout the United States and Canada. His father was a clown and his mother was an aerialist. By age eighteen, Chipper was using all of the variety skills he had absorbed to begin his comedy magic career. Over the past three decades, he has appeared in over three dozen casino revues and production stage shows, fourteen touring shows, and thousands of corporate performances.

Chipper has been honored with "Comedy Magician of the Year" and "Specialty Act of the Year" by several organizations, as well as being named one of the "Top Funniest Magicians Performing Today" by *MAGIC* magazine. He was recently nominated for "Stage Magician of the Year" by the Academy of Magical Arts (aka The Magic Castle). Chipper's show is a twisted blend of stand-up, comedy magic, improvisation, and tons of audience participation. He continues to tour performing arts centers and theaters every year with his solo show, aptly titled, *The Chipper Experience! – Where Comedy & Magic Collide!* When not on the road, Chipper lives in a very small house with his wife, his son, and a mortgage.

1. In what venues do you perform most?

Although I grew up traveling with my show business parents on various circuses and large arena shows, I'm still very much drawn to performing arts centers and theaters. I love performing

for an audience that is truly invested in the show. They've bought tickets and shown up, and now it's my turn to try to give them a great evening of entertainment. I feel that theater allows you to take more time with a routine with an emotional impact, or to fully flesh out a joke that may require a few more steps to get to the punch line. A theater audience will give you the time and focus to do routines that may not work as well in a comedy club or a casino showroom setting. They let you take more artistic chances on stage.

2. You recently came off a very successful theater tour through the northern United States. At one theater your show received the highest ratings from their patrons. What is your secret to a great show?



My rule of thumb is two-fold actually. First, always give your audience "new information." Every moment and "beat" in your show should be doled out in a consistent manner so that there is always something new for the audience to digest and think about. You don't want them to get ahead of you when it comes to a magic routine or even a joke. I like to think of the new information policy like a time-release vitamin. For the next two hours, the audience is going to receive new information nonstop, and that never-ending flow of new information is what helps you, the performer, lead the dance.

The second rule is to listen to your audience. Yes, it's that simple. The audience tells you when something succeeds and when a routine either fails or has slow spots where you don't connect with them. Too often, entertainers don't listen; they perform for themselves. They're missing the point of performing live and in the moment. Live theater provides you with an immediate and honest response to what you're doing onstage. It is an incredible tool, so I strongly suggest that magicians simply take the time to listen, not only during their shows, but before and after the performance as well.

3. Do you use blue material in your comedy?

If I'm headlining a comedy club (and depending upon the type of audience in attendance), I will sometime go a little blue on rare occasions. Ninety-nine percent of my humor is "corporate clean," and my style is based on situational comedy as opposed to only spouting one-liners. I'm not a fan of comedians who decide to work blue in order to simply get the laugh, but I am a big fan of comedians whose voice is truly their own – while they happen to be blue in their routines, the routines are still well thought out and funny, and their audiences know exactly what they're in for. I'm talking about stand-up comedians like the legendary George Carlin or currently, Louis C.K.

4. What is the worst thing about touring?

What a lot of people aren't aware of is the amount of time you're sitting in a van, a plane, or an airport to get from one town to another. The jumps between theaters can range from fifty miles to four-hundred-plus miles. It can be pretty boring, so I usually bring along a laptop full of movies, TV shows, and podcasts. Thankfully, my show isn't production intensive, so the tech rehearsals, once I reach the venue, are pretty quick and easy.

5. What is your favorite trick to perform?

While there are some very fun comedy routines in the show that I enjoy doing because they build so nicely, one of my current favorite things to do is close-up routines at a velvet table with a live camera feed that is thrown up onto large 12' x 16' screens. It's the moment in the show where, despite all the fun and laughs normally associated with me, I get to show off some actual skills. I rotate a few different close-up routines into the show depending upon the tour and the venue I'm working. They range from a MacDonald Aces routine to a version of Slydini's Paper Balls and Box. The close-up segment of the show is fun for me because that's when I turn silent; all of the routines are done to some great music tracks. It also gives the audience a nice breather from laughing before I dive back into more comedy magic routines to close the show.

6. What do you tell people who want to become professional magicians?

I stress how important it is to take every theater class you can: dance, voice, movement, writing, directing, improvisation, etc. They will all lend themselves to being a solid magician with a good sense of stage presence. Next, I would tell them to work wherever they can, even for no money. You need stage time in order to be bad, to figure it out, to try again, to be bad again, to fail, to succeed, etc. Like anything in life, performing needs constant practice and input, and audience input is so important.

7. If you weren't a magician, what would you be?

I'd definitely be a writer and a director. I've done various stage and video projects in the past and would love to do more if time permitted. As with creating my live stage shows, writing and directing allows me to stretch that part of my brain that demands I think outside the box. I guess it all boils down to it being another outlet for creativity.



8. Name three performers (from any genre) that have influenced you.

The first would be Victor Borge, an amazing classical pianist and comedian, who toured all over the world for many decades with his hilarious shows. He took serious classical music and made it accessible to people by making fun of it and the high-brow culture usually associated with it. I loved him! He was my reason for wanting to perform in the theater market. Next up is Bill Irwin, an amazing theatrical clown and actor who created several solo shows to use his incredible physical humor in a theater setting. He taught me that I could take everything I had learned from growing up on circuses and variety shows and make that unusual skill set organic to me and my own personality. Monty Python was the top of the heap for me. And by now you may have noticed a trend in that everyone I admired sort of broke through the traditional way of doing things. They pushed the envelope, which to me was a big wake-up call at an early age that it was okay for me to do that as well.

With regards to magicians, I must have watched Ricky Dunn's act (pickpocket and magician) over a hundred times growing up, as well as a very funny medicine show magician from San Francisco

known as Dr. Lovecraft. I was in awe of both of them for their incredible comedic timing, their audience management skills, and the amount of energy they exuded during their shows. And even though much more serious than I would ever be, I greatly admired Lance Burton's original bird act because he brought a unique intensity to it that made you believe he was connecting with each and every person out there in the audience during his performance.

9. What three magic books were important in your development?

The Tarbell Course is still the best; I continue to go back to it, reading over chapters I haven't read in a few years and I always find something new. And if it's not a particular trick or effect, I find things that spark new ideas that grow into new routines. It's a must-have compendium for any serious student of magic. Eric Lewis's *Miracles* trilogy was fascinating to me; he not only thought up some great routines but he also showed you the construction of the props. And while I never wound up using anything directly from his trio of books, he taught me how to think up

routines with a strong beginning, middle, and end. Also, Karrell Fox's books were great because they emphasized presentation and entertainment value over method. Create the routine first and make sure it's funny and has "legs." Then go back and figure out the best way to actually accomplish the effect. I like that thinking; it has served me well over the years.

10. Can you give us a peek at what we might see at the S.A.M. convention?

I usually don't like to give anything away about a performance. To me, that's like someone at a party yelling, "*Hey everyone, Chipper's got this great joke about a donkey and a bus driver; the donkey winds up driving the bus while the driver winds up outside the bus, running after it. Well, anyway, I'll have Chipper tell it to you. You'll love it! Go ahead Chipper! Tell us that Donkey and Bus Driver joke!*" And with that, the joke just dies a slow and painful death. I will say that I will definitely be performing a few select routines from my touring show; it will have a bit of magic, a good dose of comedy and audience interaction, some ad-libbing and improvisation, and (I hope) no donkeys driving a bus. ★

THE ELEPHANT ON THE STAGE

By Chipper Lowell

This will be a bit of a touchy issue for some, but it's an important topic and needs a bit of exploring. I thought I'd jot down a few words about a subject that has plagued magicians (and entertainers in general) since the very first moment a caveman decided to do a bit of stand-up around the very first campfire. (And considering his "stand-up" was probably just literally standing *up*, I bet he killed!)

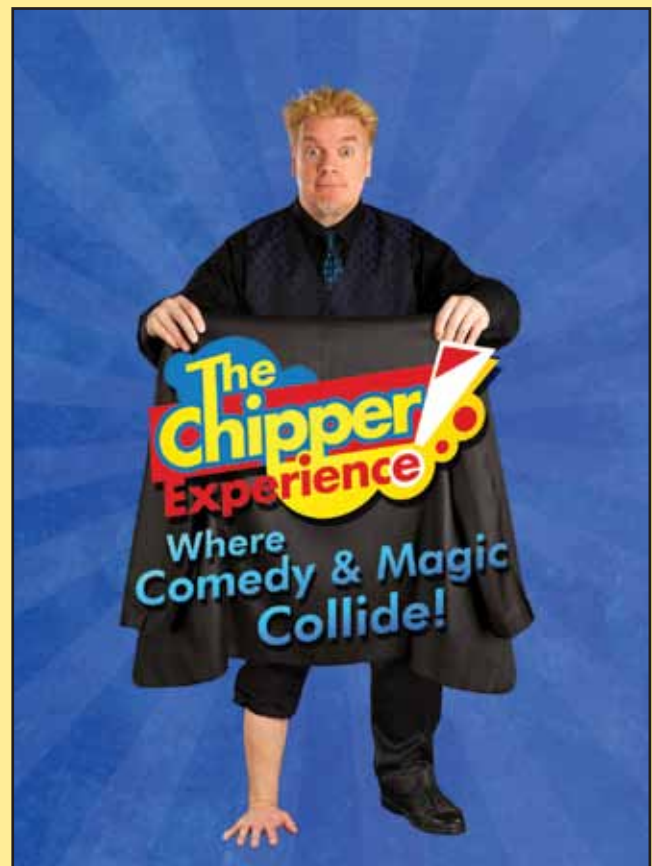
Question: How many times have we witnessed a rather portly magician waddle onto the stage in a costume that barely fits? Buttons hanging on for dear life as the tuxedo vest is stretched to its limits? A pant seam that seems to be playing a form of Russian roulette every time the man bends over to pick something up?

Now, let me be clear here. I'm not complaining or poking fun about the person's weight – not at all. What I am trying to bring to light is the deep denial that we often witness of someone who doesn't realize (or wish to admit) that there are obvious things wrong with the way they look and perform on stage – from costuming to props to personal hygiene to anything else that might take an audience "out" of the moment.

A few years ago, I was touring overseas; I happened to catch a performance of an amazing dove act that a good decade ago would have been considered among the best in the business. But over time, the performer had gained a good amount of weight and had never bothered to buy a new tuxedo, nor let the old suit out a bit to accommodate the extra girth. The birds were all tucked into position at the beginning of his act, causing his clothing to bulge out in large, sequential ripples. As each dove was produced, a ripple in his clothes "magically" disappeared.

His dove work was excellent, but with every pull it was completely apparent to the audience where the dove had been stored just moments before. And I'm sure the audience could even imagine each bird gasping for air as well.

The trouble, though, really wasn't the ill-fitting clothing, or even the weight of the magician. It was, in fact, a bad case



of the “denials.” If this magician took the time to truly look at himself, he would have to admit, again to himself, that he had gained weight. That he has lost control. And that is an uncomfortable place to be for some of us in this business where an ego can be a fragile thing.

And thus begins a long, awkward walk on rice paper, not only for the magician in denial with his shortcomings and faults, but also for the family and friends around him.

We’ve all witnessed many examples of this form of denial: toupees that don’t match the true color of the real hair they are supposed to blend in with; a teenage magician performing cigarette manipulations; a girlfriend or wife who was thrown into the act and has trouble fitting into the illusion because it was designed for a differently shaped person; props that are still being used even though they are chipped, faded, or broken. We can even include the clueless performer who decides blindly that the Bra Trick at a Blue & Gold dinner is a good idea.

As much as we take the time to practice our routines and techniques, we also need to take a good, hard, cold look at ourselves from the audience’s point of view. It’s not just about listening to them to see if they applaud you or remain silent. It’s truly about looking at you and everything you bring to the stage from their open and raw perspective.

Okay, so now what do we do? Well, what if I told you that by getting rid of the denial in your performance and appearance, you will actually get closer to who you truly are and find strengths in the areas you used to think were faults? Well, it’s true, and you’re welcome!

An example I like to give people during my lectures is comedian Louie Anderson. Early on in his career he would step onto the stage and people would raise their eyebrows and start whispering to each other about his roly-poly size. Does he know he’s that big? What do you think he eats? That can’t be healthy! And so on, and so on.

Louie would then calmly walk over to the microphone, take the mic off the mic-stand, and then set the mic-stand far off to one side while stating, “Here, let me get rid of this mic-stand so you can all see me.”

And that was all it took. Tension was immediately broken and the audience laughed like crazy and opened up. Louie could now talk about anything under the sun and everyone in the club was ready and willing to listen. Why? Because the “elephant in the room” had been acknowledged and dismissed in a single one-liner. His supposed weakness was now considered a strength – a comedic opportunity – and a strong part of his character and branding throughout his entire career, even to this day.

What I’m getting at here is that our faults (real, imagined, or supposed) can actually set us apart from everyone else out there, as long as we embrace them fully. For me, I make several self-deprecating jokes during my shows about my short stature, even to the point that my onstage assistant is over a foot taller than me. It’s different than the norm, where most magicians prefer their assistant to be shorter than they are. But for me, especially because I’m a comedy magician, the send-up is funny and filled with humorous possibilities.

As another example, country star Mel Tillis suffered from stuttering since childhood, but instead of trying to hide it, he decided to own it outright. Whenever he appeared on a television variety show, the writers loved working with him because they already had something to use – a “gimmick” that they could incorporate into the sketches they wrote for that week’s show. Because of his stuttering, he was able to bring his music to the masses, and even garnered a few movie roles as well.



So let’s go back to that first example I conjured up at the beginning of this article. The ultra-tight tuxedo on a fat magician can wind up being the perfect foil for comedy if that performer wishes to go that route. Or, he can reevaluate his clothing if he still wishes to appear serious and sophisticated. Either way, as long as he lets the audience know he’s fully aware and comfortable in his own skin, he’ll be so much closer to giving a real and honest performance, each and every time; and more important, he will wind up with a much stronger connection to his audiences.

I invite you to acknowledge your own quirks, faults, and unique personality traits that may have hampered your performance in the past and embrace them to the fullest. Trust me, you will notice not only a stronger connection to your audiences, but they will respect you for it.

Thanks for your time. Should you have any questions, or additional comments, please email me any time (chipper@chipper.tv). I would love to hear from you! ★



“Yes, the audience knows your character is made up. But they still want to believe he is real.” – Orson Scott Card

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF CHARACTER

For every performer who believes a conjurer should have an on-stage character, there are four or five who think creating one is a waste of time. Frankly, the latter is a ridiculous and lazy position for a magician to embrace. Anyone who steps up and performs a trick is *by default* adopting the character of, well...a magician.

So the question is not whether a character is necessary but rather, how much depth should that character have? Conjurers have a variety of roles to choose from—and the depth of any of those characters depends on how much of an anthology or “backstory” you wish to create for it.

In choosing your character, the goal is to adopt one that fits you like a well-tailored suit. Do you want to be perceived as a simple man of mystery, a snake-oil salesperson, a powerful wizard, or just a clever uncle? How about a professor of arcane knowledge or a person who speaks to the dead? Maybe you are a friendly chap who is still trying to figure out his “gifts.” Perhaps you are the girl next door who recently learned one of her ancestors was a victim of the Salem witch trials. The point is, your character can be a subtle role or it can be a far more theatrical one.

Mac King’s audiences draw quick conclusions about him from the moment he steps on stage simply because the suit he wears makes a loud statement. Those conclusions are then confirmed the moment Mac opens his mouth. Similarly, Pop Haydn charms and Max Maven startles for the same very intentional reasons. Among Disney guests, my own character B’lou is easily recognized by his outdoor vest and

straw plantation hat – and for his gentle southern drawl. Notice, however, in each example the costumes (and sometimes the cosmetics) advertise the adopted characters but do not complete them. Rather, the character is further defined by additional theatrical elements such as attitude, vocal accent, mannerisms, gestures, choice of props, stance, or movement.

On the more subtle side, conjurers such as Darwin Ortiz, Harry Anderson, Terry Ward, and David Blaine each present different and distinct character roles – roles that only become fully clear after they begin to speak or move. For them, the character statement isn’t made by the clothes but by the attitude of the performer in them.

Consider the practical example of Ed Hay, a gentle man who only wants to enchant his grandchildren more than usual. Ed studied Martin Gardner’s wonderful book *The Encyclopedia of Impromptu Magic* and became what he is – a kind, elderly man in a coat and bowtie who sits at a small café table and charms you with moments of what he calls “grandfather magic.” This role allows Ed to script his effects so adult volunteers become stand-ins for his absentee grandchildren. The audience “sees” through their eyes as Ed makes toothpicks dance and utensils bend and sugar lose its sweetness and get it back again – all on a tablecloth stage. That scenario also gives Ed the freedom to make hilariously bold statements no grandfather would ever say to his descendants: *“Suzy, you know I love your brother – but you’ve always been my favorite.”* The interesting character and relevant scripting give Hay’s comedic performances an intimacy and charm that is truly off the scale.

A wise performer will develop an anthology of historical information about his or her character. A well thought out backstory is the foundation of your character’s existence. Knowing the backstory cold provides great confidence in those moments when an unexpected question or comment from a curious guest causes you to step away from the script and converse

THE HIGH ROAD

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

BY MICK AYRES

momentarily.

When I proposed the character B’lou to the Walt Disney Company, the anthology went so far as to include an ancestral background supported with humorous anecdotes B’lou could share about his relatives. Similarly, Pop Haydn can answer any question about his life in the last century or provide details about his inventions, etc. These personal responses may be provided with a wink and a nod – but they are available upon demand because the performer has anticipated their eventuality and came prepared. The backstory keeps you steady, on track, and often makes your segue back to the rehearsed script seamless.

Without a doubt, adopting a character plays an immense role in the construction of your act. The selection of effects, the appearance of your props, the resulting scripts, and the blocking of your movements on stage are all determined by their relevance to the character.

The following effect is a conjuring interlude that relies solely upon the dialogue you create between you and a guest. There are no props involved. All that is required is a cooperative volunteer. No matter what character you have chosen, this presentation certainly gives your personality a chance to shine.

COMMON CENTS

The guest is asked to imagine he has coins of different denominations in his pockets. You turn your back as he pretends to remove one of the coins, holds it in one hand, and decides whether it is showing heads or tails. You turn around and immediately reveal which coins remain in the pockets, which coin was removed, which hand is holding that coin, and whether it is showing heads or tails. Then, to prove it wasn’t just a series of lucky guesses, you do it again.

Once you have acquired the cooperation of a willing guest, here is the script that follows. Smile broadly and, in an excited voice, say, *“When the sun is high,*

the moon is full, the tide is slack, and the planets line up, my senses tweak my imagination until it stretches out and I...feel...so...dang...perceptive. Like right now. It's like I'm connected to everything around me – even you! Here...I'll show you what I mean.

“Use your imagination and pretend there are four different coins in your pockets. There's a quarter here (point to his right pocket), a dime here (point to his left pocket), a nickel here (point back at his right pocket), and a penny here (point back at his left pocket). Since we've never worked together before, we'll keep things simple and just use two of the coins for now: the nickel (point at the right pocket again) and the dime (point at the left pocket again). Of the nickel or the dime, please focus your mind upon one...make your choice now. Got one? Good.”

Turn your back to the guest and say, *“While I look away, please reach your hand into your pocket and pretend to remove the coin you have chosen. Close your fist tightly upon that imaginary coin and do not open it.*

“Now, if you don't mind, I'd like you to do a couple of things to help focus the mind. First, think about the value of the coin in your hand and multiply it by, say...fourteen.” The guest will immediately nod his head or say, “Done.” If so, you know he is thinking of the dime. However, if you sense the slightest hesitation, you know the guest is thinking about the nickel. Once you know the identity of the coin, it is a safe bet you can declare which hand is holding it as well. Remember how you pointed to the location of each coin earlier? By using the nickel and the dime in this phase of the presentation, you have subtly forced the guest to use one pocket or the other, and, by default, one hand or the other. So if the guest is thinking of the dime, it is in his left hand. The nickel will be in his right hand.

Keep talking and say, *“There are different exercises like this that help a person concentrate better. Here's another one that's effective: Choose for yourself whether your coin will later show up heads or tails. If you choose heads, then hold the coin up by your own head and repeat the word 'head' five times to yourself. Do it slowly. Likewise, if you choose tails, then just hold the coin down by, well...your own tail and repeat the word 'tail' silently five times. When you are finished please hold both hands in front of you with your fists*

closed and say, 'Done.'”

Turn around and face the guest. Look at his hands. Specifically, study the skin tone briefly. If the guest chose heads and held his hand high for a slow count of five beats, then that hand will appear slightly paler than the hand that remained down by the side. Therefore, a difference in coloration tells you he chose heads – and further confirms which hand holds the coin. If the coloration of both hands is identical then the guest chose tails.

Once you have visually gained this last bit of information, you could just blurt out, *“You chose the nickel and it is heads up,”* but where's the drama, the tension, the conflict, the theater in that? Delivering the revelation in a more detailed and progressive fashion is better. Say, *“I sense the quarter, the penny, and the...dime...are still burning holes in your pockets. You decided to take out the nickel that is now in one of your hands. Specifically, it is held tight in your right hand. Finally, when you open that hand you have decided that nickel will be...heads up.”* This approach gives the impression you have discerned four different pieces of information successfully.

Say, *“If you think about it, these revelations are fifty/fifty propositions – just by taking a wild guess anyone can be right half the time. However, I think nailing 'em down one after another like that puts this stuff in a different category.”*

Now take this presentation a step further by saying, *“Even though I've never been able to do this twice in a row, I feel like I'm still in the zone and wouldn't mind giving it another shot. Are you game? All right! This time let's use those two other coins, the quarter and the penny.”* Make a gesture toward his right and left pockets respectively.

Turn away and say, *“Think of the quarter or the penny. Now pretend to reach into your pocket and remove that coin. Again, hold it securely in your hand. Have you done so?”* Wait for his answer. You want him to feel comfortable and responding freely this time.

Say, *“Because we have done this before, the pathways are open and the mental exercises are easier. This time, think of your coin and tell me when you have multiplied it by, say...nine.”* This time, the slightest hesitation tells you he is thinking of the quarter in his right hand. An immediate response tells you he is

holding the penny in his left hand.

Proceed with the same dialogue provided earlier to determine if his coin will later show heads or tails. The dramatic final revelation is the same as well. Twice now, you have successfully named the three coins left behind, the coin he chose, which hand holds the coin, and, finally, which side of the imaginary coin is showing.

Step back and smile broadly at your guest just like you did at the beginning of this presentation. Say, *“You gotta admit – we're not bad for a couple of people with no cents at all.”*

CREDITS AND VARIATIONS

Royal Vale Heath's 1933 book *Math-magic* proposed a method for determining a chosen coin based on the length of time it took to answer a simple math question. For the record, in 1998 David Harkey used a similar method in his still unpublished routine *MindNumber*, which allows a performer to accurately determine the locations of three different coins – over the telephone.

Using skin coloration to determine which hand holds an object is a clever idea that dates back centuries (possibly to the time of Reginald Scot). However, using that same dodge to determine a heads or tails status is my own variation.

When performing *Common Cents* for children avoid the math by using four imaginary crayons: red and purple the first time, blue and orange the second time. Have the child think of a word that rhymes with the chosen color. Since nothing rhymes with purple or orange, you can easily obtain your answer. Finally, in lieu of heads or tails, discern whether the crayon is pointing up or down in the child's closed hand. ★

Mick Ayres enjoys an eclectic career as a parlor conjurer, storyteller, and musician – and now, as a writer for M-U-M magazine. For the past thirteen years, he has performed over 1,300 shows annually, entertaining guests from all over the world at the exclusive Walt Disney Resort on Hilton Head Island... and he is still at it. Mick welcomes input and dialogue and can be reached at www.mickayreswares.com.

The Nielsen Gallery

Nesbitt - Wireless Wizardry

Dimensions: 2 sheet – 40” x 60” • Lithographer: Moody Bros. Birmingham

Date: Circa 1920 • Nielsen Rating: Rare

THE GREAT NESBITT: WIRELESS MAGIC

This month we feature The Great Nesbitt, purveyor of “Wireless Magic.” While this may not seem very exciting to today’s 4G generation, back in the early 1910s and 1920s, electricity in all its forms was both a household convenience and frightening stage entertainment.

According to unpublished research by historian Eddie Dawes, Nesbitt’s birth name was Neil Sinclair Nesbitt. He was born in England in 1888. From what we know, Nesbitt was, at an early age, an outstanding theater manager, a proponent of moving pictures, and also a stage-struck magician who impersonated famous magicians and performed their illusions.

Remarkably, at the age of nineteen, he became the youngest manager employed by the Moss Empires when he was appointed acting manager of the Empire Theater in Birmingham. In 1907 he became business manager for, and toured with, showman and hypnotist Professor Alex Erskine. In 1910 he moved to London to open one of the early dedicated cinemas at the Palace Theater in Woolwich. He became more involved with cinema, added other theaters, and even distributed films. In 1919 his obsession with the stage led to creation of the *Wireless Magic* act. Among other things, it involved Nesbitt conducting experiments with electricity using volunteers from the audience. According to his son Ronald, it required tons of equipment; during the act he generated 2.5 million volts of electricity and shot a seven-foot electric arc across the stage.

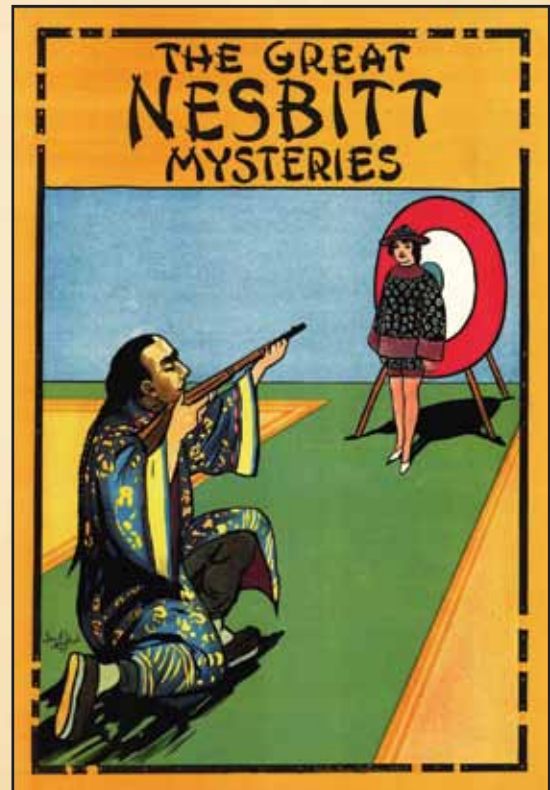
When William Robinson, the man who portrayed a Chinese magician named Chung Ling Soo, was shot dead doing the bullet catching trick, his wife Dot tried unsuccessfully to carry on the act. Eventually Robinson’s illusions came to auction on November 3, 1920, and Nesbitt purchased several.

A magic contemporary of Nesbitt’s, Raceford, also acquired some of Soo’s illusions and impersonated the late magician. In his three-part act Raceford also performed effects from David Devant’s illusion-packed sketch “The Magical Master.” To this he added an impersonation of the late Lafayette in “The Lions Bride.”

Raceford eventually sold the Soo and Devant acts to Nesbitt, who added them to his electric act and performed them under the billing “A Night in Shanghai.” During the Soo portion, Nesbitt reportedly appeared in a robe owned by the late Chinese emperor Xianfeng. In addition to impersonating Soo on stage, Nesbitt also appropriated imagery from Soo’s posters, including the ones where his name is spelled out in cigarette smoke and The Human Target. The artwork and printing on Nesbitt’s posters, however, were inferior to the lithographic masterpieces created by Soo.

The Devant act was set in the secret drawing room of a magician’s house and gives the performer the opportunity to present a

series of illusions. This includes: changing an ordinary egg into a giant one from which a lovely lady appears in the guise of a chicken; Hoops of Fashion, in which large paper-covered hoops are broken over a butler’s head and as each drops his costume changes; the Indian Rope Trick; Dissected Messenger, The Boy and Eggs; and others.



Nesbitt Human Target poster

Nesbitt gave up performing in 1928 and went back into management. He also became the business manager for Mr. and Miss Tree, the Australian mind-reading team. The poster featured here was created to play to the intense interest in the ever-present threat of war; it shows a god-like Nesbitt with electric sparks shooting from his fingertips, zeppelins being destroyed by “liquid electricity,” wireless control of trains, wireless lighting, and even wireless phones. It must have been some act. At the time of his death in 1936 at the age of forty-eight, he was the resident manager of the Alexandra Theater in Hull.

—Tom Ewing

(Information on Nesbitt was drawn from *The Davenport Story, Volume I* by Fergus Roy and from unpublished research by Dr. Eddie Dawes.)

THE GREAT NESBITT



LIQUID ELECTRICITY
THE
ZEPPELIN DESTROYER

WIRELESS CONTROL OF TRAINS

MOODY BROS.
LITHO.
BIRMINGHAM

WIRELESS
PHONE

WIRELESS
LIGHTING

ERIC JONES

TONY CHANG

BEN TRAIN

Dan Hauss

CHRIS MAYHEW

DAN WHITE

A VISIT TO THE UNDERGROUND

At the S.A.M. national convention this summer, attendees will be presented with a unique opportunity: the chance to session each night with six talented, up-and-coming, young close-up magicians. The sessions will start (as all good sessions do) late in the evening (after the evening shows) and will probably go until the wee small hours of the morning. The performers are Tony Chang, Eric Jones, Dan Hauss, Chris Mayhew, Ben Train, and Dan White. Here's a bit more about them:

Tony Chang is known for performing very difficult and visual sleight-of-hand magic. Many have regarded his obsession for details as a fresh approach to technical magic. A student for over seventeen years, Tony has released many of his creations to the magic community. His blog, doublefacers.com, has become an underground hit among the magic community. He currently resides in New York City.

You can read all about Eric Jones in the March 2011 issue of *M-U-M* (which is available online). PNP Bruce Kalver wrote in that cover story: "Eric burst onto the magic scene in the past few years, creating a great impression on young magicians as well as seasoned professionals. His technique is flawless. His teaching skills are special. He makes the difficult easier to understand. Eric is instantly likable; his charm wins over any audience." In the past two years Eric has travelled extensively, performing and lecturing for magicians around the world.

Television magic creator Dan Hauss has re-imagined what magic should

look like. As an entertainer, Dan's show takes audiences into his mind, a place where playing cards personify lost loves and ordinary objects become fantastic devices. He performs Sunday nights at South Street Magic in Philadelphia, and has performed for such esteemed clients such as Warner Brothers (for the *Burt Wonderstone* premiere), the Tropicana Hotel and Casino, and FOX Television. As a magic creator, Dan broke onto the scene with Flow, a trick that allows a spectator to control the contents of a bottle of water. Recognized for Rattled, Redline, Lit, and Sleeping Queen, Dan continues to bend truth and corporeality into new and exciting effects in the magic industry.

Chris Mayhew was born and raised in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. At the age of thirteen, his interest in magic grew strong after The Vanishing Rabbit Magic Shop opened near his house. Eventually the owner, Brent Smith, hired him to help out at the shop, and this is where Chris met Tyler Wilson. Tyler inspired Chris to start creating his own magic. Chris's first contribution to the magic community was his booklet called *A Clockwork Apple*. It was well received within the community and pushed Chris to keep creating. Chris eventually moved to Toronto to pursue his interest in filmmaking. Rather than spending thousands of dollars on film school, he decided to learn by volunteering on set as a production assistant. Chris currently resides in Toronto, working as a professional magician as he plans his next movie project.

Since finishing sixth in a Ben Train look-alike contest, Ben Train has spent

the last decade lecturing and performing across North America. Combining sophisticated sleight of hand, unique philosophical insight, and an encyclopedic knowledge of the arts, Ben creates a magical experience that is as powerful and deceptive as it is entertaining. Ben's material has been featured in every major magic publication (including *Genii*, *The Linking Ring*, *MAGIC* magazine, and *M-U-M*). His critically acclaimed DVD *Tribute* and his book *Anteater Consortium* are sold in magic stores all over the world.

Dan White first became interested in magic at the age of ten when his father showed him an old poster of the magician Kellar. While growing up in Philadelphia, Daniel fed his interest by working in a local magic store (Hocus Pocus) and was influenced by the older generation of magicians he would come into contact with daily.

As a creator and teacher, Dan has produced a number of highly esteemed and sought after DVDs for the magic community. For seven years Dan served as head magic producer for David Blaine, and was involved in every aspect of producing two prime time television shows and live stunts for ABC (*Drowned Alive* and *Dive of Death*). In 2010, Dan White began work as a creative consultant with David Copperfield.

Over the last two years, Dan created, performed, and hosted his own television show on the Discovery Channel, *The Supernaturalist*. On the show, Dan travels to the towns and mountain regions of Nepal on a journey in search of the miraculous, performing for the locals and fellow

mystics along the way.

Daniel holds a masters degree in Art History and is an avid painter. This fine arts background helps him add a new dimension to the art of conjuring, bringing mystery and elegance to each of his performances and creations.

To give you a taste of what to expect in the late-night underground sessions, here are five routines that should keep you busy for the next couple of months. Assuming that I can grab some catnaps during the convention, I plan on sitting in on the underground sessions. I think they're going to be a blast. I hope to see you there. – Michael Close

Double Color Change

By Tony Chang

This double color change happens within a spread, and it makes use of the mechanics of the spread cull. It is simple and deceptive. I leave the patter and presentation up to you.

Setup: Give the deck a downward bend by pulling down on the left and right sides of the deck. This bend will make a subsequent move a little easier. From top down, place two Jokers face up, one indifferent card face down, two red Queens face up, and the rest of the deck face down (Photo 1).



Method: Start by thumbing off the two Jokers; use the right hand to show the singularity of the cards. Replace the Jokers on top of the pack and swing cut the top half of the deck into the left hand. Complete the cut to centralize the cards.

Start to spread the cards from hand to hand; after you have spread about eight cards, pause and comment about where the Jokers are. As you resume the spread, cull a random card underneath the spread and keep spreading.

When you are near the Jokers, make sure you spread slowly by only pushing single cards. You don't want to flash the two face-up Queens below the Jokers.

Once you reach the Jokers, slightly lower the right edge of the left-hand cards.

This will allow the culled card (the Ace of Clubs in the exposed view of Photo 2) to go above the Jokers. The culled card will be used as a guide card to make the next move much easier. Make sure the culled card is still hidden under the spread.

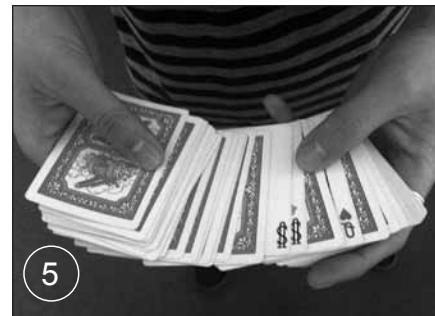


The deck is still in a spread condition. Using the natural bend of the cards in the deck slowly block push off the next three cards (the face-down indifferent card and the two Queens) over to the right a little with the thumb (Photo 3). This doesn't have to be perfect. Have the left thumb on top of this three-card block (that is, resting on the indifferent card) and have the left fingers on the bottom of the three-card block (that is, touching the bottom Queen of the stack) as shown in Photo 4. The three cards below the Jokers need only be pushed off a little, just enough that you can spread them in a second.

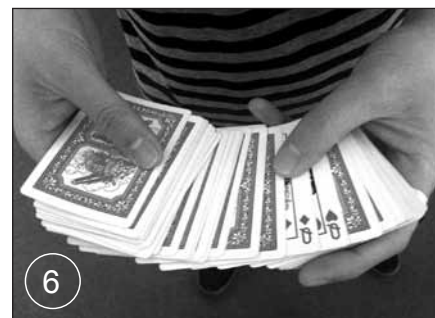


Show the Jokers one more time, and with a quick, small, up-and-down jerk of the wrist you do the color change. Here's how:

As the wrist comes up your right fingers under the spread cull both Jokers at the same time (Photo 5). By having the



right fingers flat and utilizing the previously-culled guide card, you can easily cull the two Jokers, pulling them under the spread. As your right fingers are doing that, your left thumb pushes the three cards block over to the right as your left fingers pull back from the bottom card of this three-card block. This will reveal the two Queens, showing that a double color change has happened (Photo 6).



Make sure that when you spread the cards you do so evenly. Make sure that there isn't a gap in the spread after the change. Also, make sure that after the change, the Queens are near to the position of where the Jokers were.

To clean up, cull the Jokers under the spread to the bottom as you up-jog the Queens to hand out.

[Editor's note: It will take some practice to get this change to look as good as it does in Tony's hands. If you are already comfortable with spread-cull technique, the necessary moves will come easier. A light touch helps. Also, it may help to start by practicing a single card change until your fingers get comfortable with the simultaneous actions the change requires.]

Sugar Block

By Dan Hauss

Effect: The magician borrows a quarter from a spectator. He then takes a sugar packet, carefully tears it open, and pours the sugar out. The spectator sees that the sugar packet is empty. The spectator hands the magician the quarter,

which he drops into the empty packet; he folds up the packet around the coin. The magician takes a small pocket knife and stabs it right through the solid coin. The spectator can look inside the packet and can see the knife going through the coin. The magician slowly removes the knife. The coin is dumped into the spectator's hands, and it and the sugar packet can be examined.

Props: A sugar packet, any flat, small pocket knife, and a folding quarter.

(Be very careful to not cut yourself during the performance!)

Setup: Conceal the folding coin in left-hand fingertip rest position (Photo 1). The left hand can hang at the side of the body with the fingers naturally curled.



Routine: Have the spectator hand you the sugar packet; take it with the right hand and place it on top of folding coin without exposing it. Ask to borrow a quarter from the spectator. (Make sure coin matches the folding coin.) Openly hold the borrowed quarter near the tips of the right fingers (in the same position as shown in Photo 1).

Pass the sugar packet from the left hand to the right hand. In this action, the quarters are switched. This is accomplished by simply pushing the packet off onto the right fingers, where it will now cover the real quarter, while the left hand moves away displaying the folding coin as if it is the borrowed quarter. Pay no attention to your hands as you do this switch; your gaze should be directed to the spectator. This simple switch is credited to Paul Harris.

Carefully tear off the top of the sugar packet while keeping the genuine coin hidden behind the right fingers. Take the torn piece and the real coin and ditch them in a side pocket. You're left with the open sugar packet and the folding coin in full view of the spectator. Dump out the sugar into any convenient receptacle (such as an ashtray). Show the sugar packet empty and slide the folding coin inside. Be aware of where the fold (that is, the division between the two halves of the coin) is; this will make the subsequent

stabbing of the coin easier.

Fold the opening of the sugar packet down to the top of the coin, and fold the two sides as well, making a pocket that faces towards the audience (Photo 2). This will serve a purpose later.

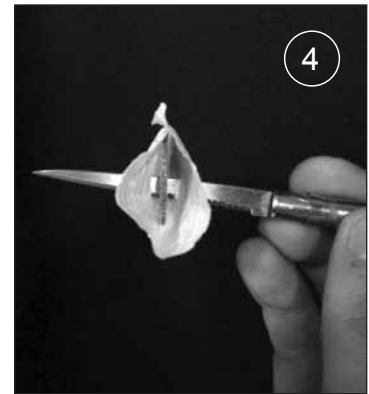


Turn the sugar packet upside down as you pull out your knife with the sharp side away from your hands. Grip the now top portion of the sugar packet with your first finger and thumb. The second finger is behind the packet, ready to fold the coin a little bit, which creates an opening for the knife to fit in (Photo 3).



Insert the knife through the sugar packet and into the small gap between the two halves of the coin. Be careful not to cut the rubber band of the folding coin. Once the penetration occurs, release pressure with the second finger; the coin will grip the knife blade. You can open the sugar packet and show the penetration from the inside. Make sure the fold of the folding coin is concealed (Photo 4).

Refold the sugar packet; withdraw the knife and ditch it into the pocket that contains the real quarter. While your hand is in the pocket, maneuver the real coin into finger palm. As you adjust the folds in the sugar packet, secretly load the folded coin into the packet pocket (Photo 5). Re-crease the sides if necessary; this pocket will easily allow switching out the



folding coin later. Grab the top of the sugar packet and display it fairly. Your fingers will act as a brace, so allow the spectator to push onto the folding coin as if it were the real coin.

Now grip the folding coin, the real coin, and the sugar packet between the first finger and thumb. You can now unfold the sugar packet while holding onto both coins so they do not fall. Open the mouth of the sugar packet and let the real coin fall out (Photo 6). While the spectator is inspecting the real coin,



let the folding coin slide out into your finger palm, and hand out the packet for inspection as well. You can now ditch the folding coin into your pocket.

Pen Production

By Eric Jones

What do they see? Imagine being able to show the hands completely empty and then produce a pen, a pencil, or a Sharpie marker with the sleeves rolled up, surrounded.

Why are we here? I was inspired by watching my friend Rick Merrill's FISM-winning act to find different ways to produce a pen after showing the hands empty. I experimented with several different options and decided that rather than trying to reinvent the wheel, I'd finesse the hell out of it.

What do you need? You'll need a pen, a pencil, or a Sharpie, and a watch. The watch should be loose enough to allow the pen to enter and exit easily, but tight enough that the pen won't fall to the floor when the arm dangles naturally by the side.

The deception: The pen starts in the front pants pocket of your dominant hand with the cap facing the bottom of the pocket. I'm left-handed and will describe the effect from that vantage point. It will be important that you wear your watch on that same hand. So if you're wearing your watch on your right wrist, you'll need the pen in the right pants pocket.

At an opportune moment, place the hand in the pocket and grab the pen. While the hand is still in the pocket, allow the fingers to grab the pen and push the end closest to the pocket into the watch band so the cap of the pen rests against the palm of the hand. Remove the hand from the pocket and allow the arm to hang naturally by the side (if no one is standing behind you). If you are working surrounded, simply hold the arm bent at the elbow in front of you so the pen is concealed from all sides.

With your free hand, pretend to slowly pluck something from the air. Rub the something between the fingers as you turn the hand palm up. Then, open the hand as you show the invisible object to your spectators. You will then bring the hands together to display the invisible something and to blow on it, but you will do this in a very specific manner.

As the hands come together, the hand concealing the pen will be palm down and will meet perpendicularly to the palm-up hand. When the hands touch, the pen will slide under palm-up hand (Photo 1). The hands should cup so that the heels of each hand touch as if holding water. This shows the palms of both hands empty



while hiding the pen beneath them (Photo 2). This is a great sell that the hands are empty. If your audience attempts to reconstruct the trick, they will convince themselves that your hands were empty and that they saw the inside and outside of both hands with the sleeves rolled back.

To keep the pen from flashing during this movement, be cognizant of several variables:

1) Make sure that the pen isn't sticking out too far. If the pen extends too much from the watch, it could flash from under the palm-up hand. To correct this, before going into the display, make sure the tip of the pen cap doesn't come past the center of the palm.

2) Be aware of your height compared to that of your audience. To prevent flashing the pen under the hand, the palm-up hand must stay between the pen and your audience's view of it. The best way to do this is to get closer to your audience so they have to look directly down at the pen. However, in some instances, this just isn't possible. So, you may have to turn the hand so the palm obstructs the audience's view of the pen. Practicing this on video or in a mirror will help you learn these angles.

3) Make sure the heels of the hands touch. This will prevent the audience from seeing the pen between the wrists. As you cup your hands together, do so as if they really do hold water. If you hold them so the flesh touches, there is no chance of flashing the pen between the hands.

Flatten the hands together and rub the

palms as if pantomiming rolling a marble between the hands (Photo 3). Roll the small, invisible marble down to the tips of the fingers, being careful not to expose the pen hidden under the palm-down hand. Grab the invisible marble at the fingers of the free hand and pantomime showing it at the fingertips of that hand. Hold the hand palm up at waist level, with the index finger, middle finger, and thumb touching.



To produce the pen, you will communicate stretching that invisible marble into an invisible cylindrical shape. Keeping the back of the hand hiding the pen toward your audience, the fingertips of that hand grab for the marble; the fingertips of both hands mime the actions of stretching it into a pen shape. Mime the pulling actions three times. On the third pull, you will retrieve the pen from the watch band under the cover of the hand that hides it. It is important to remember to keep the receiving hand very still. The hand you deliver the pen to should not move inward toward the pen; the hand delivering the pen should move forward in a covering motion until the tip of the pen cap is received by the fingertips of the other hand (Photo 4).



Once the receiving hand has the pen securely trapped between the index finger, middle finger, and thumb, the covering hand pulls back (Photo 5). The fingertips of that hand slide against the pen as the



hand retreats, revealing the pen as it does (Photo 6). The hands turn palm toward the audience in a display while holding the pen.



Things to make you go hmm...

The wonderful thing about this production is that your hands really do seem empty throughout the entire process. I ask that you take your time when performing this, because it will really seem impossible to your audience. Make your movements slow, methodical, and deliberate. The slower you go, the more time your audience has to appreciate what they are seeing. Remember that you are communicating to your audience through pantomime that you are grabbing something out of the air, rolling it between the hands and the fingers, stretching it out, and then bringing it into reality. This takes effort. Believe the actions yourself and your audience will be able to appreciate the production all the more.

As an aside, I also want to mention that I wouldn't perform this in a formal show. I personally believe this is much better suited for impromptu performances for a few people standing around you rather than for a seated audience in a close-up show. As a follow up to this production, I use my version of Alan Rorri-son's SMOKE, sold at www.theory11.com.

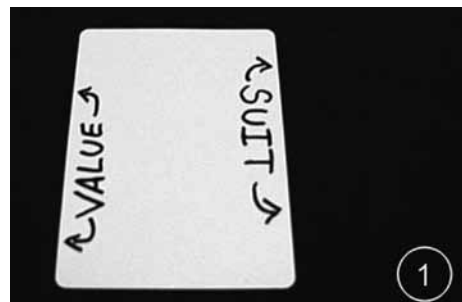
CAANDY (Card At Any Numerical Digit Yo)

By Chris Mayhew

Effect: The magician has someone name any number between one and fifty. A spectator is asked to insert a card with an arrow drawn on its back anywhere in the deck. The two cards above and below the arrow card are taken out and used to create a third card. The third card is now found at the number established at the outset of the effect.

Requirements: You will need a complete deck, without Jokers, and a blank-faced card with a back that contrasts with the complete deck.

Set-up: On the face of the blank-faced card, write the words "Suit" and "Value" with two arrows pointing outwards as shown in Photo 1. Turn the card over book-wise (side to side). On the back of the card, draw a double-headed arrow pointing from left to right, width-wise. When drawing the heads of the arrow, make the head that is on the same side as the word "Value" a bit convex; in this way you will always know which way that word "Value" is pointing. This will become very important later on (Photo 2, arrowhead exaggerated). I will refer to this card as the Arrow Card; place this card in your shoe (or any other easily accessible location).



Arrange the deck in Si Stebbins order.

Method Overview: The underlying principle of CAANDY comes from a Stewart James effect, Spell of Mystery.

Cut the deck and complete the cut. Use the value of the top card and the suit of the second card to generate a third card. For example, deal off the top two cards, face up. If these cards are the Two of Spades and the Five of Diamonds, use the Two as the value of the third card, and Diamonds as the suit of the third card, thus generating the Two of Diamonds. The way that the Si Stebbins system is arranged, if you count down to the card that is now twelfth from the top, it will be the Two of Diamonds. Stewart James used the name of the card (and the fact that it was twelfth from the top) to spell down to the card.

I have taken this a step further, turning the effect from a spelling trick into a card at any number trick. The main idea behind this is that the top two cards can then create *two* different cards. One card (as in the example above) will be twelfth from the top of the deck. However if you use the suit of the first card and the value of the second card (which, using the cards above would generate the Five of Spades), the card generated will be at the thirty-ninth position from the top. Using two possible cards, instead of just one, ensures that thirteen cards are the most you will need to displace (to bring the card to the desired number). This calculation (and one other thing you will learn) is all you really have to remember; everything else is easy.

Method: "Most card tricks require you to pick a card, or think of a card, or even look at a card. But I'm going to go in a different direction and have you create a card." Bring out the Arrow Card; be sure not to reveal its face.

"Here is how we will accomplish this. I'm going to give you numerous choices that will determine the outcome of this effect. Think of it as a 'choose your own adventure' sort of thing – only we're using cards, and there's no storyline, or an adventure." Place the Arrow Card vertically between you and the spectator.

"Here's your first choice: name any number between one and fifty." Now the math comes into play. (This is no harder than the mathematical skill required by the Invisible Deck, so don't be worried.) Right now you know that the card the spectator creates will either be twelfth from the top or thirty-ninth from the top. The number he names determines which card you use. If the spectator names any number from one to twenty-five, you will use the card twelfth from the top of the deck. If he picks a number from twenty-six to fifty, you will use the card thirty-ninth from the top.

Let's say he names thirty-one, which

means you'll use the card thirty-ninth from the top. You subtract thirty-one, from thirty-nine, which gives you eight. Remember this number. If he names a number higher than thirty-nine, such as forty-five, then you would subtract thirty-nine from forty-five, and remember that number. The same procedure applies to the card at the twelfth position.

"Your next choice is to place the Arrow card anywhere you would like in the deck." Fan out the deck and have him insert the Arrow card for about half its length. I use a fan rather than a spread because it visually entices him to place the card near the center of the deck.

This will make it much easier to do the up-coming displacement. Close the fan, and then spread to the out-jogged card.

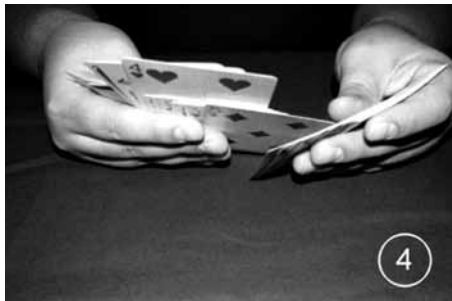
"You have placed the arrows between two cards; would you like these two or would you like to place the Arrow card somewhere else?" Up-jog the two cards that are on either side of the Arrow card (Photo 3). You will now displace a certain amount of cards depending on what number was chosen at the beginning of the effect. This is not as complicated as it



sounds. If the spectator named a number between one and twenty-five that was less than twelve, then you will take cards from below the two out-jogged selections. If he named a number between one and twenty-five that was more than twelve, you will take cards from above the two selections. The same goes for any number between twenty-six and fifty. The number you secretly calculated at the beginning of the trick will determine the amount of cards you will displace.

In our example, the spectator chose thirty-one as his number. Thirty-one is less than thirty-nine; the difference is eight. Therefore, you will establish control eight cards below the out-jogged selections. An easy way to establish control is to spread through as you say, "You could have picked any of these cards." Matching actions with words spread eight cards past the out-jogged selections. I usually count in groups of twos and threes

– an efficient method that disguises the fact that you are counting cards. (This is an Alex Elmsley idea.) Place your right fingertips on the face of the eighth card, but keep the right-hand cards in contact with the deck (Photo 4, an exposed view).



With your left hand, take the remainder of the deck, casually remove the two selections, and place them face down on the table. Then place the left-hand packet on the top of the right-hand packet (Photos 5 and 6).



[Let's discuss what happens if the spectator names a number larger than twelve or thirty-nine. For example, if the spectator had named forty-seven, you would establish control eight cards above the out-jogged selections. As you spread the cards, you sight eight cards above the out-jogged cards. The left thumb rests on top of the eighth card, holding it in place, as the right hand takes the remainder of the deck, removes the selections and places them on the table, and then places its packet below the left-hand packet (Photos 7 and 8). In essence, you are simply cutting the deck.]

Spread out the three cards, with the upper card to the right, the Arrow card in



the middle, and the lower card to the left (Photo 9, magician's POV). For clarity, I will refer to the card on the right as card one, and the card on the left as card two.

You can now put the deck off to the side because all the dirty work is done. The card that the spectator will create in a moment is now (due to the displacement) at the thirty-first position in the deck.

You now give the spectator a final choice, which, in fact, is no choice at all. The cards are on the table, with the Arrow card between the two cards they chose. You will ask the spectator if he wants to switch the positions of the two cards. Because we want to create the card that began at the thirty-ninth position, we must keep track of card two (the left-hand card), which represents the value of that card. The position of card two will



determine how you turn over the Arrow card. Remember, the convex arrow points to the side of the card that has the word "Value."

If the convex arrow points at card two, then turn the Arrow card over end for end (Photo 10). If the arrow does not point at card two, turn the Arrow card over side to side (Photo 11). You now combine the two cards as indicated on the face of the Arrow card; that newly-created card will be at the thirty-first position.

Have the spectator count to the thirty-first card and have him place it face down beside the Arrow card (Photo 12). I then pick it up and look at it as I say, "Looks like you created the right card."



Comments: To the spectator it should seem as if they had the freedom to choose anything they wanted, and in reality they did. But behind the scenes you were giving them controlled choices. For instance, you needed them to choose two cards right next to each other, in the perfect effect; they would be able to choose any two random cards. Yet, by having them place the Arrow Card in the deck, it enables them to arrive at two selections right next to each other, but at the same time it gives the illusion that they could have any two cards. The same applies to the ending, when they chose to switch their two selections places. Their choice is completely free, but you manipulate their free choice and control it in your favor just by turning over the Arrow Card a certain way.

An easy way to remember the principles used in this effect is this: 1239, that is where the two cards lie in the deck; one twelfth and one thirty ninth.

By using 1239 you have one big number to remember, instead of two separate numbers. For the displacement, just remember that if the number is lower, then take the cards below. If the number is higher, then take the cards above.

Afterthoughts: If you would like to see a video of this trick being performed, you can find it for download at <http://www.vanishinginmagic.com/magic-downloads/card-magic-downloads/caandy/>

If you have any questions or just want to get in touch you can follow me on Twitter @chrismayhew1 or add me on Facebook; I would love to hear from you.

The Boosh

By Ben Train

Canadian cardman Ben Train has the ability to create very clean card magic with sophisticated and streamlined methods. This one combines Vernon's Matching the Cards plot with Charlie Miller's Dunbury Delusion to create a very powerful routine.

Effect: A card is selected (for example, the Ace of Spades) and shuffled into the deck. Ben explains that the cards are marked, not on the back, but on the front, and he offers to demonstrate how this works. He turns over the top card and shows that it is a black card, which means that the selection must be black; he drops this card on the table. He turns over the next card, the Ace of Spades, which tells him the selection is a Spade. He drops this onto the table as well. Finally he turns over a Jack, meaning that the card was the Jack of Spades.

Apparently unaware of his mistake, Ben spreads through the deck to show that the Jack of Spades is face up in the middle. The participant nervously tells Ben that the card was actually the Ace of Spades and not the Jack. Without missing a beat, Ben spreads the deck to show that the face-up Jack has now changed to the Ace of Spades. But there's more: Ben changes the three tabled cards into the other three Aces!

Setup: From the top down: a black card, the Ace of Spades, the other three Aces (in any order), and a red Jack. Reverse the Jack of Spades and place it a few cards from the bottom of the deck.

Method: Give the deck an in-the-hands cut, and in the process catch a break below the original top card (the black card). Execute a dribble force or a riffle force at the break, showing the participant to top card of the lower half: the Ace of Spades (Photo 1).



Drop the upper packet on top of the lower one, using the LePaul automatic in-jog procedure to keep a separation between the packets. This is a simple move. Angle both packets slightly downward at the front and hold the right-hand packet a couple of inches above the left-hand packet. Drop the upper packet onto the lower one with a very slight forward motion. You will find that the bottom card of the upper packet automatically ends up sticking out of the back of the deck a few millimeters (Photo 2).



Cut the deck by pushing down on the in-jog (Photo 3) and riffle shuffle the two packets together, ensuring that the top six or so cards from the lower packet end up on top of the deck. The end result is that the setup has returned to the top of the deck with the black indifferent card back on top. This shuffle also positions the reversed Jack of Spades nearer to the middle of the deck.



Spread over the top three cards and take them into your right hand as you say, "Honesty is the best policy, so I want to come clean – the cards are marked."

Spread over three more cards and catch a little finger break under them. Square up all six cards, which you now have a break under. *“Not on the backs but on the front. It sounds crazy, but I’ll show you how it works.”*

Turn over the top card and explain, *“See the black markings on the card? That tells me that your card was a black card. You don’t have to say anything – the cards tell me everything I need to know!”* Place this card face down on the table. (Don’t overlook the last line; you need to let the spectators know not to respond. Otherwise you run the risk of them doing so when you reveal their selection, thus spoiling the ending.) Turn over the next card (the Ace of Spades) and say, *“And this tells me that your card was a Spade.”* Here is where the Dunbury Delusion ploy comes into play. Do not mention that you know this is the selection; instead, continue on, apparently clueless. Cleanly drop this card onto the one already on the table.

Next execute a quadruple turnover of all the cards above the break to show a Jack, informing the audience that this card tells you that the card was a Jack. Don’t worry about this; the audience’s attention will be on the selection, which you just placed on the table. Keep a break below the face-up four-card packet. Turn over the two tabled cards, placing them back on top of the deck (Photo 4) as you say, *“We’ve*



found a black card, a Spade and a Jack, meaning that your card was the Jack of Spades.” Turn over all six cards above the break back on top of the deck and immediately thumb off the top three cards onto the table in a small spread. These are the three Aces, masquerading as the three cards you have just showed. Don’t give the participant the opportunity to correct you at this point; plough through to get to the next phase.

“All I have to do is shake the deck, and when I do the Jack of Spades turns face up in the middle!”

Spread over the top two cards and then continue the spread, culling the second card (the Ace of Spades) beneath the spread (Photo 5, exposed view) inserting it just above the face-up Jack. Wait for the spectator to respond that the Jack is not his card, but don’t allow him to “help” you by



picking up the cards on the table. Square the deck.

You will now turn the Jack of Spades face down and in the process you will secretly reverse the Ace of Spades. This is done using Larry Jennings’s Larreverse. The Larreverse technique can be found in *Dai Vernon’s Ultimate Secrets of Card Magic* (pages 49-50) and Roberto Giobbi’s *Card College Volume 4* (pages 1033-1036). Spread the deck between your hands until you reach the face-up Jack. As the Jack is turned face down, the Ace of Spades is reversed. Square up the deck and table it.

Let the participant tell you that he actually selected the Ace of Spades. Without missing a beat, make a gesture over the deck and spread to show that the Ace of Spades is reversed in the middle. Turn over the tabled cards to show that they have also changed to Aces. ★

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VISION CHECK

Effect: After rubbing your irritated eye, a huge contact lens is popped out into your awaiting hand. This is especially funny, since the lens is larger than the eye itself! Realizing the lens is dirty, you remove a tissue and gently rub the lens. When the tissue is removed, the lens is seen to have changed into a pair of glasses with “Coke bottle” lenses.

Comments: The inspiration for this effect came from Tom Mullica’s contact lens routine. In his routine, the lens is removed from the eye and put back in. This routine differs in the fact that something is done with the contact lens once it is removed from the eye. The changing of the lens into a pair of comedic glasses is totally unexpected.

If you already wear glasses, this effect is the perfect opener. Simply substitute your glasses for the comedy glasses. Now, when you change the lens into glasses, put them on your face and continue your performance. The effect is very strong and the entire sequence only lasts a couple minutes.

Preparation: Go to your local novelty store and purchase a round magnifying glass (about two to three inches in diameter) and a pair of “Coke bottle” lens glasses. Once you obtain these items, remove the lens from the magnifying glass. This will act as your jumbo contact lens. Throw away the rest of the magnifying glass; it is not needed.

For the effect, you will also need to be wearing something that has a pocket large enough to allow your hand and the glasses to be in the pocket at the same time. The pocket should be on your right side. You must also have a tissue.

Place the tissue in the pocket. Follow this by putting the glasses in the same pocket above the tissue. The glasses are placed in a vertical position so that the folded arms are toward the body.

Secure the lens from the magnifying glass in a place that is easily accessible. If you are wearing a jacket, a perfect place is the right sleeve.

Procedure: When you are ready to begin, secretly obtain the lens in the right hand. Just about any grip will suffice; I like to place the lens into a deep Tenkai palm (Figure 1). In this position, the lens is wedged between the thumb and palm of the right hand and is hidden from the audience by the back of the hand.

Making full use of your acting abilities, pretend that a piece of dirt is in your right eye. Once you have caught the audience’s



Figure 1

attention, the right hand moves to the irritated eye and rubs it with the index finger. As you rub your eye, tilt your head

down and release the lens, letting it fall into your left hand (Figure 2). The sudden appearance of the lens is quite shocking and will generally get a laugh. This is done while stating, “I have something on my contact lens. I’ll be okay; it just needs a little cleaning.”

Adjust the lens in the left hand into a standard French drop position. Immediately, the right hand dives into the pocket and grasps the lowermost edge of the glasses with the middle, ring, and little fingers. Simultaneously, the index finger and thumb obtain a corner of the tissue. Once you remove your hand from the pocket, you will be in a position like Figure 3. From the spectator’s standpoint, the glasses are concealed by the back of the right hand and arm. It appears as if you simply removed a tissue to clean off the lens. You will find that it will help to bring the lens up to your mouth and breathe on it as the right hand goes for the glasses and tissue.

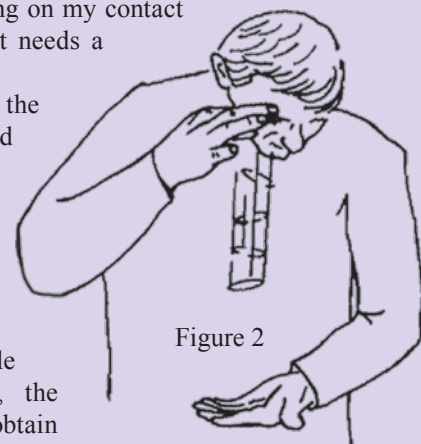


Figure 2

This casual misdirection takes all the heat off the right hand.

The right hand now moves in front of the left hand apparently to rub off the lens with the tissue (Figure 4). What actually happens is this: the right hand approaches the lens and proceeds past it until the back of the hand blocks the spectator’s view of the lens. The instant the lens is out of sight, it is allowed to fall flat onto the fingers of the left hand (standard French drop). The nearest lens of the glasses is put in position, occupying the same space as the previous lens, and grasped by the left hand. Basically, the lens falls flat and is replaced with the glasses under the cover of the hand and the tissue.



Figure 3

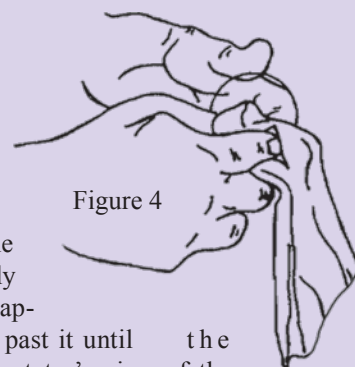


Figure 4

Once the glasses are in position and firmly held in the left

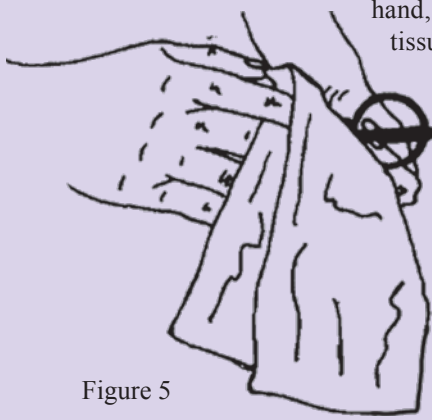


Figure 5

hand, the right hand uses the tissue to rub the glasses. The right hand is then removed (Figure 5). This is done while saying, "If you think this is ridiculous, you should see my glasses." The timing of the patter line is very important. Time it so the spectators start to see the glasses as you finish the sentence. Tilt the left hand slightly upward

to help conceal the lens as the glasses are displayed.

Dispose of the lens by taking the glasses in the right hand momentarily. The left hand then takes the tissue and places it in the pocket along with the lens. You are left clean holding the glasses, which are put on briefly as a sight gag. The routine itself reads much longer than it actually plays. In reality, it only lasts about a minute or two. Have fun with this little bit of business.

CANDY CAPER

Effect: Relating the story of a world class candy thief, Mr. Sweet Tooth, the performer opens a package of candy by tearing a corner of the wrapper completely off. After pouring out a few tasty treats, the torn off piece is visually reattached. Once again the bag is completely sealed.

Preparation: You will need to obtain two identical packages of pourable candy. I prefer to use M&M's brand. In addition to these packages, a thumb tip is required. Open one of the packages by tearing off the upper right corner (Figure



Figure 1

1). Now, pour a couple pieces of the candy into the thumb tip. Continue by placing the torn off corner into the thumb tip so it rests against the ball of the thumb when it is inserted into the tip. To correctly orient the piece, the torn edges should be deep inside the tip. The rest of this open package is then disregarded. (I usually eat the candy!) To begin the effect, you will be wearing the loaded tip on your right thumb.

Performance: To perform, display the unopened package of candy in the right hand. The thumb tip is hidden from the spectator's view behind the wrapper. Begin to relate the story of the ultimate candy thief.

"Have you ever heard the story of Mr. Sweet Tooth, the most notorious candy thief of all time? No? Well I know for a fact that he'll never be caught. You see, Mr. Sweet Tooth was also a magician before he turned to a life of crime. One day, while I was visiting Hershey Park, we ran into each other and he showed me why this was true."

Regrip the candy in the left hand. The right hand comes over to apparently tear off the upper right corner (upper left from the spectator's viewpoint). This is not as innocent as it seems. When the thumb tip contacts the corner to be torn, it actually folds this corner down behind the package. Almost instantly, the left thumb presses against the outside of the thumb tip and holds it against the package. The right thumb is then removed from the tip carrying with it the previously loaded corner. Figure 2 is an exposed view of this situation.

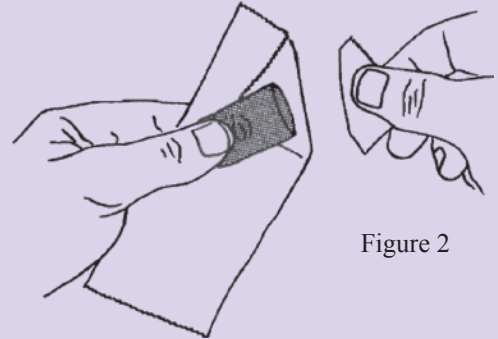


Figure 2

Mime ripping off the corner and toss the extra piece to the table. Continue the patter, "Mr. Sweet Tooth wouldn't steal the entire package of candy. He would just take a couple." Dump the candy out of the tip and into the right hand. Figure 3 is an audience view of this action. "Then, he would take the package and seal it up so that nobody knew he had been there."

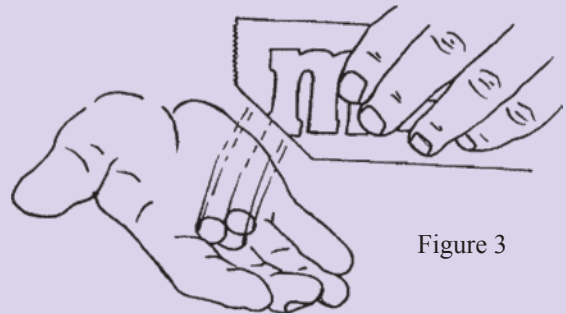


Figure 3

Matching your actions to the above story line, the extra piece is picked up between the thumb, first, and second finger of the right hand. Without pausing, the piece is pushed back into the thumb tip and the bent corner of the package is straightened. The fingers of the right hand give plenty of cover to this movement. Turn the bag upside down with your left hand and give it a gentle shake. It is completely restored and may be given away if desired. The thumb tip will be easy to ditch because all attention is focused on the candy.

Extra: In Candy Caper the use of the thumb tip works quite well due to the structure of the routine. Rather than use the tip to vanish or produce items as with many applications, it is used as a type of utility holdout device. Technically, it creates a situation that already exists. Once the bag of candy is torn open, the audience expects to see candy poured out. This is exactly what they see. Therefore, it is logical to conclude that the audience believed you ripped the bag in the first place. Using the tip in this way can be very disarming even for those in the know. ★



In this month's column, I'll cover the fourth rule from my list of the "Fundamental Rules of Stage Magic."

In the April 2013 column, I explained that a common reason for palming is to conceal an object that had previously been vanished by means of sleight of hand. Additionally, a palmed object could be a secret gimmick or any other item that for various reasons you might want to hide from view. Furthermore, in the previous column I explained that Fundamental Rule of Stage Magic Number Three is a ruse that employs a secondary object such as a magic wand to mask the presence of the palmed item.

It does stand to reason that sometimes you might want to deceptively discard the palmed object so that both hands are truly empty. If that is the case then it might be beneficial to employ the Fundamental Rule of Stage Magic Number Four, which is:

"The easiest way to secretly dispose of a palmed object is to discard it under the guise of picking up a visible object at the fingertips."

THE GIBECIÈRE

Before I explain this rule in depth, perhaps a bit of history is in order. In Europe, conjuring as entertainment began to take hold in the sixteenth century. At that time, most magic shows were performed

outdoors wherever and whenever people had gathered. The presentational style was somewhat similar to today's street performers. The old time conjurers did a wide variety of effects such as the burnt and restored string, knife through nose, penetration of wooden beads off of a cord, ribbons from mouth, and the Cups and Balls. Occasionally these magicians needed to gain access to items such as the packet of rolled up ribbons for the ribbons from mouth trick. Or they needed a place to get rid of a palmed object such as a ball for the Cups and Balls. Because they were usually surrounded by the audience, the magicians were limited in where these items could be deceptively hidden. It is for this reason that conjurers began to wear a pocketed apron or a small leather open top bag called a *gibecièr*e that was attached to the belt. The proximity of the bag's opening to the hand allowed the magician to easily steal and discard items secretly during the show. Incidentally, the word *gibecièr*e is French for "game-bag," which is a bag hunters use to hold and protect meat.

THE TABLE

By the eighteenth century, magic was becoming very popular in Europe; this led to a period in which an increasing number of magicians began to work indoors in theaters. This change in venue allowed conjurers to create tricks of increasing complexity in terms of stage setting, which in turn allowed them to discard the *gibecièr*e. For example, one common trick was to borrow a finger ring and make it disappear. Later an orange was produced and cut open; inside of it was a lemon.

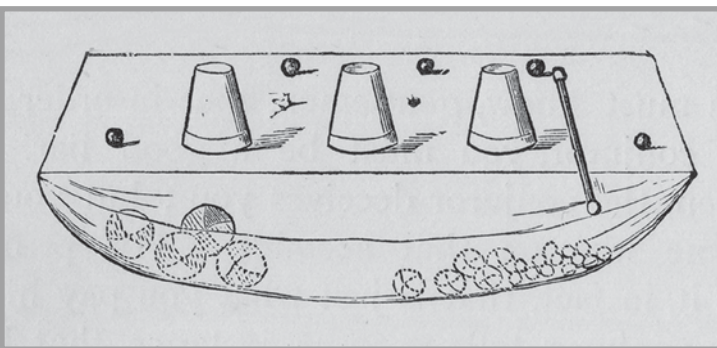
The lemon was then cut open and inside of it was a walnut. The walnut was finally cracked open and inside of it was the borrowed ring. The secret was that, unbeknownst to the audience, there was a hidden assistant under the magician's

table (which was covered by a floor length tablecloth). After the ring was vanished, the magician secretly handed the ring to the hidden assistant. As the magician performed a different trick, the assistant placed the ring into a hollowed-out walnut shell consisting of two hemispheres held together by wax. He then loaded the same into previously hollowed out fruit. Later the magician produced the prepared orange and presented a seeming miracle.

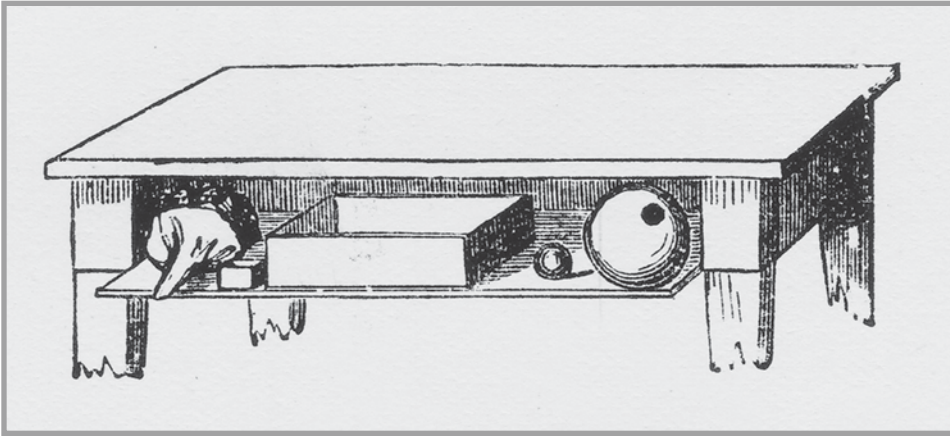
Of course, another benefit of performing on stage was that the magician could utilize larger and more complex artifice such as trap doors, special stage scenery, and lighting and optical effects based on reflectance. Another aspect of eighteenth-century magic was that many of the magicians of the time wore an exotic costume such as a tall conical wizard's hat and robe. Some magicians hid production items in the voluminous robes, while others still wore a *gibecièr*e. When it came to the Cups and Balls, magicians always wore the *gibecièr*e, until a conjurer named Conus appeared. For his Cups and Balls routine, Conus covered a table with a cloth and pinned up the fabric on the back side to create a cloth bag that held the various balls for the trick. In other words, Conus moved the *gibecièr*e from the performer's waist onto the table and thus made the trick more deceptive. Granted, those Cups and Balls performers who did not have the benefit of working in a theater still found it more practical to wear the *gibecièr*e.

THE SERVANTE

The nineteenth century saw a new era of magic, ushered in by the progressive ideas of the Frenchman Jean Eugene Robert-Houdin (1805-1871), who chose to forsake the unusual costume for simple, elegant, evening attire, which included a black tailcoat and vest. It must be noted that at the time his clothing did not appear to be a costume per se. He simply matched the clothing style typically worn by his high class patrons. But being a clever conjurer, Robert-Houdin found a way to gaff his clothing so that he could easily steal and get rid of small objects. For instance, inside the lining of his tails he sewed a pair of deep pockets that he called "*profondes*"



Conus Gibecièr



Robert-Houdin Servante

(which is a French word meaning “deep”). These pockets were used to get rid of items by simply dropping his hand to his side and letting the object fall into the pocket. Robert-Houdin also sewed shallow pockets on his trousers behind both of his thighs. These pockets were hidden by the tailcoat, but they allowed him to easily steal and dump small objects.

As far as his stage setting is concerned, Robert-Houdin discarded the heavily draped tables (with the hidden assistants) that were popular amongst magicians and instead used the Louis XV style furniture. Today, Robert-Houdin’s stage setting might seem overly ornate and stylized, but at the time it looked like what you would see in the home of a typical wealthy nineteenth-century Parisian. But looks would be deceiving, because, like his clothing, almost every piece of stage furniture he used was gaffed or gimmicked in some way. For instance, even a simple side table was gaffed with a hidden shelf in the back that secretly held props (in the same way that Conus’s tablecloth held the balls. Later, Robert-Houdin made a cloth-lined container that allowed him to secretly drop items in order to make them disappear. For instance, when he wanted to make an orange vanish, Robert-Houdin used the following method as described in his 1868 book “*les secrets de la prestidigitation et de la magie*”:

“Place (say) an orange near the edge of your table, just above the gibecière. When, in the course of your patter you say ‘I take this orange,’ you encircle it with both hands as though to pick it up, but before letting the hands close on it, you give it a slight push with those fingers of the one hand that are masked by the other hand, and make believe to pick up the fruit, whereas it really falls into the gibecière. You must take special care that those fingers that

are hidden alone move, without the hand in the slightest degree participating in the movement.”

Eventually the container hidden behind the table was given a new name: the “*servante*.” It should be noted that the servante should be made in such a way that a dropped object makes no sound whatsoever. It is for this reason that Robert-Houdin recommended placing a cloth bag filled with sawdust inside the servante.

By the late nineteenth century, magicians had figured out a new way to use the servante in order to vanish an object that utilizes the aforementioned Fundamental Rule of Stage Magic Number Four.

THE TECHNIQUE

It works as follows: Let’s say you want to vanish a ball. On stage left you have a table with a servante hidden from the audience’s view. Resting visibly on the table is a magic wand and a ball. First, pick up the magic wand while talking to the audience; this is important, because you want to establish in their minds the existence of the wand. This way they will get used to the presence of the wand and will not be overly focused on it when you pick it up again later. With your left hand place the magic wand back down on to the tabletop, but place it near the rear edge of the table. Next, pick up the ball in your left hand and display it to the audience. Tell the audience that for this trick you will need the magic wand. This statement lets them know that you *will* be picking up the magic wand. Since the wand and the table are on your left, it stands to reason that you will use your left hand to pick up the wand. Additionally, since the ball is in your left hand then it is logical for you to transfer the ball from your left hand to your right hand so

that your left hand will be empty (to pick up the wand). Execute a false transfer of the ball from your left hand to the right hand. In other words, use a magic move (such as the French drop) to make it seem as if the ball is placed into the right hand; in fact, the ball is secretly retained and palmed in the left hand. In the process of this sleight make sure that the right hand is held in such a way that it truly seems as if it contains a ball. Next, while your attention is directed at the imaginary ball in your right hand, the left hand goes down near the rear edge of the table and in one smooth motion the ball is dropped into the servante as the wand is picked up. Finally, walk slowly forward to the audience and tap the wand against your closed right hand and show that the ball has vanished.

Now that you understand the basic technique, you can create variations that suit your personal style and specific tricks. For instance, the container that catches the vanished object *does not* have to be a table servante. It could be a box, an upturned top hat, or your coat pocket. It does not matter as long as the container seems natural or logical to your stage setting. Also, the magic wand *does not* have to literally be a wooden stick. It could be invisible “woofle dust” or it can be a salt shaker with “magic salt” as used by my friend Paul Potassy. In fact, the “magic wand” *does not* have to be any sort of magical talisman. It just needs to be an object that you can logically pick up and place into a container.

Furthermore, this technique is not only for vanishes; it’s actually a way to get rid of any palmed object. For instance, let’s say you are doing the cut and restored rope trick. You reach into your right coat pocket and pull out a pair of scissors and give them to a spectator to hold. You do the standard method of the trick and have the spectator seemingly cut the rope in half (but in fact they are cutting off a small piece of the end of the rope). The rope is then wrapped around the fingers of the left hand, but the smaller piece of rope is secretly palmed in the right hand. Then your right hand takes the scissors away from the spectator and places the scissors and the palmed piece of rope into the right coat pocket. Afterwards, the rope in the left hand is uncoiled and shown to be restored and both your hands are completely empty. As you can see, as long as it is performed in a logical manner, this fundamental rule provides a psychological mask that allows you to secretly discard any palmed object.★

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MENTAL BREAKDOWN

BY CHRISTIAN PAINTER



Wouldn't it be great if for every show that you performed one hundred percent of the audience loved it and raved about it? Unfortunately, if you are going to do a show for the general public, at some point you will get a bad review. This is a show business reality. As with anything else that we do in life, you cannot possibly please everyone. Nor should you try. So what can you do when you get a bad review? I have a few suggestions that may help.

First, stay calm and read the review carefully. Your gut reaction will be one of devastation and resentment. You will feel lousy and angry. That's okay, but don't let these initial emotions lead you to a bad decision. Go do something else for a while until you are calmer and clear-headed. Go for a walk. Watch a movie. Hit the gym. Get a cup of coffee. It will be tough, but do it anyway. Then go back to the review and reread it. Ask yourself a few questions.

Is the review unjust, or are you just upset at being criticized? In order to truly answer this question in an unbiased way, you will need to get into the details of the review. Get a pen and some paper and make a list of all the points brought up in the review. Don't judge them, just list all of them. Reread each point you wrote and decide which ones are accurate. It's too easy to say that everything negative in the review is unjust. If you say this, you are only lying to yourself. There is usually some truth in every review, even if it is only a small part.

Write out responses to each point of the critique. This is a great exercise and will make you feel better because it will clarify your reasons and objectives as they relate to the structure of your show. If you have trouble responding to a specific point, then this is where the reviewer may have been correct in his assessment; you just didn't realize it. You may need to think about your show and how this aspect of it can be improved. This process will help you to speak more clearly and more confidently

about your show.

What will become clear as you go through the above steps is that you will see which parts of the review are opinions and which parts are facts. For example, if one of the criticisms was, "I did not like the rope trick," I would qualify this as an opinion and not belabor it too much. However, if the criticism was, "The trick with the ropes was confusing and didn't make sense," then I would definitely pay attention – this is a specific problem. You then need to ask yourself if the routine is unclear. Could you make it better? Look at your show from the reviewer's point of view. Honestly ask yourself if you could improve your show.

Every so often it is a very good idea to hire a director or trusted professional to observe your show and look for problems, issues, or places for improvement. If you hear a critique more than once about the same thing, it most likely is time to bring in someone to help you find out what you need to fix.

Your initial reaction after a bad review will be that everyone will see the review and your days as a performer are over. Gloom and doom will prevail. Don't let your doomsday thoughts get the better of you. It is helpful to analyze who wrote the review and how much authority he or she has. Is the reviewer from a major magazine or newspaper and a million people will see it? Or is it a local blogger who has a following of a few hundred? Usually you will find that you have given the review a lot more power than it actually has.

There are two movies you should watch. The first one is called *Heckler* (it is rated R). If you think magicians have it rough, comedians have it worse, because their reviews come during the show in the form of heckling. Jamie Kennedy sits down with both comedians and critics. He specifically sits down with critics who wrote some really brutal and nasty things about him – not just about his show, but about him personally. He wants to find out why. After watching this movie, you will feel okay about your bad review. You may actually laugh about it.

The other movie I recommend is *Comedian* by Jerry Seinfeld. This is a movie that you should own and watch for

professional development. This documentary is about Jerry developing a new act made of all new material. You watch Jerry through the trials and tribulations, through the failures and successes of creating a new stand-up act. It is a nice feeling to know that one of the most famous comedians and actors has to go through the same things that we do in developing an act. There is no shortcut to the creative process.

If you want to be proactive and really get a feel for what your audiences think of your show, there are some proactive steps you can take. Audience feedback is the best way to see how you did. Put some mechanisms in place to gauge reaction.

Train a video camera on the audience and record each show; *watch* the audience reaction for yourself. Watch how the audience responds. Are they sitting forward in their seats? Are they texting their friends? Are they looking around or at their watches? Then rewind and this time *listen* to the audience. What do you hear – crickets, laughter, talking? All of the audience reactions tell you how they felt about your show.

After the show, stand by the door and thank everyone for coming to the show; see how they react to you. If you're a pretty aware person, you can tell those people who absolutely loved the show, those who thought it was just okay, and those who avoid you and eye contact at all costs. This is a great indicator.

You can ask someone you trust to give you honest, brutal feedback. But the key here is that you must be open to hearing it. Steve Daly, aka Tiny Bubbles, is often asked by magicians to critique their shows. His first line to them is, "Do you want the truth or do you want me to sugar coat it?" If you say you want to hear the truth, you must be prepared to hear it. Steve tells us that many people consider his question and then ask for the candy-coated version. That tells you something, doesn't it?

And finally, let the bad review go. Don't torture yourself over mistakes or critiques. Use them as learning tools. Pick yourself up and keep on going. That is the only way you're going to succeed.*

Christian Painter is a full-time performer whose last show blew.



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BY NORM BARNHART



THE TALENTED TRICKY TENNIS BALL

Terry Seabrooke's fabulous idea with a talking tennis ball inspired me to come up with this unique and magical little routine. Over the years, Terry was someone who always made me laugh. His wonderful column in *M-U-M* was always the first thing I read. He is one of my favorite performers and a real inspiration for all creative and comic magicians. His book is great.

What They See: The magician shows a scarf on both sides; from it a tennis ball magically appears and is bounced on the floor. A small voice is heard to say, "Ouch." The magician looks at the ball and bounces it on the floor again; again the voice says, "Ouch." The voice is calm and dry with an almost depressed, deadpan tone. Think Señor Wences.

The magician looks down at the ball and then holds it up to his ear. It is the ball that is saying "Ouch." The ball is turned to show the mouth opening (Photo 1) as it once again says, "Ouch." The magician looks stunned and steps back. He looks at the audience, then back at the ball, and asks the ball, "Did you just say ouch?"



Photo 1

The ball's mouth opens; it says, "Yup." The magician bounces the ball again, and says, "Is this what hurts?" The ball opens its mouth and says, "Yup, ouch."

"Are you a magic tennis ball?" "Yup," the ball replies.

"Here is a magic wand; let's see a trick." The wand is held like a tightrope and the ball is set on one end of the wand. It balances and then rolls along the wand (Photo 2). It is tossed up off the wand with a "tah-dah" gesture. It bounces off the floor and is caught. The ball says, "Ouch."



Photo 2

The magician says, "That was a great balancing trick. I guess you don't care much for the ending." "Yup," the ball replies.

"Could you try it again?" This time the ball bites the wand and stays on it. The magician tries to shake off the ball, but it stubbornly stays on the wand. The ball makes mumbled sounds. The magician leans over to listen to the mumbling. "You're what? You're afraid you will bounce again? Tennis balls are supposed to bounce!"

The magician decides it's time to say goodbye to the ball. "It is time for the ball to go back home." The ball is tossed twice; it suddenly vanishes, changing into a yellow scarf that bears the words, "Bye bye!"

How it is Done: The "mouth" of the ball is formed (as Terry Seabrooke suggests) by cutting a small slit in one of the seams. The wand has a secret. I like to use the special rising wand that is found at magic shops, the one that looks like it rises in your hand. The inside of the wand hides a length of black elastic that can be retracted. When it contracts, it makes the wand rise. In this routine the elastic is used to help the ball apparently ride on the edge of the wand like a tight rope. The audience is unaware of the hidden elastic. (You could make a wand that has black string tied to each

end. Putting your thumbs into the thread and slightly moving it away from the wand forms a track that the ball can ride on. The store-bought wands are inexpensive, however, and that is what I use.)

The initial appearance of the ball is done by hiding the ball in your hand while you show both sides of a scarf. The ball is kept hidden toward you. Presto, it makes its appearance in any way you desire. You can then do the routine as above, or add any of your own bits.

The wand is introduced; the elastic is held in one hand as illustrated, with the thumb of the other hand keeping the elastic about an inch away from the wand (Photo 3). This allows a little track for the ball to roll on. From the front it looks like it is balancing in an impossible way.



Photo 3

The final vanish is done in one of two ways. The easy way is to use the Devil's Hank, a dealer item, or you can use any other vanishing device. I like the method of vanishing things in the tuxedo tails ala Dove to Silk. As the wand is put away, a small scarf that is nearly the same color as the tennis ball is taken and hidden in your left hand. The ball is tossed up twice; the third time it is left behind in a pocket in your tails. The hands continue to make the tossing motion and the ball seems to fly up, turning into a handkerchief in mid air. The left hand has tossed up the scarf at the precise moment when the ball would have gone up the third time.

The plot and magic added to the Seabrooke idea is what takes this from a funny ventriloquist bit and turns it into a magical routine with an amazing appearance, a baffling balance, and a stunning vanish. ★



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

BY SCOTT ALEXANDER

THE MULTIPLYING BOTTLES

"I believe entertainment can aspire to be art, and can become art. But, if you set out to make art, you're an idiot."

— Steve Martin

When you talk about the oldest trick in the book, the Multiplying Bottles sure ranks right up there. It's one of those classic, dusty-and-musty relics from the days of apparatus-magic-gone-by. Still, even a mediocre performer can get a decent reaction with the trick from a contemporary audience. The basic plot is easy to follow; it has a little production value and an inherent narrative structure. It really is a paint-by-numbers kind of trick, but that certainly doesn't make it art. When watching the trick in the hands of someone who is just going through the motions, it often feels pedestrian, "hacky," and uninspired. I've seen many lackluster Bottles presentations and it always makes me cringe, in much the same way as if I were looking at a painting of deer jumping over a log, hanging in a Motel 6. But watching the Multiplying Bottles in the hands of a seasoned pro like Denny is like looking at a magical Mona Lisa, and not just because it's old, but because it becomes a well crafted piece of entertaining, theatrical artistry.

Denny says: "Audiences love to watch the Multiplying Bottles...when they're done well. I basically do the Ken Brooke routine. I've seen them all, I've read them all, and Ken's is the best. He understood what makes it entertaining. It is all about the pacing. It's not that it's a big mystery. In fact, a lot of magicians won't do the Multiplying Bottles because they believe that the audience will figure it out; but it's not about that. It's all about having fun. It's all about having a good time. It's all

about laughing. And most important, it's all about entertaining. You must make this look as if it's happening by accident. That's what makes it funny. Apparently you are screwing up, but at the same time the audience is wondering where are all those bottles coming from."

THE PROPS

Denny recommends investing in the actual vintage Ken Brooke Bottles. If you can find a set, expect to pay a thousand bucks. Yeah, that's a lot of green, but Denny has used the same bottles for over forty years. They take a licking and keep on tricking.

Three sets of three nested bottles each are required for this routine. There are a lot of bottles on the market, but most are not up to the standards of the old Brooke sets. Ken's are made of a thicker aluminum stock so they hold their shape better. The outer two shell bottles have little inner lips inside the opening of the bottles for ease of separation. When your middle fingers enter the opening of the bottles to apparently show you're lifting an empty tube, you have the confidence of holding onto the lips allowing you to release the inner bottles singly and confidently. If you find a decent set, they can be easily repainted and modernized with a little effort.

Denny has changed the labels on his bottles and repainted them several times over the years. Enamel automotive paint does a great job, because it is tough and leaves a nice shine. If you want to change labels, just scan the ones you want and print them out. A great tip is to use rubber cement to apply them to the bottles. Simply coat the back of your label all the way to the edges in rubber cement and let it dry. Then coat the matching area of a bottle in rubber cement and let it dry. (Cover an area of the bottle a little bigger than the area of the label to ensure all the edges stick down nicely.) Then carefully line up the label and press it onto the bottle. To clean up any

excess cement, simply rub it; it will roll up and pull away cleanly with no residue. You will also need two drinking glasses, the taller the better for visibility. Denny uses real glass, but I've found some nice polycarbonate glasses at Target that I use. If these are accidentally dropped they will not break. If you want to do Phase One of Denny's routine you will need a Comedy Legs table. Denny sells a version he has custom made. If you are interested, you may want to give him a call at the shop in Baltimore. He is always willing to pick up the phone and help a serious student.

THE MULTIPLYING BOTTLES ROUTINE

Phase One – The Comedy Legs Table: Denny leads into the routine by talking about the old Ed Sullivan show. He mentions that this is the type of old-school magic he enjoyed as a youth, so people realize they are going to see a piece of nostalgia. This way the audience gives him a pass on the questionable shiny tubes. Denny walks stage left and picks up a table. On the table we see a bottle with an inverted glass tumbler over it. Behind the bottle are two shiny tubes. As he walks toward center stage, one of the legs of the table drops off. He looks puzzled as titters of nervous laughter ripple through the audience. They think a genuine mishap has occurred. Calling out for his assistant Minh and getting no response, he sets the table down and comments to himself, "*Never mind, it'll hold with three.*" He acts as if he is testing the table's sturdiness.

Assured, he now picks up the table and begins to move all the way to center stage; as he does, alas, another leg falls off and clanks to the floor. "*Minh!*" Denny yells, now holding a table with only two back legs. Minh makes her appearance laughing and pointing at Denny, obviously amused at his predicament. He asks, "*What's wrong with this thing?*" Minh's simple, curt reply gets a big laugh. "*It's broke!*" she retorts

with her thick Vietnamese accent. Denny asks, "Well what am I supposed to do now?" Walking off stage, Minh puts the finishing touch on by saying, "Well...you da magician!"

Denny now gets a look of determination on his face, and suddenly two cut-out human legs, in garters and stockings, drop down from the front of the table to support everything (Photo 1). This is the classic comedy legs table. Denny always uses it in conjunction with the Multiplying Bottles because it sets up the time-tested "magician in trouble" premise perfectly. The magician is not in control of the situation, but somehow manages to get out of his dilemma. This will happen in the bottles routine later, so the audience is primed for it without even realizing it. Denny already has them halfway down the garden path.



Photo 1

Phase Two – Passe Passe Sequence: The bottle routine starts with two, three-bottle stacks inside each tube. The third stack of three is in front of the two tubes with the empty glass inverted over the bottle. Underneath this bottle and glass is another, upright, matching glass. This whole arrangement is in the center of the legs table (Photo 2). As a backstage precaution, Denny surrounds this set up with a decorated, four-sided cardboard box that has no top or bottom. One of the hazards of this trick is that if the table is bumped,



Photo 2

bottles, tubes, and glasses go everywhere (Photo 3). This cover acts to protect the bottles from being upset before show time. It will also serve another clever function later.



Photo 3

"This is a very simple trick because you only have to keep your eyes on two objects: a bottle and a glass." Denny begins by lifting the glass off the bottle; he places the glass upright on the right side of the table and slides the bottle to the left, saying, "First we separate the bottle from the glass." He now pauses for a couple of beats. "There's more, there's more. Once you get the bottle and the glass separated, you cause the bottle and the glass to change places. In other words, the bottle jumps to where the glass is, and the glass jumps to where the bottle is. It's all done by covering them with these tubes. First you cover the glass (cover it with the right-hand tube/bottle stack), and then you cover the bottle..." As Denny picks up the left tube, he "accidentally" flashes the hidden bottle (Photo 4). Now comes the part where (in the hands of most magicians) this routine usually falls flat. Convincing the audience that you may have actually made a mistake takes a knack that Denny has perfected. It



Photo 4

is a beautifully crafted piece of theatre; I will make an attempt to dissect it for you, in the hopes that you can get as much out of this moment as Denny does.

Here's what happens in a nutshell. A split second after seeing he screwed up, Denny tries to cover his mistake, but gives up almost instantly. It is too late, and he knows he has to come clean. All of this happens in a heartbeat. In a matter of a few milliseconds, he starts to do the trick, screws it up, tries to cover it up, and then figures out he might as well just laugh it off because he knows he was busted. This frenzied moment is accompanied by the following actions.

Denny looks down at the exposed bottle and makes a loud vocalization. He utters what seems to be the word "oops," but it is higher pitched than his normal register, very frantic sounding, and he only manages to get half of the word out. Simultaneously with the vocalization, he slams the tube back down. He then bumps it up and down two more times against the table loudly. It is during these two bounces that he apparently tries to save the trick, decides to give up, and then laughs along with the audience at his situation. He will often go weak-kneed and physically collapse a little, bracing himself on the table, cover his face (or "facepalm" in the social media lingo), and then slam the tube up and down a few more times. As the audience laughs, so does he, seeming to revel in his own embarrassment. This

is a genuine human moment that we have all experienced at one time or another and Denny acts it perfectly. That's the best way I know to describe it in words. We will call this the Oops Sequence for future reference. To see it in action, just enter Denny Haney Bottles in the search box on YouTube, and give yourself a treat.

After this first Oops Sequence, Denny reaches into the left tube (inserting his finger into the hole) and pulls out the stack of three bottles. He sets these off to the left rear corner of the table saying, *"Too many bottles: don't worry about it. We cover the bottle here..."* This being said, Denny covers the downstage bottle with the now-empty tube. Continuing he says, *"...cover the glass here..."* (lifting and replacing the tube to show the glass) *and cause them to change places.* Now he lifts the two tubes and shows that nothing has happened. At this point the audience laughs. *"Which hasn't happened yet, unless you're dyslexic, then you may have noticed some movement!"*



Photo 5



Photo 6

Denny has a wonderful subtlety that he does throughout the routine. Due to the method, you always have to hold one stack in a tube with your middle finger (Photo 5). You can't really show this tube empty. But whenever he lifts the tubes to show the bottle and the glass in their respective configuration, he always bangs the tubes on the table to create noise and excitement. Instead of leaving the tubes sitting on the table as most guys do, he tucks the tube that is actually empty under his armpit (Photo 6). This way the audience keeps casually seeing the tubes empty. The audience picks this up on a subconscious level, without the magician having to hold the tubes up and overtly demonstrate that they are empty. It's one of the fine points that makes Denny's routine more natural and convincing than others. This display looks very carefree and open and is a great alternative to just leaving the tubes on the table at all times, which looks way too suspicious. Once the tube is in place under his arm, Denny uses his free hand to make minor adjustments to the bottle and glass. He repositions them on the table a few inches to the right or left, providing a reason for holding the tube in such a manner.

"But when you're doing this you have to make sure you are set up correctly. Yes, you do! You have to make sure the bottle is the same distance from the glass...as the glass is..." Denny gets down low, staring at the glass and bottle, readjusting them slightly, until the audience starts to laugh. It takes a second for them to catch on, but just pause enough and the laugh will come. As the laugh comes, he shakes his head saying, *"Don't get ahead of me!"*

"Once you get 'em that way, you cover them up. Everybody say, change!" (The audience yells.) *Remember the bottle that used to be here...yes...it has now arrived over here. The glass that used to be here... yes...has now arrived over here. That's the easy part...the hard part is to get 'em to go back!"* Denny reveals nothing has happened and says, *"You're not buying this one, are you?"* He immediately covers them back up and then makes them change places, revealing the magic has happened. (This is accomplished, of course, by simply leaving the previously hidden bottle so it

covers the glass and taking away the previously visible bottle, which reveals the glass that had been hidden beneath it.) He says, *"Sometimes I can actually do this!"* This gets a big reaction from the audience because at this point they think this is all just a gag. Their expectations are low in the magic department. The magic moment hits them square in the eyes because the change is so fast and unexpected.

"Once you get 'em to go one way, it's a simple matter to cover 'em up and get 'em to go back the other way." (The tubes are replaced and then lifted in such a way as to reveal the glass and the bottle in their original positions.) Denny blows through this moment as if it were nothing; the change is so startling that the audience takes a step back to think for a minute.

Immediately Denny launches into the next part and he begins to pick up the pace. *"I'll do this one more time; watch the bottle, watch the glass."* Taking the empty tube from under his arm Denny purposely makes a big cheesy move of now showing that this tube is empty. He purposefully slides it over the bottle, saying, *"First of all, you cover the bottle."* He now takes the other loaded tube and lifts it to cover the glass. *"Then cover the glass."* Here he does the Oops Sequence again. He removes the outer shell bottle from the tube and slams it down, leaving it in the back center of the table as he says, *"Too many bottles; don't worry about that."*

He now covers them again and repeats the change sequence, talking about covering the bottle and glass and again they change back. He repeats the Oops Sequence, but this time there is a difference. He pauses and almost sneaks up on the tube. Everyone is now expecting a bottle to be there. He looks at the tube, leans in, hesitates, looks again, and lifts it quickly, immediately slamming it back down saying, *"I knew that was gonna be there!"* He pulls the outer shell out through the top, placing it over to the right back corner of the table and then repeats the change sequence. This change is done at an even faster pace. He finishes up by saying *"That's the trick, how do ya' like it?"* The audience should think the trick is over at this point (Photo 7). This is going to set them up for the last barrage of bottles.

Phase Three – The One-Tube Sequence and Finale: During the



Photo 7

applause, Denny adjusts the various bottles slightly, picking them up and slamming them down. He constantly does this with the glass and the bottle at various times in the routine, emphasizing that they are all solid while adding movement, sound, and excitement (three of Fitzkee's big buzzwords). If Denny ever picks a nested stack up, he briefly sticks his pinky under the stack to hold it together and then removes it just before slamming the bottle back to the table. While making these adjustments, he surreptitiously slides the left-hand tube onto the stack of three that is in the upstage left corner of the table. He will use this reloaded tube momentarily.

Continuing on, Denny says, "I'll do the same trick now only using one tube. You have to be really fast to do this." He covers the glass with the right-hand tube (which at this point contains a stack of two nested bottles). He covers the glass and drops the stack, then covers the left bottle/tube stack and picks it up revealing the glass. He slams the tube down on the table. During this he says, "First you cover the glass and that becomes the bottle; then you cover the bottle and the bottle becomes the glass." Upon slamming down the tube, he immediately reaches into the tube and pulls out the upper bottle of the stack. He slams it down to the right side of the table saying, "But you need another bottle! Hide that! Don't let anybody see it." This leaves a single bottle in the tube and a two-stack bottle visible, opposite the glass.

Now, you repeat that same sequence

and dialogue in reverse, removing the outer of the two shells from the tube, setting it down to the right center of the table while saying, "But to do that I use an extra bottle; that's how the trick is done. I don't let anyone see that!" In your right hand, pick up the tube with one bottle in it. With your left hand, you pick up the remaining tube, loaded with the three-stack. Denny now picks up the pace even more.



Photo 8



Photo 9

Covering the glass with the left-hand tube Denny says, "Sometimes I don't even use a glass; sometimes I use two bottles." Reveal a bottle where the glass was by letting the innermost bottle slide free over the glass by releasing pressure with your left middle finger. This is when that Ken Brooke inner lip comes in handy. This

shows that the glass has changed into a bottle. Continue on by dropping the next inner bottle slightly behind and to the left of that bottle lifting the tube to reveal it saying, "Sometimes I use an extra bottle."

At this point in the routine Denny sets the two tubes down on the table; each one has one remaining bottle in it for the kicker. He then lifts the two shell bottles revealing the glasses underneath and sets the bottles down to the right and left of the respective glasses (Photo 8) saying, "Sometimes I use two glasses." (Some magicians cry exposure here. Ken Brooke always said it didn't matter. Denny also thinks that at this stage in the game, things are moving so fast it doesn't even register for most people. And those who do catch it feel included in the bit, giving them a little naughty thrill.) To finish up, Denny picks up the two glasses, one in each hand, and drops them mouth down into the tubes. He then lifts up the tubes revealing two final bottles (Photo 9). "That's the trick; that's, my act; how do ya' like it?" Denny shakes the tubes in the air and dances around as Can-Can music plays him off while the audience goes nuts.

Ken Brooke used to close with the Bottles, but in Denny's illusion act the Bottles wasn't a closer. To make it easy to strike the table, he scoops all the bottles to the center of the table and puts that cardboard box with no top and bottom over the entire array of bottles and tubes, which keeps them from going all over the place as the table is being carried off the stage.

The Takeaway: The Bottles is definitely not an earth-shattering mystery, and yes, it's as old as dirt. But then again, so are most magic tricks. But when it's performed properly, it's still a valid, stage-worthy piece of magic. The real lesson of Denny's Multiplying Bottles routine is to study his demeanor, the way he acts on stage, the way he handles the tubes, and the seemingly infectious glee with which he performs the trick. He puts his full acting ability to bear in creating a believable situation, a situation that the audience can't help but enjoy. Be sure to visit YouTube and check out the performance for yourself. It sure as hell is entertaining... and ultimately, that's what we're supposed to be doing. ★



I first saw Lance Burton's show at the Monte Carlo in 1996, shortly after it opened. I enjoyed it immensely as a fan of magic. Who wouldn't marvel at the glorious, smooth dove work? Who wouldn't thrill at the superlative vanishes and appearances? What magician wouldn't delight in seeing many classics of magic brought to life, such as the Jarrett pedestal vanish and the Okito Floating Ball? The show was a feast of magic.

But this was only the beginning. Over the years, I was fortunate to see Lance's show many times with our Master Class students. Also, I became much more knowledgeable about stage magic – its history and techniques – and about the extraordinary challenges of performing this kind of show. And so, over time, I fell in love with Lance's show and came to profoundly appreciate its achievements. For me, personally and as a lover of great magic, it was a sad day in September 2010 when Lance closed the show after 5,508 performances.

To the best of my knowledge, no one has published the running order of *Lance Burton: Master Magician* and it is my deep pleasure to do so here. To be precise, I can't claim to have "captured the show," since Lance rotated pieces in and out over the years; it is also well known that Lance liked to call for this or that routine after the show got started. But I will preserve a record of the show I saw one night in 2010.

One other note before plunging in: Lance's show was packed with magic so I will need two months to record it all. This month I will provide the details of Act One and the "Intermission" (which wasn't really one!). Next month I will continue with Act Two and discuss a few lessons we can learn from Lance about show building. I hope you enjoy this two-part discussion of one of the great, grand magic shows of modern times!

Lance Burton: Master Magician, The Monte Carlo Resort and Casino, Las Vegas, 7:00 p.m., June 29, 2010.

BUILDING A SHOW

BY LARRY HASS

PRE-SHOW

1. An animated video of balls bouncing around an array of instruments, thereby creating delightful, upbeat, electronic music.
2. A video of Lance performing the roller coaster escape from *Top Secret* (1999).

ACT ONE

1. A masked character draped in black, "Doctor Death," chases two dancers to center stage. This is followed by a blackout.
2. Black art ghost-streamers fly around the stage and then fly out over the audience.
3. Against a backdrop of giant posters of Kellar, Thurston, Dante, and Grabel, and after a voice-over about the passing of the mantle of magic, Lance magically materializes on stage.
4. Lance greets and welcomes the audience. In front of a backdrop painted with a night scene of the Seine, and to Vivaldi's "Four Seasons," he performs a shortened version of his FISM Grand Prix winning act. In brief:

He lights a cigarette and creates a flame that travels up his cane; he catches the flame at the end and it becomes a dove. He removes his gloves and tosses them out; they transform into a second dove. He rolls up his sleeves, produces a candle, and lights it; it disappears and he produces it again. The candle magically becomes a second candle and then a third candle. He sets aside two of the candles and wraps the third one in a white silk; it transforms into a third dove. He takes a page out of *Variety*, tears off a piece, tears it further, places the pieces inside the folded page, and lights the edge of the page. It is completely restored. Then he tears and crumbles the page and produces a fourth dove. He tosses the fourth dove up in the air, where it transforms into a silk with a flurry of confetti. The silk is placed around his neck and he takes his bows.

5. Lance Burton Air: Six dancers magically appear from within a small, thin, standing wardrobe. They do a dance number. Then, escorted by Lance, who is wearing a cape, they step one-by-one down into a small blue trunk on a pedestal. The dancers vanish, apparently transforming into six doves.

6. While Lance is getting to know audience members, a cocktail waiter interrupts. Lance floats a champagne glass off his tray.

7. Lance sits on the front of the stage, rolls up his sleeves, and performs Torn Napkin to Bird.

8. The bird, "Elvis," is placed into a ball-shaped cage, which floats in astonishing ways to Stravinsky's "Firebird." The ball then floats on a foulard and transforms into a silver streamer. This is a beautiful, magical sequence!

9. Adam and Eve: This is the Girl without a Middle illusion with Lance in the device. A woman magically appears in the middle, wearing a white cape and holding an apple. Lance is restored, and they both move downstage, front and center; in a flash the woman vanishes. Lance twirls her empty cape with a flourish.

10. Magic Gramophone: A dancer stands on a small table, a large cone is placed over her, and then the cone is unwrapped by Lance and an assistant. The dancer has vanished from the table and suddenly "Lance" is revealed to be the dancer who just vanished! Lance then appears in the middle of the audience. This happens so quickly, you can't believe it.

11. Vanishing Bird Cage, performed slowly and with a see-through piece of fabric – shades of Billy McComb. (Note: Lance performed *Multiplying Bottles* in this slot if there weren't enough children in the audience to warrant the later repeat of the vanish.)

12. Double Mis-Made: Man and woman assistants are placed in two vertical boxes, which are sub-divided and rearranged. The sub-divided boxes are shown to have different parts of the assistants in bizarre locations, for example, head on bottom, feet on top, etc. At the end, the assistants are restored but they are wearing each other's clothes.


13. Children are invited on stage, Lance greets and chats with them, and then repeats the Vanishing Bird Cage surrounded by them (shades of the Blackstones and performed with Harry Jr.'s blessing).

14. Erotic Dream Levitations: As Lance calls upon the heavens, a woman levitates around him. They then move upstage onto a bed. The woman lies on top of Lance and they both levitate straight up behind the proscenium. This is the end of Act One.

Non-Intermission: Michael Goudeau's outstanding comedy juggling act. Lots of laughs. To be continued...★

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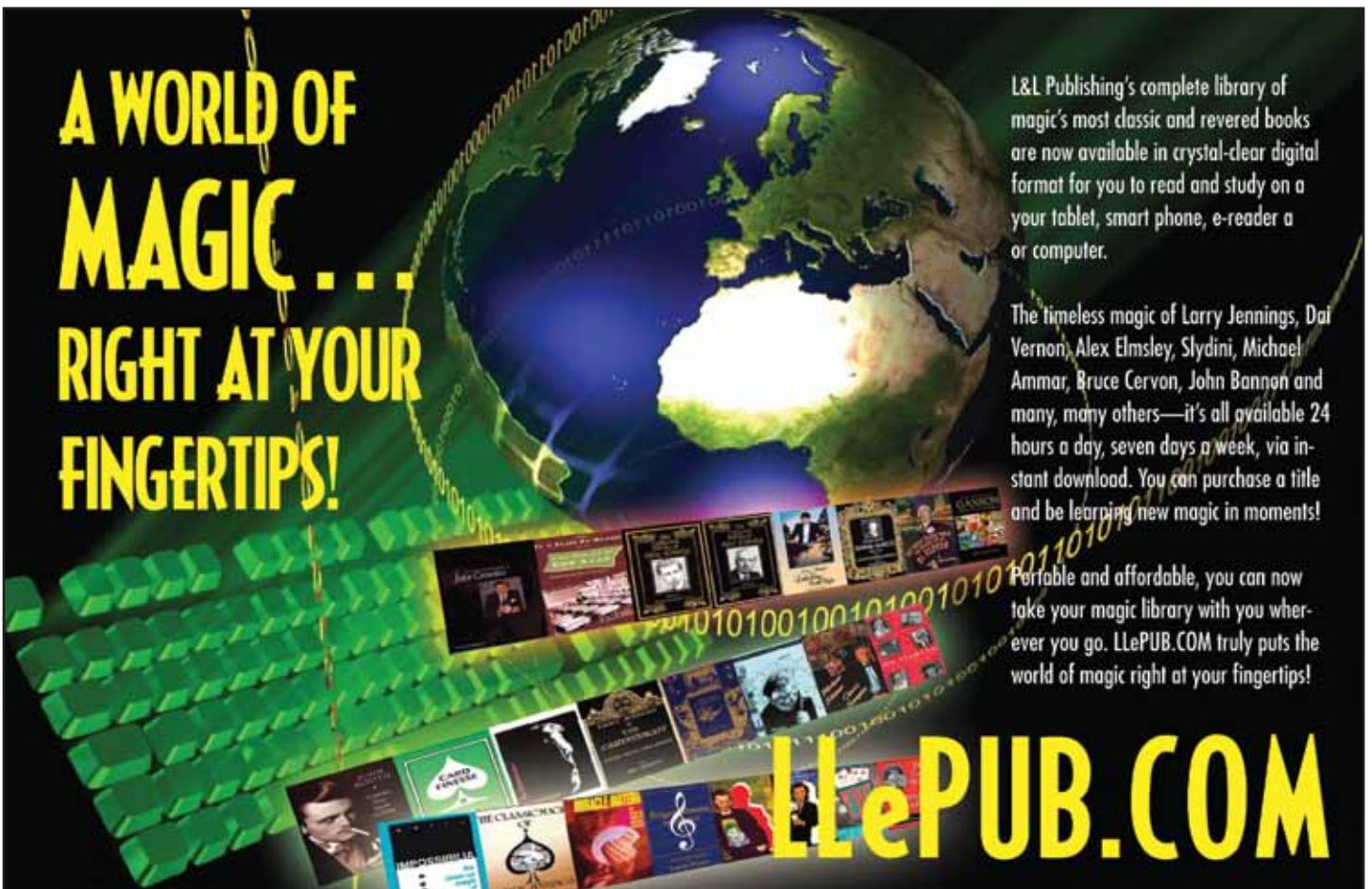
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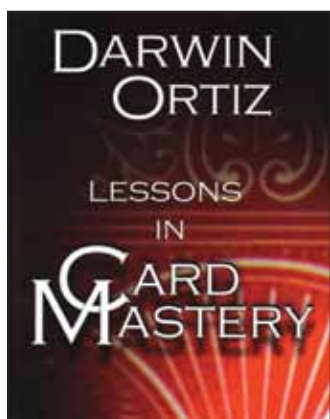
Compiled and Edited by W. S. Duncan

LESSONS IN CARD MASTERY BOOK By DARWIN ORTIZ

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$55.00

REVIEW BY ANTONIO M. CABRAL



Among Darwin Ortiz's previous three collections of material, I've always felt the most widely accessible was *Cardshark*. When his last book, *Scams & Fantasies with Cards*, came out, the question for a lot of people seemed to be, is it another *Cardshark*? I can save those people some time and money by saying that Darwin's new book, *Lessons in Card Mastery*, is not another *Cardshark*. That's not a reflection of its quality by any means; *Lessons in Card Mastery*

contains some of the most astounding demonstrations with cards that you'll ever encounter. And it's not a matter of difficulty, even though Darwin's material can be very technically demanding. It's entirely a matter of style.

A standard, if hoary, litmus test a lot of magicians use to evaluate material is to ask the question, "What would this look like if I had real magic powers?" The question that tends to get left by the wayside is, if I had real magic powers, would I choose to use them this way? Card magic in particular seems to suffer this way, with playing cards having become more and more of an abstract magician's prop like metal rings or sponge balls. Magicians worry about displaying "real magic powers," without worrying that these miraculous abilities seem to be restricted to cardboard for no reason. Demonstrations that speak to playing cards as things that normal people use to play games and win money – things like perfect estimation, instantaneous memory, and total control – tend to get dismissed as demonstrations of "mere skill." Even when they're acknowledged as extremely powerful, they simply don't fit every performer's style. So, many people are going to buy this book and frankly find very little of use in it. For the rest of us, I assure you there are no displays of "mere" skill in *Lessons in Card Mastery*. These are displays of otherworldly skill.

The book is divided into three sections: Gambling Mastery, Superhuman Mastery, and Supernatural Mastery. Gambling Mastery contains routines more specifically related to the gaming table, and it might surprise some that it's the shortest section in the book. However, it contains a couple of the most powerful effects in the book. Positively Fifth Street is (many would say "finally") a Texas Hold 'Em routine that everyone can understand, whether they're fans of the game or not. It's a terrific combination of the pick-a-card plot and a Hold 'Em deal that makes its point very clearly. If you have Darwin's last DVD set, *Nothing*

but the Best, you've seen him perform Best of the Best parts 1 and 2. It's a killer display of instant memory, perfect estimation, and dealing any card you want from anywhere in the deck. It plays so strongly because, largely, you're doing exactly what you appear to be doing. It's also the first of many in this book that genuinely qualify as a "blockbuster."

The middle section, Superhuman Mastery, is the longest of the bunch. Some of this material has appeared previously in Darwin's lecture notes and DVDs, but much of it is appearing in print for the first time. One of those items is One Shot, One Kill, which is a deviously constructed demonstration of estimation and the ability to cut to any card in the deck. It's also one of the more accessible items in the book; if you overlook it, someone else is going to fool you with it. Another is Doppelganger, a Travelers routine that gets so far ahead of your audience it's downright cruel. There are demonstrations of impossible card manipulation like Sweating Bullets (a version of Vernon's Aces that ends with the cards in perfect order) and 52 Pickup, probably the ultimate Triumph routine. In 52 Pickup, the audience sees a genuinely shuffled deck clearly (and genuinely) mixed face-up and face-down; by the end of the trick not only are all the cards face down, but again in perfect order. I can personally vouch for the strength of this trick, and it may be the strongest display of card control you ever do. (The effect is similar to Bob Farmer's The Casino Inspector from the January 2013 issue. Darwin's routine calls for continuous perfect faro shuffles; if that's not your idea of a good time, maybe Bob's routine is.) There are also uncanny displays of mental skill with cards in the tricks Limitless (a Miraskil/Shuffle-bored type effect) and Billion Dollar Brain – the latter being the most powerful display of card memory I've ever come across. Along with all these tricks is some extremely good advice on audience management for minimal hassle and on handling the climaxes of tricks for maximum effect. There are also a few great utility items, such as the Spectator False Shuffle (a great addition to any stacked deck routine) and the new control sequence for Darwin's multiple selection routine.

Supernatural Mastery brings up the rear with the material that might appeal to the most people – the "card trick" card tricks. This section also contains a number of memorized deck routines that are not only strong tricks, but along with a couple of other tricks in the book will give you some solid tools for handling a memorized stack. Of particular use are a handful of different approaches for what Simon Aronson calls the Open Index – instantly getting control of any named card in the deck. In Darwin's case, "instantly" means "with zero to minimal handling." Other standouts include The Uninvited Guest (a very clean Visitor-type effect by Darwin's student Mark Ennis), Fast and Loose (a rapid series of two-card transpositions), and the improved handling of Darwin's Wild Card.

I'm clearly very enthusiastic about this material, the advice, and the utility items scattered throughout the book. This material speaks directly to my style of card work. However, I know in meeting, talking to, and hanging out with other performers that even among those who aren't put off by the technical demands

of material like this, many simply aren't interested in performing these types of demonstrations. And that's fine for them. These routines are largely formal close-up pieces requiring a certain venue, audience, and performing presence. If you're looking for table-hopping material or stuff for your bar gig, most of this material isn't for you. Since it's not my job to proselytize this style of card work, I can simply recommend the book for the techniques and performance tips that others might find useful in routines they feel more comfortable performing. For those of us who do enjoy displaying superhuman skill and expertise with a deck of cards, *Lessons in Card Mastery* is a treasure trove.

**TRANSPARENCY BOOK
By BORIS WILD**

*Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies
Price \$50.00*

REVIEW BY MARC DESOUZA



This is a beautifully produced book from Fantasion/C.C. Editions of France. The distinctive lenticular (look it up) illustration on the cover and the sophisticated design lend an air of class to the excellent material contained within its 230 pages. There is one small problem and you will have to judge if that is a real problem to you: almost all the material in the book has seen print before. Over eighty percent of the techniques and routines contained within the book were previously printed in *The Complete Boris Wild Marked Deck*, published in 2001 by Camirand Academy of Magic. That

book is out of print; instead of reprinting it, Mr. Wild elected to rewrite all of the routines and add some new routines and concepts. How do you feel about that? I can tell you how I feel.

A creator or performer who uses his own creations on a very regular basis can learn a lot about the material in ten years. Mr. Wild has shared his additional learning in many cases. More important, he has added commentary after each routine described, which he calls PSY-Show. These sections provide valuable insights into the thinking behind the creation and performance of these routines and were actually my favorite parts of the book. He has added a few extra routines, extra techniques (including a false shuffle), plus an entire new chapter titled Miracles with a Touch of Improvisation. In this chapter he begins with an exploration of the use of the Marked Deck with Dai Vernon's The Trick That Can Not Be Explained. There are some very valuable ideas here and in the further discussion of the Marked Deck and improvisational magic. I found that the republication and expansion of the material in this volume were certainly justified, but if you already own the previously published tome, you will need to make that decision for yourself.

And now, for the rest of you who don't have the previous version, buy this book. The Boris Wild Marked Deck is one of the best systems out there. It is a brilliant advancement on the Ted Lesley Deck. There are a few similar ideas out there of late that also have a similar lineage. Every technique and routine in this book can be done with any of those decks, but may take a second or two longer to handle. Most of these routines are designed to remove any suspicion of a marked deck. The opening chapter

deals with a discussion of the deck itself – its history, its manufacture, and the reasons for its design. Boris goes on to talk about some easy applications.

The following chapters are broken down to deal with effects with a shuffled deck, then routines with a stacked deck. The next chapter concerns Wild's own memorized deck and routines with it. This is not a memorized deck like the Tamariz or Aronson stacks, but a stack that allows you to know the card at a named position or the position of a named card via a mathematical formula. This can be a good tool, especially in conjunction with the routines he describes, but it is not a substitute for a true memorized deck.

This is as good a book as you could imagine concerning this subject. It is very well written, especially considering that English is not Wild's native language, but I suspect he is not even really French. (Have you ever gone out to eat with him? And, he loves America way too much.) I have seen Boris destroy a room full of the best posted close-up magicians at the 4F convention with his version of Out of this World. Double Personality is a fantastic routine combining the marked deck with an Ultra-Mental Deck, and Pure Telepathy is a wonderful performance piece. You can find a YouTube video of Wild performing this on the French TV show *Le Grand Plus Cabaret du Monde*. There are lots of other great routines for both casual and formal performing.

I would heartily recommend this book if you don't have the Camirand publication; even if you do own the earlier book, you might well consider buying this version. For me, at least, it was a worthwhile buy and certainly worth that extra read.

**MORE iCANDY DVDs
By LEE SMITH AND GARY JONES**

*Available from: www.rsvpmagic.com
Price \$60.00 (Volumes also sold separately)*

REVIEW BY DAN GARRETT



“Alias Smith and Jones” return with more good close-up magic in this two-volume compendium. Lee Smith and Gary Jones are obviously “workers” who know what makes for great magic out in the real world. This time they get a little help from their talented friends, who include James Brown, Mike Stoner, Brendan Rodriguez, Arnel

Renegado, and John Carey. The DVDs complement each other, but since they also stand alone, let's take a look at them separately.

Volume 1 contains eight routines performed and explained along with explanations of about ten or so essential card techniques. There are no weak routines here, and there are a few standouts. The Arrow will appeal to everyone who owns a Smartphone with a video camera. It borrows significantly from a routine by Atlanta magician Rich Aviles. With a little one-time preparation you'll have a pleasing piece of magic to carry around with you. Many of us already do a version of The Biddle Trick, but Lee Smith's routine is very direct. Slick is a brilliant extension of the well known Ray Kosby sequence that takes Oil and Water to new heights, and it has a nice kicker ending. Kick Right Back Plus is very strong, but not completely impromptu. Still, it's worth a look. Mike Stoner's Rover recreates the Koornwinder Kar with a

different method and gimmick that will not be known to performers of the original. Unfortunately, I felt that Predicto Plus goes too far with “additions” and “improvements” and becomes muddled and confusing to an audience. Go back to the original.

The Toolbox section takes well over a third of the DVD, with explanations of various basic and intermediate card sleights and moves. It’s a great reference! The routines and sleights on Volume 1 make good material for any close-up repertoire, and are particularly recommended for amateur magicians who wish to make the move to professional.

Volume 2 contains five routines, two of which are non-card effects, plus nearly two dozen sleights and variations that comprise over half of the total screen time. The first routine takes up a lot of time, and is perhaps the most controversial. It’s called Witchcraft 2 by Arnel Renegado. The explanation is shown on amateur video footage that is not up to par with the broadcast quality of the rest of the video. However, it is clear. The effect is very Biblical, that is to say, a borrowed bottle of water changes visually to “any flavor named.” This effect is a street magician’s dream, except that it cannot be re-set in public.

Preparing the gimmick is somewhat dangerous. It involves significant modification of a hypodermic needle and a common magic prop. Therefore, this DVD contains an “age eighteen and over” restriction and numerous warnings and deniability against lawsuits. “Any flavor named” is a bit misleading. There is only one flavor, which is covered by some clever routining. You must secretly punch a hole above the water line in a borrowed bottle of water, so returning the bottle could cause possible problems or reveal the method to some. Despite performance restrictions, this effect will be the main reason many will purchase Volume 2. Just be aware of what is involved, and please be careful!

Interweave by Brendan Rodriguez was a highlight for me. It’s a visual and startling flourish with two unprepared rubber bands (which could be borrowed). Every rubber band aficionado should learn this. You’ll easily get the hang of it on your first session, and become an expert in a couple of days. Be sure to learn it with both hands. It is no surprise that Interweave leads off the promotional footage for *More iCandy*. Watch it online.

I also liked Jones’s clean signed card to card box called POB. But the best card routine on both volumes is Jones’s Repeat Cards to Pocket. There is certainly a routine or two here, I won’t say which, that will go into my repertoire. As a special “Easter egg,” John Carey teaches a pet routine not mentioned on the DVD box.

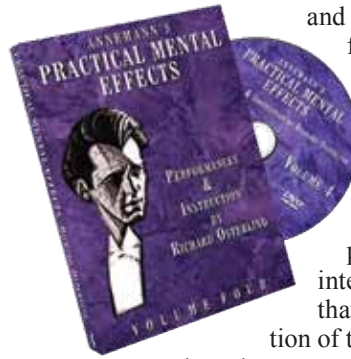
Crediting is good throughout, and all routines are performed in the “real world.” The Toolbox section contains a small reference library of many basic card sleights and moves. All these moves are actually used in the routines explained on the DVDs. *More iCandy* should appeal to every close-up and card magician. Recommended.

**ANNEMANN’S PRACTICAL MENTAL EFFECTS
VOLS. 4, 5, AND 6 DVDS
BY RICHARD OSTERLIND**

Available from: www.OsterlindMysteries.com
Distributed by *Murphy’s Magic Supplies*
Price \$30.00 for each volume

REVIEW BY MARC DESOUZA

Richard Osterlind is a prolific creator of mentalism and mental magic. He has released numerous effects, books, and videos over the past twenty-five years. His latest project involves culling through the classic book *Annemann’s Practical Mental Effects*



and releasing selected effects in video form. The three volumes that are the subject of this review are the second trilogy. The material in the Annemann book is actually material culled from the pages of *The Jinx*, one of the greatest magazines ever published, (especially for anyone interested in mentalism). That means that this is actually the third publication of this material. Who really wants to buy the same stuff three times? If you are interested in this kind of material, you would and should.

Osterlind and his trusty sidekick Jim Sisti have gone above and beyond in presenting and teaching this material. In virtually every case, Osterlind has modified the original effect either in presentation, the use of props, or even methods. He has modernized much of it and shows that they can really be commercial, performable routines. All of the routines are first performed for an audience of laymen in a studio setting. After that, Sisti and Osterlind discuss the original, how Richard has modified it, and why. There are six routines on Volumes 4 and 5, and only five routines on Volume 6, but that volume also contains a PDF file of the entire original book. Not all of the routines were my cup of tea, so I’ll point out a few of my favorites from each volume.

Volume 4 begins with a very strong book test created by Sid Lorraine called 40,000 Words. The title comes from the fact that a pocket dictionary is used. The performer turns away after it is handed to someone, who is requested to open the book at any point and look at any word on the page. They close the book and are handed a business card to write down the word. The card is inserted into the book and the performer can immediately name the word chosen. The method is very clean, quite direct, and extremely clever. I am not really keen on number tricks with a lot of process, but E.G. Ervin’s Number Thot deserves a tryout. Several spectators write a single digit on a piece of paper. This multi-digit number is entered into a calculator. A die is rolled and the number in the calculator is multiplied by this number. The new number is written down and one of the digits is circled, and then the rest of the digits are added up. The performer is told this number. He immediately reveals the circled digit and its position; he then reveals the entire number – a lot of climaxes for not too much work. This volume also contains the Annemann classic Pseudo Psychometry. There have been lots of versions in print and I have personally used several versions in my own stand-up shows for many years. Here, Osterlind teaches his version, which incorporates some cold reading techniques to great effect.

Volume 5 contains a Stuart Robson effect titled Horrors. It is basically a version of the old Age Cards, but done with words. There is an extra twist or two that will fool someone who knows the original. This should be food for thought for many magicians, allowing you to customize your own version. Jack Vosburgh’s Cherchez La Lady is a mental three-card trick that gets a re-treatment from Osterlind, who has made notable changes to the original methods used. Dr. Jacob Daley’s Ultra Slate Message rounds out this disc. Four slates are shown blank and one is chosen. A message appears on the slate; the best part is that there are no gimmicks involved. The handling is very clean and simple.

Volume 6 contains some of my favorite routines of the set. Symmyst is a multi-phase book test that originally used magazines. In Osterlind’s handling, he uses some of Larry Becker’s Flashback books, so you will have to own these to perform this version,

but it is very good. Phantom Artist is Annemann's handling of a Percy Naldrett idea. It is a novel revelation of a chosen famous figure. Osterlind uses his Transparent Change Bag for the selection process. He then shows a blank piece of paper, folds it up, and begins cutting away small pieces. When he is finished, the remaining paper is opened to reveal a cut-out silhouette of the chosen person. In his case, it is Marilyn Monroe. The original in the book gave a choice of such notables as William Jennings Bryant... a wise change on Mr. Osterlind's part. In reality, a simple Google search will provide a variety of silhouette choices. And they make a very memorable giveaway. The last item is Whim of Tituba, which is the precursor to Arthur Emerson's Pegasus Page. Again, this is an effect that has been in my own repertoire for almost forty years. In Osterlind's handling, a piece of paper is signed and sealed in a nest of envelopes. A magazine is chosen. A number of digits are written by audience members on a piece of paper and added up. The magazine is opened to the page corresponding to the number to reveal that half of the page has been torn out. The envelopes are opened and the missing half page is inside.

There are some really fine effects for both magicians and mentalists contained in this set of DVDs. I have only highlighted some of my favorites; you will probably have your own. I think Osterlind's modifications to the originals certainly justify the production of this project and I recommend them.

EUROPEAN COIN MAGIC SYMPOSIUM VOLS. 3 & 4 DVDs

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$35.00 each volume

REVIEW BY DANNY ARCHER



In November 2011, the second European Coin Magic Symposium took place in Milan – two days of non-stop coin magic. These DVDs were filmed live at the event and are produced by Giacomo Bertini, who is himself one of the top coin workers in the world. As one of the producers of the first convention dedicated to coin magic (COINvention 2003), I was thrilled to see these two discs in my mailbox.

This was a two-camera shoot and everything is filmed well for both the performances and the explanations. Sound quality is fine, with some performers dubbed into English and the occasional use of sub-titles. Disc menus and navigation are well done. Bertini starts things off on Volume 3 with a fantastic Matrix routine. This will be the first (but not the last) time that you will be seriously fooled as you watch these wonder workers. Daryl follows with a nice Coins Across that is within the range of even a beginning coin magician. Then Tabary (yes the rope master), working silently to a jazzy score, causes three half dollars to vanish one at a time. They are then reproduced one at a time. The whole piece runs sixty seconds long. I was thinking maybe a gimmicked close-up mat, but it was just beautiful sleight of hand expertly performed.

Miguel Angel Gea does an unusual variation of Wild Coin in which the first coin changes color, the second changes size, and the third is chopped in half. When dumped from the cup they are all back to normal. The Enigma Change is a wonderful Spellbound move taught by its inventor Eric Jones. It has different applications and here was used as an incredibly visual color change.

Anthony Gerard shows a Coins Across that has a great audible ending for the last coin.

To break up the coin magic, Francesco Addeo performs a barehanded one-at-a-time production of four Aces. In the vein of the Phoenix Aces, this was a thing of beauty to watch. Roberto Giobbi has four cards selected and then uses the cards in a Matrix effect. For the kicker the cards match the date on the leader coin. Japanese coin master Shigeo Futagawa performs China Money, an effect in which he produces a number of silver coins and then a Chinese coin, a bigger Chinese coin, and finally a jumbo Chinese coin. He offers some great work on a variation of the Sylvester Pitch, and his production of the jumbo coin is stunning. Jean Emmanuel Franzis has a different take on the classic Cylinder and Coins, doing away with the wand and using a ball instead of a cork. This routine is not for the faint of heart.

The event's guest of honor, Michael Rubinstein (who in my opinion is one of the smoothest coin workers ever), shows an Oil and Water routine mixing copper and silver coins together that then magically separate. Jerome Bourgeon does his very visual version of Three Fly. It's over in thirty seconds but this looks like real magic. There is a bonus coin box routine (performance only) by Ginjiro. Performed silently to music, this has a killer finish that I watched over and over again.

Volume 4 looks and sounds the same as Volume 3. It kicks off with Akira Fujii who performs and teaches accompanied by subtitles. The effect is a four coins across routine with a backfire on the final coin, ending with the vanish of all four coins. Next up is Giacomo Bertini with his excellent Cylinder & Chips. This is a variation of Ramsay's Cylinder and Coins done with poker chips – an excellent effect that is very clean and very magical.

The Magician's Magician, Daryl, presents The Manly Matrix, a basic coin assembly that is within everyone's skill set. Spain's Miguel Angel Gea shows Three In One. Three coins from a purse are dumped into a glass. A card is selected and the deck tabled. One at a time all three coins vanish, one is pulled from the glass, another one is found in the purse, and the last coin is found in the deck, marking the spot of the selected card. Eric Jones teaches his EJ Copper Silver, a very clean and visual copper/silver routine in which the coins exchange twice. The bonus performer from Volume 3 is back: Ginjiro has a nice touch with coins. He does a beautiful Spellbound routine in which a silver dollar coin is produced, vanishes and appears, and changes into a Chinese coin several times before it, too, finally vanishes.

Auke van Dokkum performs silently to music; his Chink a Chink is over in forty seconds but has a lot of magic in it. Aurelio Paviato shares his O.C.T.S. An English penny is marked with two stickers, the magician's name one on side and the spectator's on the other. A card is selected, shown, and left in the middle of the deck. The marked coin vanishes and appears in the deck above the selection. Once again a card effect is included, and this time it's Antony Gerard doing Shuffling Down a Different Sidewalk, an ungaffed version of Sidewalk Shuffle. Curtis Kam presents Box Jumper, in which three silver dollars are removed from a purse. A coin box is shown to contain three Chinese coins. One at a time the silver coins transpose with the Chinese coins. This is a very nice routine.

Eric Roumestan teaches his Impossible Coins to Pocket. Four silver coins are shown. The first two vanish singly while the last two vanish together. His hands are shown empty as is his pocket. The four coins are reproduced from the pocket before all four vanish together. Chameleon Skin Purse by Alex Conradi starts with a purse frame. A half dollar is removed, vanishes, and is reproduced; for the finish a second coin is removed from the frame.

Michael Rubinstein performs Silver & Lint. Plucking some lint from the table, it transform into a silver coin and then back to lint once again. This disc includes an effect from Remey Robert, the third-place winner at the competition. Coins and Ball has a lot of visual coin magic, nicely done to a jazz score; the effect is explained as well.

Magic with coins is considered by many to be harder than magic with cards, because it is. How many self-working coin tricks do you know? It is harder, but when well done its impact is second to none. This DVD teaches some fantastic coin magic with a degree of difficulty that ranges from easy to knuckle-busting. It was inspirational seeing these talented performers; anyone looking to add or expand their coin magic repertoire will benefit from watching them. Both volumes are recommended. I will seek out the discs I have not seen. So should anyone who is interested in coin magic.

THE MONK'S WAY DVD

By STEVE REYNOLDS

Available from: www.SteveReynoldsMagic.com

Price \$40.00

REVIEW BY ANTONIO M. CABRAL



The number of ways to arrange a deck of cards is roughly equivalent to the number of molecules in the known universe, which may or may not be related to the staggeringly vast field of card magic that exists and continues to expand. Every magician does at least something with a deck of cards, and many do everything with a deck of cards. Then there are the “cardmen,” who try to boldly go where no one has gone before, who try to do everything that can be done with a deck of cards. Steve Reynolds is

a Cardman with a capital “C.” He began by developing a solid underground reputation as a guy who knows his way around a card problem, and for the past six years has been living the dream of making a living with his original material. On his latest DVD, *The Monk's Way*, he shares eight routines from his working repertoire that may or may not find their way into your working repertoire, but they certainly are interesting card tricks.

Steve is well known for his attention to detail in both his methods and his knowledge of moves and concepts. Of course, it helps when one's mentor is someone like Jon Racherbaumer. His major heroes are Ed Marlo and Brother John Hamman, and it's not hard to see their influence in his work. He shares Marlo's passion for mechanical and conceptual exploration with a deck of cards, and Hamman's flair for offbeat psychological ploys. And as with both those gentlemen, the results tend to be a mixed bag. But they sure make for interesting card tricks.

Take for example Reynolds's Finally Final Aces. Bro. Hamman's Final Aces is one of the strongest and most baffling Ace assemblies you could perform, in large part because you cleanly repeat the effect and yet the Aces somehow continue to migrate from separate piles to join the Ace of Spades. The effect, like MacDonald's Aces, is achieved with gaffed cards. Reynolds tries to achieve the same effect with ungaffed cards, essentially by performing the original with ungaffed cards and where the gaffs would come into play, getting by on sheer bluff.

As an experiment, it's very intriguing. In performance, you can see the moment where the audience ought to have something to react to, but doesn't. So they don't. Given the choice, I'd rather perform the original, and get all three reactions instead of two. Reynolds's routine works, sure – but not better than the original.

Fireback Aces is another assembly routine that relies on a similar level of bluff and inattention. It might be fun to try on occasion, but I'm not sure how long its legs are for a regular performance piece. Of the three assemblies offered, Shadow Zone Assembly fares the best, but it still relies on more confusion than I personally prefer inflicting on an audience. At the same time, all of these are enticing in the same way as watching Derren Brown's psychological experiments. You know you can't fool “all of the people all of the time,” but the “some of the people some (or all) of the time” will be immensely satisfying.

The Monk's Way also features a clever pair of Travelers routines that accomplish a great deal with little of the usual heavy sleight-of-hand lifting. Of the two, I prefer Magician vs. Leprechaun, which is the more direct one. The other, Mr. Fogg Tracked Down, involves what might be too much time misdirection. In performance, the Aces are signed, then set aside for so long (while another trick is performed) that one audience member is genuinely surprised to see them again. This is where Reynolds's Hamman influence starts to run into Dai Vernon's maxim that “confusion is not magic.” Psychological ambiguity is a very strong and effective component of any conjuring performance, but too much tends sacrifice clarity.

To me, the better effects on *The Monk's Way* are the simpler ones. Flash Changed is a nice change of four random cards to four Aces. Monkey in the Box is a cleverly routined way to cause a signed selection to appear in the card box. U-Turn is a Pineapple Surprise/Maxi-Twist style effect that plays very well. These are the ones you'll do immediately. They might not be as much fun as the others, but they'll prove more reliable.

The DVD is well-shot, and Reynolds is very thorough and clear in his explanations, and gladly details his thinking on these various plots. One solid complaint I have is the presence of Jon Racherbaumer. I understand the mentor/student relationship, but someone should have reminded him that it's not his place to grumble and kvetch his way through his guest spot on someone else's DVD – the time for that is either before the DVD is shot, or afterwards. On camera is the last place to pick apart the material the consumer has paid decent money for.

Steve Reynolds's approach to card magic is very intriguing; anyone interested in the vast universe of card tricks ought to pay attention. Whether these routines work for you as they work for Steve is a question up in the air, but thinking this creative is always welcome. Check it out if you're a Cardguy with a capital “C.”

VORTEX OF REFRESHMENT TRICK

By DAVID REGAL

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price: \$40.00

REVIEW BY DAVID GOODSSELL

In a nutshell: The performer shows both sides of a bamboo place mat, reaches behind it, and removes a large, full glass of liquid – cola or beer, anything. He takes a sip and places it back behind the mat, where it seemingly disappears! What!? He repeats it, in case you blinked at the wrong time. On the third time he shakes the mat, turns it sideways, rolls it into a tube, reaches inside, and removes the glass once more. It does seem impossible, especially this last sequence.



Some of you will remember this as The World's Greatest Invention from David's book *Approaching Magic*. You might have thought to do the trick, but wondered where you could find a bamboo mat. Could you really make up the required gimmick? Sure you could, but it might take some hunting and experimentation to find the right materials.

David has already found the materials and provides them to you, complete with a ready-made gimmick and an instructional DVD under a new name, Vortex of Refreshment.

This is a favorite routine for David, and from the DVD that shows him doing this at the Magic Castle we can see that it does work and it is entertaining. Watching David's performance, once you understand the method, you will realize that to do it right you must work through the handling so that every move seems natural. If either hand appears to be doing anything fishy, your audience will quickly move from "how did that happen" to "I wonder what he was doing." That will kill the magic. Even in David's performance, his right hand seems a tad stiff at times, although the audience doesn't seem to detect anything. (Perhaps I'm being too picky.) But if you study David's presentations, gain a full understanding of how this effect works, and practice, you will find your own way of handling the gimmick. Then, with a little work, your technique can reach near perfection.

This is an excellent trick, perfect for emcees or for presenters who want to add a little fun to their lectures. It is an ideal opening trick for any show. Can you do it for kids? Yep. Fill the glass with chocolate milk or juice. What makes it great for kids is that it's a fast-paced, two-minute opener that gets kids shouting to see the other side, even though you are showing the other side; suddenly, in mid-shout, it's over.

Vortex of Refreshment comes with the mat, gimmick, and DVD instructions. You can find a suitable plastic glass at any discount store.

ULTIMATE NETWORKING TOOL DVD, BOOKLET, AND PROPS BY JEFF KAYLOR AND ANTON JAMES

Available from: <http://themagicestate.com>

Price \$40.00

REVIEW BY JIM KLEEFELD



I'm glad I get a chance to review this product; reading the ads and watching the trailer present some real issues to discuss. I'll explain later. Right now, let's see what you get. The slim package contains an eight-page booklet describing the props and a net-

working idea, a DVD with further clarifications on the use of the props, forty cards that you use to collect information from prospective clients, a half-pencil, and a nice leather peek wallet. Jeff Kaylor has produced only top quality well-thought-out products, and this is no exception. He has designed a way for you to ask for, and retain, contact information while wrapping it in a magic trick (well, technically a mentalism

effect). His premise is that while at a venue, you hand out a card and a pencil, have the client write down his contact information, and then perform magic with that information. The design of the card is clever and useful for accomplishing the effect, and the cards are heavier than standard business cards. This helps when a spectator handles the card and tries to write on it while standing.

The wallet is nice quality leather and finely sewn, with pockets and elastic bands in just the right places to hold and separate the cards into four distinct sections – Unused, Hot Contacts, Cold Contacts, and Instant of Performance. The wallet in my package has the elastic that holds the pencil a bit off-center, so that the wallet does not fold correctly. It appears that the ones on the video instructions work correctly, so I believe I got a dud. The instructions are slim, but explain how to make use of two gags on the printed card to mollify your prospective client into giving his information. As an ice-breaker, it seems to succeed fairly well. I had no trouble ringing in the card and getting the information from several on whom I tried this. All in all, it is a very nice product with a decent concept behind it and well-produced props. It is certainly worth \$40 to have a way to smoothly and professionally engage your clients and secure their contact information.

As to the issues I mentioned above, the product title is partly unclear and partly wrong. I tend to resent (or at least suspect) any product titled "Ultimate." True, here. This prop is another decent way to help you gather information. It is not an "Ultimate" anything. Frankly, I am not even sure it can be called "networking," if all you do is collect someone's email and then solicit them later.

Further, the product marketing is a poor approach. The print ads and video trailers suspiciously do not tell you what you are getting. The creators tell you it's great and that it works and that it's worth the money. But how do you judge that with so little information to go on? I guess you have to wait to see if some magazine reviewer decides that the public has a right to know what they are getting when they buy something and spills the beans.

Alas, the provenance is another problematic issue. Kaylor and co-creator Anton James discuss this as if they came up with it themselves. Peek wallets are old and common, using secreted information to impress clients has been around forever, and even the idea of asking for the client's card instead of handing them yours goes back decades.

In the effect introduction, Kaylor and James tout the wallet as being "professional" because you do not gather information on a cocktail napkin or your cell phone. First, nobody writes on napkins any more. Second, bumping contact information into a high-tech smart phone seems very professional to me. And third, they would have you hand the spectator, not a Montblanc or even a Cross pen, but a tiny, eraser-less golf pencil to write with. Utilitarian, I suppose, but hardly professional.

Now, let's talk about the instructions. This is a simple prop with a simple idea, so no great and lengthy explanation is necessary. But the DVD is simply excessive. Kaylor and James literally read the booklet to you. Most of the video is a PowerPoint slide show showing you the exact wording that is being read aloud and is also printed in the booklet. I guess this is not bad, but the print version, the slide show, or the video would have been sufficient, because they are all nearly identical.

My last complaint is that the package contains forty of the business cards, each of which you can use one time. Are there refills available or do you have to buy another set and get a second leather wallet? If you can buy more blank cards, there is no mention of it on the packaging, their website, or related seller's websites. There is a webpage link for UNT that supposedly will

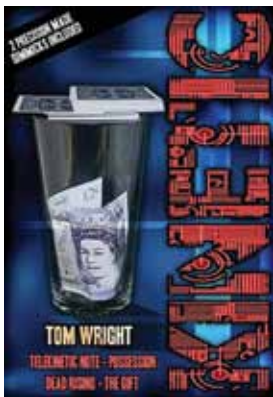
provide more information, but currently it has only one video with one additional tip that is very similar to what is in the instructions. Plus that page for the “UNT” is misnamed as “UTN.”

Here’s the bottom line: I like the wallet and the cards and the clever and useful gags that get you into the magic. The concept is proven solid for generating leads. This is worth the investment for those of us who do commercial shows and want to get more of them. Like all lead management systems, you have to condition yourself into using it repeatedly for it to work. Add a decent writing implement and ignore the creative posturing, and you have yourself a helpful carry-around tool.

KINETIC TRICK **By TOM WRIGHT**

Distributed by Murphy’s Magic Supplies
Price: \$42.00

REVIEW BY DAVID GOODSELL



Thread and cards. The Haunted Pack concept (whether it is cards that rise or decks that cut themselves to reveal a chosen card) has been around for a long time. Magicians are always looking for ways to improve the method, to make the handling more natural. In recent years a wide variety of reels, invisible threads, and invisible elastic threads have expanded the possibilities dramatically, no pun intended. Is Tom Wright’s method the best to date? Some people like red cars, some people like blue

cars. But the Kinetic DVD will certainly get your mind working.

The DVD comes with two simple reels of invisible elastic thread and a method for securing the reel to your body. Of more importance is Tom’s thread setup, which makes possible three of the four close-up routines demonstrated. A card is selected from a deck shuffled by someone at the table. The card is placed into the deck, which is then placed on the bottom of a down-turned glass tumbler. With just the power of suggestion the top half of the pack slowly slides backwards and falls to the table. Then, with the spectator focused on the cards, the top card of the remaining pack flips into the air and onto the table. It is the chosen card.

In the second card effect, a card is selected, returned to the deck, and the deck is placed inside a wine glass held by the spectator. The selected card slowly rises from the deck, pops out, and falls to the floor. As an alternate ending, the card is left tipped, well out of the deck. Everything is clean. The glass could just as easily be on the table. This effect uses a different thread setup from the other three.

Two paper-money effects are shown. A twenty-dollar bill is borrowed, folded, and placed inside an empty glass. Two playing cards are placed on top, trapping the bill inside. The glass is then placed on a table. Slowly, the bill crawls up the inside of the glass, pushes the cards aside, and jumps into the air, where the performer catches it.

In the last effect, a borrowed bill is folded and given to the spectator to hold. At the count of three the spectator lets go of the bill. Rather than falling to the floor, the bill flies to the performer, who catches it.

In all cases the performer is at least two feet away from the magic and his hands are completely free of the work – very con-

vincing.

All four of these performances are filmed in restaurants or on the street with real people. The explanations are clear and complete, and the methods can be mastered with reasonable effort. This is excellent, visual magic!

MAGNUM TRICK **By MARK ZUST**

Distributed by Murphy’s Magic Supplies
Price \$35.00

REVIEW BY JIM KLEEFELD



I have a new worker. Magnum is going into my stand-up mentalism show, no ifs, ands, or buts. This versatile piece created by “Perceptionist” Mark Zust has lots of potential, because it is not a one-trick pony. You can easily do several minutes with this one simple prop.

Magnum is essentially a single page torn from a current magazine. It is slick and professionally done and reads well on

both sides. There are articles, illustrations, photos, and ads, all fake, but all deceptively realistic. No lay person would suspect that it is anything other than a regular page torn from a regular magazine. You can set up three magazines at once because you get three identical pages in the package.

After having a spectator choose any magazine and stop you at “any” page, you tear the page from the magazine and hand it to the helper. Once they have it, you can present a multiplicity of effects, including one or two drawing duplications, a “pick any word” revelation, a world city revelation, one or two different famous celebrity revelations, even a time prediction, based on an advertisement for a watch. It is a versatile prop. You can do one mind-reading effect and put it away, or you can have the spectators pass it around so you can read several minds in different ways. In fact, Zust gives two sample scripts that you can use to create ten- and fifteen-minute routines using just this magazine page.

Overkill? Probably not. Zust’s routines have a decent flow to them and the effects in the routines are varied enough that you won’t bore the audience with one trick and then more of the same. I liked that his effects depend on several different methods, most of which are easy and require very little memory work. If anyone tries to reverse engineer your methods, they will be flummoxed.

Without being too specific, here are some highlights. A spectator reads through an entire article and chooses any word. You reveal her word. Another spectator sees many celebrity photos and concentrates on one. You tell her who. Someone picks one of the six cities from a list. You name it. Through some of Zust’s nicely thought-out dual reality, the rest of that audience does not even know that there is a list of cities. They think that she merely thought of any city in the world. Another spectator chooses one of the drawings or illustrations on either side of the page. As she concentrates, you pick up your whiteboard and duplicate that drawing. These are solid, if familiar, mentalism effects that wow lay audiences.

Are there downsides to Magnum? A few. If you nitpick, you might conclude that the paper it is printed on is heavier than typical magazine paper. I doubt anyone would notice in a stage

show, especially as they do not have any other pages of any kind to compare it to. Also, there is a possibility someone might see that an article ends with the words “continued on page 132.” This threw me, because many popular news magazines are never that long. Again, I doubt it would be noticed, let alone questioned in real world performance. Another consideration is whether you get repeat bookings. If your livelihood depends on revisiting the same audience often, you cannot get away with using this for repeat shows. Unlike a Flashback book where at every show the spectator sees a different word, in this case, each time you use it, the same things will show up. Of course, since it has multiple effects, you could simply choose to do the celebrity revelation one time and the city revelation the next time. But if you carefully plot out and practice Magnum’s fifteen-minute multi-phase routine, you will be revealing many of the same things at every show.

A word or two is in order about other current magazine tests, because comparisons are inevitable. Here are the differences. Patrick Redford’s Killer Magazine Test uses two complete magazines, but they are atypical ones with detailed information about serial killers. You probably would be using Killer and Magnum for different audiences. Steve Thompson’s Glance includes two complete magazines as well, and a spectator can choose any word on any page in either magazine. However, there is one effect: you reveal one word. Likewise with Nathan Kranzo’s Tru-Test. Basically, one word is revealed. Magnum and Tru-Test use a single page, not an entire magazine, so your spectator always gets that page. She does not get to see or use any other pages in the magazine. But routining makes it look like she chose any random page in any magazine and you just tore it out for her. The positives are that Killer and Glance both leave entire magazines in the spectator’s hands, but Magnum holds the potential for many predictions and revelations and a much longer routine. The Tru-Test package comes with one hundred sheets; Magnum comes with three. Done properly, you should be able to retrieve the Magnum sheet and use it many times.

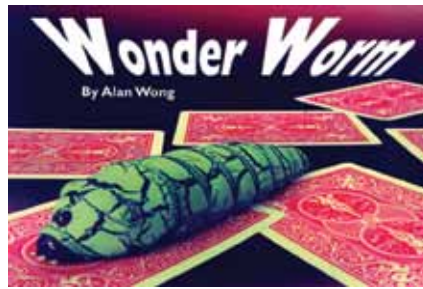
I found the instructions for Glance and Tru-Test adequate, but short. The directions for Magnum are very detailed, with illustrations where needed. And as a clever addition, Zusto includes a ubiquitous crib sheet that will go unnoticed by your audience, but in a pinch, can aid you in the few simple bits of memory work needed. It’s a clever and helpful touch. You get three re-usable magazine pages, a thirty-page instruction book, and the nifty crib card for a very reasonable \$35. More to the point, you get fifteen minutes of solid mentalism material for your money. If you use this routine so much the sheets wear out, you can buy refill pages three at a time for \$10. I already bought refills, as I am sure that I will be wearing mine out. I’m happy to have Magnum and I suspect you would be too.

WONDER WORM TRICK By ALAN WONG

Available from: <http://awongmagic.com>
Distributed by Murphy’s Magic Supplies
Price \$25.00

REVIEW BY PAYNE

This trick was a flashback to my misspent youth. When I was growing up and new to the world of magic there were many tricks that I’d order from the overly lurid ads in the back of a magic magazine that, when they finally arrived in the post, turned out to be something the dealer had run across in a Five and Dime (or Dollar Store, in today’s parlance) and found a way to foist upon



the unsuspecting by making a trick out of it.

This is exactly what Alan Wong’s Wonder Worm appears to be. It’s a mass marketed remote control toy that he has made into a card trick. Well, made isn’t exactly the right word here. Since there

have been no modifications of any kind made to the plaything, I suppose it would be better described as a mass marketed remote control toy that Mr. Wong has repackaged and included a card trick with. Even the card trick harkens back to my youth, as it includes the classic phrase “Use your favorite method to force a card.”

Now don’t get me wrong. It is a great little toy. You get a small (about four inches long) grub-like mechanical worm with a single glowing blue eye. It crawls, inchworm like, forward at a brisk pace. It will also spin on its axis, allowing it to clamber merrily along in all directions. It is controlled by an IR remote that will work up to fifteen feet away (as long as it remains in the remote’s line of sight, since infra-red beams won’t go through walls or around corners).

The included effect is nothing that any self respecting magician wouldn’t have instantly come up with themselves had they found one of these toys in a hotel gift shop. A card is selected from a small packet of eight cards or so. The cards are then placed face down in an array on a table or on the floor and the Wonder Worm brought out. The worm then speeds along from card to card finally coming to rest on one of them – which card, surprise, surprise, turns out to be the previously selected one. This is neither a fooler-dooler nor much of a trick. But it is a neat toy that, on a side note, is great at terrifying or entertaining the cat.

The worm runs on three LR44 button cell batteries that will keep it powered for a full thirty minutes of continuous operation. So for the thirty seconds or so of time required for your Wonder Worm to find the selected card before your audience starts to nod off you should get many performances before needing to change out the batteries. The remote also requires three LR44 batteries as well (all of which are included). The remote is of such a size that it is easily hidden in your hand. It is bright green with a blinking LED light on it. So you might think about covering it with some flesh colored tape to help camouflage it. Not that anyone is going to think that you’re not using a remote to control the Wonder Worm anyway. So in the end, all I can really say is Alan Wong’s Wonder Worm is this: great toy, poor trick. ★

If you wish to have your product reviewed, please send it to:

Bill Duncan
P.O. Box 50562
Bellevue, WA 98015-0562

Socializing the Tech Way

The Yellow Pages is dead. With the exception of senior citizens who still use those books to look things up, most people run to their computers and point their browsers to seek out businesses related to their interests.

Social media is the in thing, as is getting to the top of search engine lists. The more you post online, the more visible you are in search engines like Google, Bing, and Yahoo. Here are a few apps to make it easier for you to promote yourself on the social networks.

Hanging Posters



Want to look professional when you post on Facebook or Twitter about an upcoming performance? Check out **Phoster**. **Phoster** is a super easy way of making simple, professional posters that you can post on Facebook, Twitter, or Tumblr; you can also attach them to emails. Basically, you select a layout, choose a photo or graphic from your camera roll, type a simple message, and then press a button to assemble it and send it out – really easy and clean.

You can take a photo on the fly and turn it into an immediate poster. Imagine meeting someone famous backstage and within a minute, promote it on Facebook. **Phoster** is available on the iTunes App Store for \$1.99. Just download this app. I guarantee that you will use it.

All about Me



About.me has been mentioned here before. If you want a one-stop place for people to learn all about your social media links, **about.me** is the place for you. Think of it as a place to create a billboard sign that people can visit to learn all about your links. They also have a free app so you can make adjustments on the fly. My address is about.

me/brucekalver. **About.me** is a free service.

Storyboard on the Fly

It is so annoying when people have a few photos to show on Facebook and choose to post them one at a time. With **Diptic**, you can put multiple photos together in a variety of layouts. They come out like the old photo albums we used before the advent of digital photography. This program is extremely



easy to use. Simply select a layout, pick the pictures from your camera roll, arrange them in the order you wish, and with a final press of a button, you have a beautiful collage that you can share on social media. **Diptic** is in the iTunes App Store for 99 cents. It is also available for your Mac or Android phone.

Getting to Hollywood with Vine



Vine is the latest social network gimmick. With the **Vine** app, you can make a six-second looping clip of whatever you want. Once you create a Vine, it can be shared on Facebook or Twitter. Basically, you combine half-second photos that come together to make this video loop. Perform a

magic trick, do an animation, create a commercial. You can do a lot in six seconds! **Vine** is free and available on the iTunes App Store.

File Access Away From Home



Every year at the S.A.M. convention, you will find lots of people running around working to give you the best convention that is humanly possible. I'm sure you will notice that I also run around to help as the "tech guy" when needed. A lot of times, people are looking for forms,

graphics, photos, or films that I am supplying. All of this is on my home computer but I am usually able to produce what they need from wherever I am. How? I use a simple little device called a **PogoPlug**. This device plugs into your router at home; up to three hard drives can plug into the PogoPlug. The contents of the hard drive are now privately on the World Wide Web for you to access from another computer. They also have apps that allow you to get the files from an Android phone or iDevice. There is no fee to use these devices; the price for a **PogoPlug** has recently been lowered from \$100 to around \$30-\$40. Check them out at amazon.com or Google them to find a dealer near you. **PogoPlug** has saved my life many times. ☆

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



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TREASURES FROM THE SALON DE MAGIE

BY KEN KLOSTERMAN



DUVAL'S RHAPSODY IN SILK



This month's column is devoted to a local Cincinnati magician, Ade Duval (1898-1965). He was very popular in both Chautauqua and Lyceum, but it was in vaudeville (beginning in the 1920s) where he became famous with one of the showiest, most startling acts ever performed.

The act he made famous was called "Rhapsody in Silk." In its simplest form, it was a silk production act. It utilized a drumhead or "Phantom Tube," a common piece of apparatus among magicians. A metal tube is shown empty, the ends are covered with small squares of tissue paper, metal rings seal the ends, and the magician pokes through the paper and withdraws several beautiful silks or streamers. Even in Duval's day the trick was so well known that most magicians wouldn't be caught dead doing it.

However, Duval took the trick to the next level and beyond – he literally covered the stage with the silks he produced. Accompanied by an orchestra, Duval poked through the tissue and thus began a whirlwind of color. First came gaily colored silks, one at a time, then a three-foot-square silk, a rainbow of tied silks, and finally a gigantic silk measuring 4½-feet wide and 19-feet long. That concluded the first part of the trick.

Sparing less than a moment to catch his breath, Duval continued the explosion of colored cloth. Next came eighteen smaller silks, then ever increasingly larger silks, some a yard and a half square. The routine concluded with silk streamers spouting from the tube



and then a huge hand-painted butterfly silk that filled the stage.

Duval's act was a tremendous hit; he played all the top vaudeville theaters in the United States, the British Isles, and the continent. Although the climax of his act played for less than three minutes, Duval and his wife True spent nearly an hour loading the props for every performance – forty-five minutes at a minimum. And they sometimes did two or three shows a day.



Duval Final Silk Production

The surviving apparatus is not much to look at. It resembles several Petrie and Lewis Phantom and Drum Head tubes. The key to accomplishing the remarkable productions from the one tube was that there were actually more than one tube; additional loads that were secretly obtained during the production. Sadly, none of the silks from the act survive. This is not surprising, since according to Duval, the life expectancy of a silk was about eight weeks.

The provenance is from magician Paul Fleming to the Salon de Magie. ★

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S.A.M. PHOTO CONTEST



Congratulations to "Merlin" (aka Tony Antonelli) for being the winner of the S.A.M. gear photo contest this month.

As you can see, all the great wizards want to get in on this contest. Why don't you enter now? Photos can be posted on the S.A.M. compeers Facebook page or sent to National Administrator Manon (pronounced Mah-noh) Rodriguez. There are only a few months left until final voting happens at the S.A.M. convention in Arlington, Virginia. Grab your S.A.M. gear and a camera and get your photo in today. —Steve Marshall

INSIDE STRAIGHT

BY NORMAN BECK

POPPING THE QUESTION

There are two kids I want to meet; they are not magicians, they don't play cards, and, as far as I know, we have nothing in common. The two guys are Jake Davidson and Michael Pollack. One is a high school senior and one is a college freshman. A famous guy who plays the piano a bit was giving a talk at Vanderbilt, where Mr. Pollack is a student. The lecture took place during the Q & A part of the show; the kid asked the old man, "Can I come up on stage and play one of your songs with you?" The famous guy's look was long, but his answer was a short "Okay," and in short order the kid was on stage with his idol. (The punch line will come in a moment.)

In California (and around the country for that matter), prom season is just around the corner. Jake Davidson didn't have a date. Let me restate the last line. Jake Davidson *did not* have a date to the prom; but he does now. I can remember back to my high school days; the idea of asking a girl out was very scary. The greatest fear was hearing the all-too-often word "No" (or perhaps "Hell no!").

I think the word "no" is scary enough in one-on-one situations, but with Michael Pollack and the famous piano player it was in front of about a thousand of his peers, and with Jake Davidson it was in front of the entire Internet world. Jake posted a YouTube clip asking a girl out on a date. The girl, however, said yes, and that helps me renew my faith in humanity. The girl was not from Jake's school, or even from his state; in fact, they had never spoken when he asked her out. The girl's name is Kate Upton and she has been on the cover of the *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue. She is listed as one of the top one hundred most gorgeous women in the world. The famous piano player was Billy Joel. I hope that both these events were on the square and neither was staged.

The key lesson is that neither guy had a thing to lose; but they had a great deal to gain by just asking the question. If they had received a no response, they would simply move on.

A number of years ago, a lady I worked with was out to dinner with seven of her girlfriends and a guy walked up to the table and asked her out cold. He simply left his business card and said that if she was interested, she should call him. The guy was in and out in less than thirty seconds. He invested thirty seconds and one business card, and he risked the danger of being shot down in the middle of Spago. He was not shot down, however, and the story had a very happy ending.

I am a big fan of asking any question of anyone at anytime — as long as that question is appropriate. The worst thing that can happen is they say no. In bringing this closer to magic, the most common situation is that I will do a trick for a magician and he will ask, "Where is that in print?" I would love to have a magician get to the point and say, "I really like that routine and was wondering if it would be okay if I did it." You may well get a no, but you just might get a yes; the only way you will know is if you ask.

I have a good friend who is a doctor; he is single. For a number of years he knew a nurse who was a drop-dead, beautiful woman who any man would be happy to know. She moved; on the last day she was in Tulsa he asked her, "Why did we never go out?" The reply broke his heart: "You never asked." My tip of the week is simple. Don't worry about the word no. Hearing it doesn't hurt, and to not ask is the same as a no. ★



THE DEAN'S DIARY

BY GEORGE SCHINDLER

CORPORATE GIGS

I boarded the bus in front of the Fairmont Hotel in Dallas. I had already done my day's worth of magic, cutting and restoring a rope in six different meeting rooms at the hotel while showing that if you split marketing and sales you halve the efficiency of your project. But when you put the two departments together, they are stronger than ever. (Yes, I know it's corny, but it paid my bills.)

The morning before, I had visited the company. The lobby had a bar set up for breakfast, which included a delicious non-coffee hot drink of Dr Pepper. I drank it black, no sugar. It was great! I was, after all, at the Dr Pepper headquarters, a large, twenty-six acre, landscaped building on East Mockingbird Lane. But I digress.

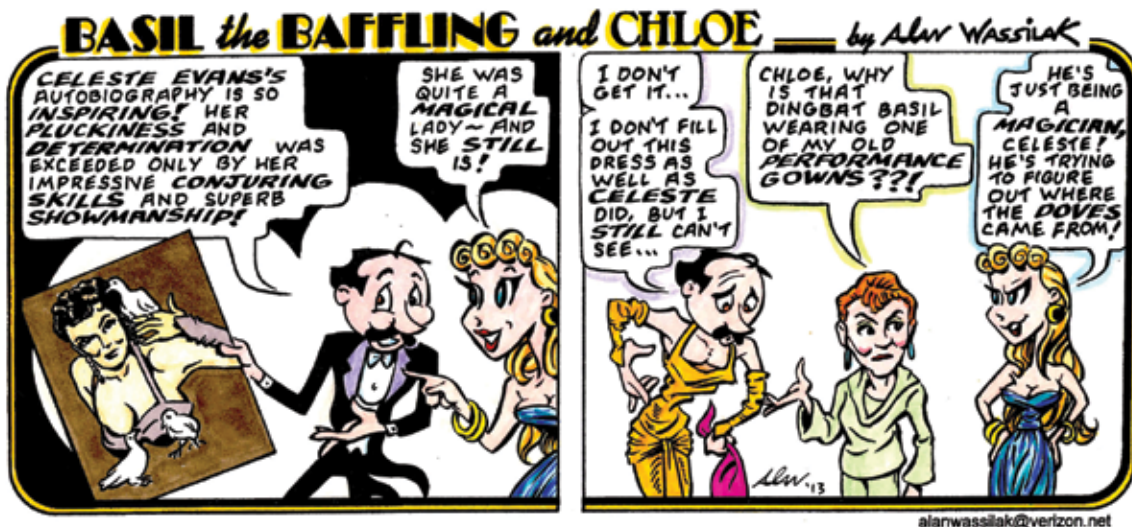
The Dr Pepper bottlers meeting ran for three days. I wasn't scheduled to leave until the following day, and having nothing to do that last evening, I was invited to have dinner at a place called Ranchland, which is why they loaded all of us onto buses. The ranch was located out of town on the way to Fort Worth.

When we arrived, we found there was a kiosk set up with ten-gallon Texas hats and red bandanas that each guest had to wear. Cocktails were served before we made our way onto the grounds. This was a working ranch that catered to large parties. I wasn't into horseback riding, so I gave that activity a pass. A country and western band played for us as we got onto the property, where tents were set up and a number of sides of beef were turning on open barbeque spits.



One of the salesmen asked if I would do a few card tricks, and I knew that after dinner I had to get out of there. I was not going to wait for the rodeo. There I stood in my faded blue leisure suit (popular in 1976) in the center of an open field and I asked myself, "What's a nice Jewish boy from Brooklyn doing in the middle of a Texas cow pasture?" Card tricks! I earned my money when I took the early bus back to the hotel. Each bus had an ice bucket up front filled with various bottles of non-Dr Pepper liquor. My salesman buddy came with me, so I did close-up for the riders on the way home. One woman asked, "Is there one of you on every bus?" My salesman broke into laughter when I replied in my Brooklyn-Texas accent, "Yes, ma'am!"

P.S. Try hot Dr Pepper instead of coffee or tea some morning. ☆



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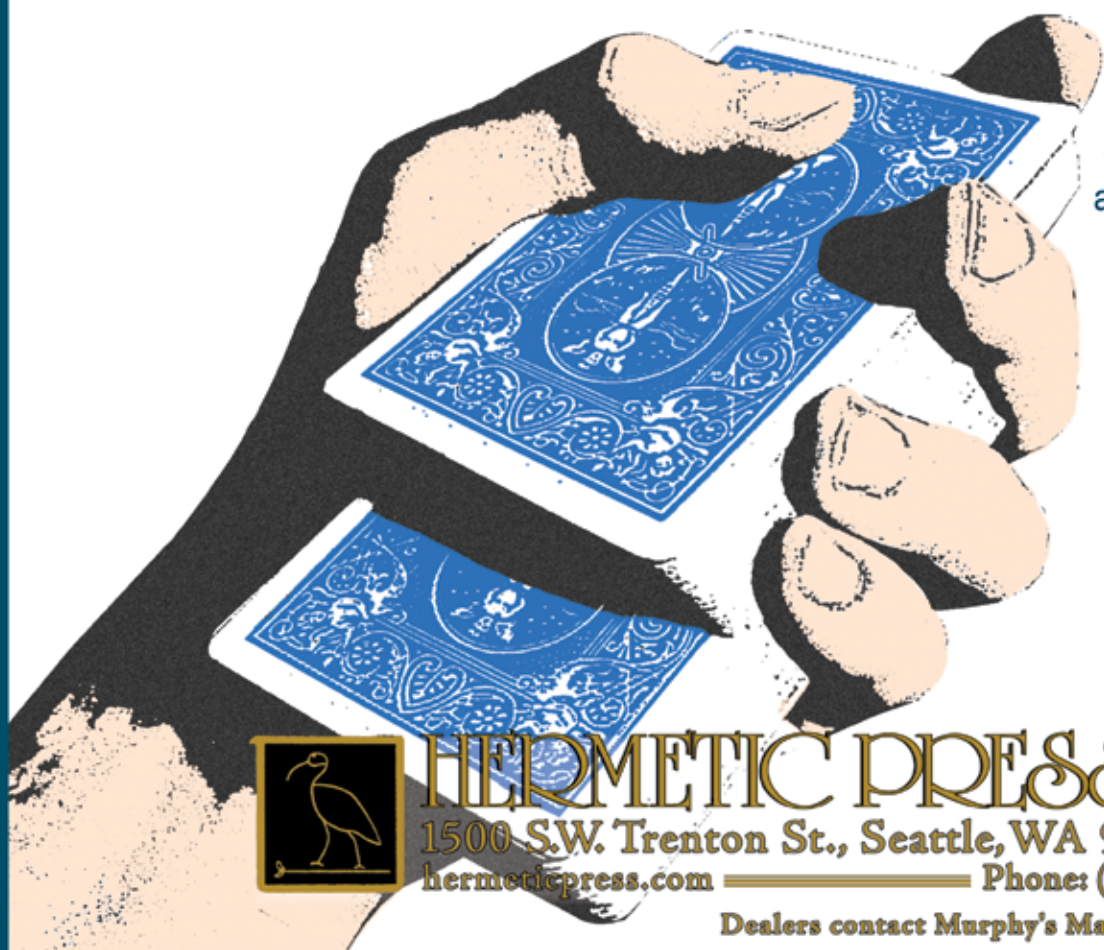
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