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THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN MAGICIANS

MAY 2014



THE SPANGLERS
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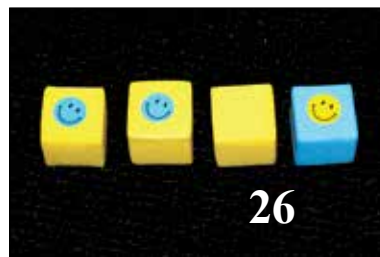
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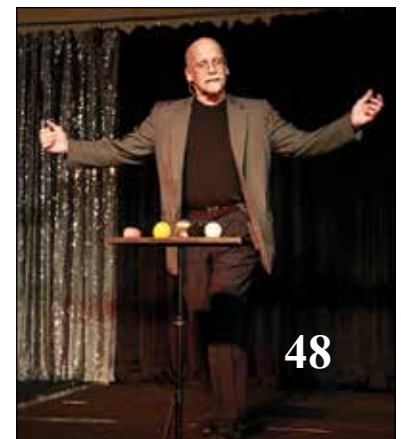
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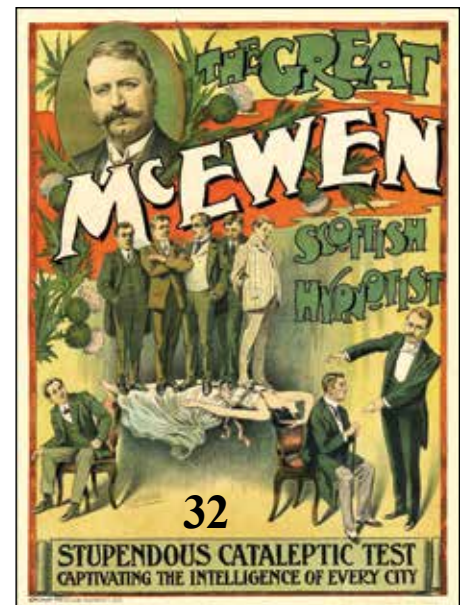
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Editor's Desk

Michael Close

Bruce and Kitty Spangler have had a major impact on the magic and the magicians of Colorado. As teachers and mentors they have inspired and guided the magical lives of generations of young magicians. They were pioneers in the use of video equipment as a magical learning tool. As collectors they have preserved the treasured props and mementos of many famous magicians. And throughout it all they have served as sterling examples of how to sustain a marriage; they recently celebrated their fiftieth anniversary.

Dan Rodriguez was one of the young magicians who was influenced by the Spanglers. In his cover story this month, Dan pays tribute to the Spanglers and their amazing lives in magic.

Because of the length of the Spangler cover story, a few things got squeezed out of this issue. The minutes of the March 2014 national council meeting were slated to appear in this issue. They will be published in the June issue. However, if you would like to read the minutes before then, you can find them on the S.A.M. website (www.magicsam.com). Log in and go to the members' home page. Find the link to Downloads/Documents (on the left side of the screen). You'll find a PDF file of the minutes there.

There are some very practical and useful routines in *M-U-M* this month. George Parker describes the torn and restored card routine he developed by using his SurvivalVersion methods. One thing to keep in mind as you study George's routine is that he treats the effect as an additional, offhand kicker to another effect that uses a signed card. It's a casual thing. The card is folded and torn; boom – the card is restored. It's a quick trick.

The two routines excerpted from *Al Schneider Magic* will be great additions to your arsenal of impromptu close-up tricks. Pay particular attention to Al's additions to the venerable Saltshaker through the Table trick. The little touch of wrapping the shaker with strips of paper gives a different feel to the trick and adds a layer of puzzlement.

I've been having a lot of fun with Bob Farmer's Monte Bones, which you'll find described by R.D. Michaels in the El Roberto Enigmatico column. I performed this routine for a local Canadian professional magician; he was very surprised that it was going to be published in *M-U-M*, rather than being released as a commercial product. Considering that one-trick DVDs are now selling in the \$25-35 range, your investment in the S.A.M. has already saved you some money.

While we're on the subject of tricks, I'd like to devote the remainder of this column to the current state of the magic marketplace. In past few weeks there have been some dramatic examples of magic companies releasing products without having done the due diligence necessary to establish whether the tricks were actually original and deserving of release. In several cases there were outpourings of protests via social media, and the offending products were withdrawn. What I'd like to talk about are not these specific examples, but rather what you, as a

consumer, can do to protect yourself.

The amount of product being released to the magic community is staggering. The Magic Cafe website has a section called "The Good, the Bad, and the Garbage" that features members' reviews and discussions of products, including individual tricks, DVDs, books, ebooks, mental magic, stage effects, and magic accessories. During the past twelve years, more than twenty thousand items have been discussed. That is a tsunami of magic product. And when you consider that books and DVDs usually offer more than one trick, that is a overwhelming number of magic tricks, all of which are vying for your money.

How do you choose? How do you know if someone is trying to sell you an old idea that was in print years ago? The answer is simple; you have to be a better informed, better educated consumer, and, first and foremost, that means that *you must be able to read*. You need to know the history of whatever branch of magic interests you, and that history is to be found in books.

What books should you read? I can offer you some suggestions in the field of magic that particularly interests me – close-up and card magic. I have prepared a suggested reading list that you can find at my website (www.michaelclose.com). Go to the "free stuff" page. If close-up isn't your thing, there are experts in other areas of magic who can point you in right direction. (Some of these experts write for this very magazine.) With the knowledge you'll gain from these books you will minimize the chances of purchasing rehashed products.

Another benefit of "book-learning," is that you will be able to put the value of a one-trick DVD or download in perspective. Recently, an online magic company made available a download of a single trick, performed and explained by a well-known author. The download sells for \$10. The book in which this trick appears sells for \$35 and includes eighteen effects, which means each effect costs about two dollars. So the question you have to ask yourself is: Is it worth paying **five times more** for a trick just so I don't have to learn to read? If the answer to that question is yes, I fear your magic learning experience will be a very costly one.

There is one other aspect to being a smart magic consumer, and this aspect is perfectly explained by Darwin Ortiz in the first chapter of his book *Designing Miracles*. He writes: "A quick survey of Internet magic boards will show that a large percentage of posters are seeking the 'best' version of a particular trick... We live at a time when there is a glut of methods, versions, and 'improvements' for every magic plot. Consequently, it's more important than ever to ask, not just which version is best, but how do we determine which version is best?" Understanding what constitutes "improvement" is different from historical knowledge. I have found that those who really understand it learned from expert mentors.

I urge you to buy and carefully study *Designing Miracles*. It will take time for you to internalize Darwin's information, but when you do you will become a far better magician, and a powerfully informed consumer. Far too much product floods the market for you to only rely on someone else's opinion. You need to be in charge. Education is the key to that empowerment. You won't have to go on the Internet to ask what the best version of this or that trick is. You'll be the person who already knows the answer. How cool is that? ♦



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President's Desk

Dal Sanders

There are so many exciting things happening right now that I barely know where to start. Unfortunately, most of those things are “in the works” and not ready for full announcements. There soon will be new opportunities for all compeers to stream the S.A.M. Video Library. If you are the president, vice president, or the leader of your local assembly, we will soon be ready to announce a special affiliate program that will give you new and exciting tools to help you in your leadership role. If you are one of the elected leaders of your local magic club, you might want to put a hold on November 8 and 9.

April 12 was the first anniversary of our Facebook Fan Page. This page is not just for magicians; it is for anyone with an interest in magic and magicians. When we launched the fan page we wanted to get 2,400 people to follow us in twenty-four hours. I have to admit that I was skeptical that we would reach that lofty goal, but we did it. As of this date we have close to 6,000 people following us. We have thousands of people checking in with the page every day and recently we had 28,704 different people view a single video that we posted. If you are not following this page and our other Facebook pages I encourage you to sign on. There is a wealth of information there. The other official S.A.M. Facebook sites are the Compeers Facebook Group Page (which is for members of the S.A.M.) and the S.A.M. Conference Facebook Page (with news about our national conventions).

I have really enjoyed the discussions that I have had with magicians recently. We have talked about many things, but many people have been asking my opinion on how to be successful. Of course my first reaction is to laugh it off by saying, “I’ll let you know if I ever get there.” Then I started to think about it. While I’m certainly not where I would like to be, I do have a great life and a great family; I am privileged to serve as president of the world’s oldest and most prestigious magic organization, and I make a living by making people laugh and say *wow*. I guess I am successful in a way. While there are tons of books, videos, and seminars on success I will add my thirteen cents (adjusted for inflation). What follows are ten steps that I think you must take to have the magic career you’ve always dreamed about.

1. Think for yourself. Don’t listen to the advice of those who are just getting started themselves. If you listen, you will hear a lot of what my wife calls “baloney sausage” when she really means bull...well you know what she means. Much of this advice starts with the words, “What I do is...” Usually this hot air is useless; sometimes it can be worse than useless. Instead, seek out the counsel of those who have made their mark in magic. Get to know the experts. Listen to their advice and be ready to pay for it.

2. Find a decent place to live. Living in a coldwater flat might be all right if you’re a folk singer or a French impressionist painter, but living like a starving artist is a good way to become a starving artist and stay that way for a long time. Unlike singers or painters,

magicians are rarely discovered after they’re dead.

3. Take classes. Go to workshops. Attend lectures and conventions. There are two very good reasons for this. First, you will learn a lot from working pros and second, you will begin to meet people. Our business is one of networking and constant collaboration, so it’s a good idea to get started on this part of your career immediately. The upcoming I.B.M./S.A.M. combined convention would be a great place to start. Whether you are into close-up, stage, parlor, or family magic, there will be something there that will help you grow.

4. Be like Elvis and “TCB” – take care of business. What this means is look out for your finances in a realistic way, budget for your career needs, save for a rainy day. I’m surprised at how many people think it doesn’t rain in “magicaland.” It does, and often. You should always act like a responsible business person. Even if you’re not a responsible business person, *act* like you are.

5. Take care of yourself. Stay healthy. Eat well, exercise, and drive carefully.

6. Relax. Getting your career started is probably going to take some time and there might be some pain involved. Keep in mind that while pain is inevitable, misery is optional. Breathe deeply. Pay attention to the rest of the world. Anxiety, frustration, and worry will not make things go any faster.

7. Be nice to others. This sneaky ploy works in all walks of life.

8. Don’t become a critic. A lot of new magicians think that they will impress people with their criticism of others. They think that it’s a way to look smart. Believe me, you won’t impress and you won’t look smart. You’ll just come off as an amateur wannabe. Instead, do what the stars of magic do. Smile and say things like: “That was quite a show!” “Well, what can I say...amazing!” “You really fooled me there.” This is not called lying; this is called professional courtesy. Personally, I only risk being critical to those I know very well.

9. Remember why you’re here. You’re here because you want to entertain people with magic and (if all goes well) make some money. Open mic nights, working for “experience,” and other free shows (or almost free shows) are all fine to keep your ‘instrument’ tuned, but they can easily become a “way of life” if you are not determined to make money at this.

10. Make a plan. I know this is a lot like homework, but the results of sitting down for a few hours and really determining what you want out of your magic career are truly amazing. “A bad plan, vigorously executed, is better than no plan at all.” – General George Patton

Well, ten is a nice round number...but if I were to go on to eleven, it would be this: Do everything you can to be a happy person, right now. If you think you can whine and complain today and then be happy someday in the future, I’m here to tell you that happiness just doesn’t work that way. Putting off happiness until someday almost always guarantees that you will be unhappy forever. As Charles “Tremendous” Jones once pointed out, “If you can’t be happy where you are, it’s a cinch you can’t be happy where you ain’t.”

Of course, this is just my opinion...I could be wrong. ♦

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WILLIAMSON LECTURES AT PA 1

NEW YORK, NY— The PA 1 Magic Table was a lot of fun this month with regulars Richard Bossong, Scott Mero, Rene Clement, and Lee and Jerry Oppenheimer attending. We meet for lunch and to share magic at The Edison Café in the Hotel Edison. It's on 47th Street of 7th Avenue in Times Square. We meet after 12:30 on Fridays. On Saturdays the magicians gather at the "Pizza Place."

Our monthly meeting of the Parent Assembly was on March 7, 2014 at 7:15. President Throwdini was working at the Venetian in Vegas that night, but we did not have a quorum of fifteen members so he did not need to run the meeting. We had announcements for our members with an update from co-producer PP Ken Ferst on this year's *Salute to Magic*. He thanked the board for their ticket purchases and asked membership to step up their ticket buying. There are group ticket discounts if you buy ten or more tickets from the Queens Theatre at 718-760-0064. The emcee of the show is Jay Scott Berry. The acts are: Joe and Bronwyn Devlin, David Oliver, Jay Scott Berry, Kamarr, and Jeff McBride. It will be at Queens Theatre in the Flushing Meadow Corona Park, Queens NY. The show is on May 17. Magician Sol Stone will be honored as "Magician of the Year" that night.

The meeting ended promptly at 8 p.m. It was Open Mike Night at which each member was to do one single trick for the assembly. Lonnie Hefland, Rene Clement, Doug Edwards, Harvey Berg, and many others performed. It was a fun and relaxed evening.

On March 12 David Williamson lectured for the Parent Assembly. David's irresistible mix of humor and skill helped to make this one of the best lectures of the year. His focus on magic inside the "bubble" and outside the "bubble" illuminated the need to change your work when performing for

the public in a paid venue. It was a real teaching moment for all who attended. His humor killed; it was a crazy and fun night.

On Friday March 21, Doug Edwards ran a well-attended workshop at the Gemini Diner. We have blast eating dinner and sharing magic. Doug is amazing. —Tom Klem

Parent Assembly One meets at Mount Sinai on Madison Avenue in New York City Contact Tom Klem sampalnyc@gmail.com (212) 725-5258 www.sampal.com for more details.

2

CHINESE MAGIC

SAN FRANCISCO, CA—

At the beginning of the meeting, Dale Chung donated a magic set he had come across to the club to encourage exploring and developing new routines and methods to perform "standard" tricks and to encourage younger magicians who often begin with such tricks. The theme of the night was Chinese Magic. Starting the performances, Tamaka presented two crystal silk tubes and two Chinese frames with a bar inside each of the frames when opened. Opening the first frame, he showed three scarves tied to the bar. The scarves were removed, placed in a crystal tube, and then the scarves became tangerines. The scarves were missing from the first frame. Then the second frame was opened and there were the three scarves tied to the bar. Those scarves in frame number two were removed, placed into a second crystal tube, and then those scarves became one big dragon scarf. In addition, the three small scarves reappeared in frame number one.

Rich Seguire first made a fortune cookie magically drop from under Stu Bacon's nose and then showed us some "Chinese Viagra," which causes pills spilled from a medicine bottle to stand upright. Rob Shapiro (Mr. SHAP) used a genie tube to change four small scarves into one large scarf, blending all the colors of the smaller scarves. Hippo Lau performed a three-card Monte given to him by Bob Kuhn (our 101-year-old member)



Tamaka performs Chinese silk tubes and frames

to magically change the position of the cards at his will with only a flip of the wrist.

Stu's first trick demonstrated his first set of magic Chinese Sticks; he followed up with a vintage Buddha-paper folding trick. Dale focused on magic "presentation," first utilizing a key and then with Professor's Nightmare ropes. Dale's presentation was very original (inclusive of multiple oohs, ahs, and groans to his many puns and jokes) and not the typical routines associated with either trick or prop. Korene Tom and Terrie Cardoza also participated in vanishing the cookies brought by Rob. Next month we will perform magic to honor Bob Kuhn. —Rob Shapiro

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 <https://www.facebook.com/groups/249018441875771/> for more details.

3

JEREMY PITT-PAYNE LECTURES

CHICAGO, IL— Assembly 3 was pleased to host Jeremy Pitt-Payne for his first lecture. Jeremy has been working on Michigan Ave. in Chicago for the last four years as a full-time street performer. Although he said

upfront that he normally doesn't perform for magicians, we were able to twist his arm and get him to open up on not just the methods to his tricks, but the psychology he's learned from his hundreds of flight hours performing in front of lay audiences.

Jeremy began by presenting his ten-minute street act with our members standing around his table, just as they would watch when Jeremy works his pitch on the street. Following the show, he broke down all the basics, then advanced techniques and theory for his three effects: Sponge Bunnies, Cups and Balls, and the Bill in Lemon.

Jeremy's Bill in Lemon was especially appreciated by the members. A few subtle touches, honed over hundreds of performances, elevated the Bill in Lemon from a good trick to near-miracle status. His particular method for the load, never before explained to magicians, earned a great deal of applause and admiration from the members, many of whom perform other methods for the classic effect. We hope Jeremy sees fit to publish his touches on the effect sometime in the future.



Mi Neil Tobin with Lecturer Jeremy Pitt-Payne

Following the trick explanations, the members were curious to know about life working as a street performer: what hours were best, how to deal with police, how to adapt to the weather, and other details of the practicality of street performance.

The biggest lessons of Jeremy's lecture were not about the logistics

of street performing, but the psychology of audience management and misdirection. These lessons are applicable to every venue of magic performance, not just street performing. Many of our members came away from the lecture eager to put some of Jeremy's advice to practical use in their own work.

The members of Assembly 3 are grateful to be the first to hear Jeremy's lecture, and strongly recommend him to lecture for any club or assembly that might be interested! —John Sturk

Assembly 3 meets on the 4th Monday of the month, 7:30 PM at the Pilgrim Congregational Church, 460 Lake St, Oak Park, IL. Contact Darlene Bull dabull44@gmail.com (815) 740-2660 www.magicalchicago.com 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 who performed with cards, coins, rope, dollar bills, and even a tiny plunger. Prior to the contest, we were treated to two excellent mini-lectures: George Hample lectured in one corner of the room on mentalism effects while Eric Johnson held court at the other end of the room, where he taught some killer card tricks. Following these fine presentations, we held our annual close-up contest.

The close-up contest began with third-place winner Reba Strong performing a wonderful money-themed routine that included Patrick Page's Easy Money. Ed Cohen then divined Donna Horn's selected card in a unique manner with the aid of a rotary telephone. Next, Jim McElroy did an excellent Coins Across routine that culminated in the production of a jumbo coin. After Jim, second-place winner Joe McHugh deftly executed a hysterical Cups and Balls routine using crumpled-up dollar bills and tea cups while dressed as a gangster and brandishing a fake gun.

Ralph Armstrong then followed



Close-Up Contest Winners (l to r) Brian Hurlburt, Joe McHugh and Reba Strong

Joe with an amazing card revelation that also brought all four Aces to the top of the deck. Joe Festa then enlisted the aid of Edna Stimmler, a.k.a. Sunflower, and Donna Horn to demonstrate the history of poker in Atlantic City and concluded with the revelation of a brand of shoe freely selected by Edna. Assembly 4 president and first-place winner Brian Hurlburt then closed out the contest with a very entertaining Professor's Nightmare routine, after which he used a small plunger to locate a card previously selected by Peter Cuddihy. The close-up contest was a resounding success; everyone in attendance witnessed some amazing magic. Following the meeting a number of our members and their guests went to our favorite local diner where the fun continued. —Peter Cuddihy

The James Wobensmith Assembly 4 meets third Thursday at 7:00 p.m. at the Bustleton Memorial Post, 810 (American Legion) 9151 Old Newtown Road. Contact Brian Hurlburt brianhurlburt@comcast.net More information: www.sam4.org/ for more details.

6

MARCH MAGICAL MADNESS

BALTIMORE, MD— Following our under-a-minute business meeting, Peter Wood led off the magic with an interesting presentation of the Invisible Deck with the spectator coloring a drawing. Mentalist Oneil Banks predicted his spectator would choose the Joker from a mixed deck, and was right! Joe Bruno performed a mind reading effect (from the current *M-U-M*) plus his card effect first published in a 1973 *Linking Ring*. Didn't quite work out, but he later redeemed himself with his creation, Making an Elephant Disappear (with cards). And, by request, he performed his version of Al Cohen's version of Senator Crandall's version of Six-Card Repeat (a terrific effect for kids, he pointed out).

Tony Anastasi did his Bashful Card, with the spectator selecting the only red-backer in a blue deck. Card wizard Joe Harsanyi tested his spectator's luck with several amazing card casino tests. Craig Feinstein performed Cannibal Coins (it's on his website), mysteriously caused a quarter and a penny to change places repeatedly, and then did Four-Card Brainwave. Our host, Howard Katz, attempted to transmit ESP card thoughts to three spectators; well, let's say it succeeded more often than not. Andy London surprised us by ditching his cards long enough to

perform a very smooth version of Michael Ammar's Cross of India using eight silver dollars. Of course, he had to follow with a card trick, based on his lucky card the Nine of Clubs; unfortunately, luck was not with him tonight.

Eric Hoffman demonstrated how three different professionals would perform a card trick. Our guests from Johns Hopkins, Mike Bledsoe and Ronann Carrero, were next on stage. Mike mysteriously linked a finger ring on and off a rubber band; he followed with Eight-Card Brainwave. Ronann did a Three-Card Monte in which the money card (a Queen) turned into a Joker. Guest Jefferson Rose performed a blazingly fast magic square based on our average ages. The scary part was hearing what some of our ages were! Guest (and soon to be member) Mark Wolfire blew us away with his debut card trick (Triple Intuition by Dani DaOrtiz). Resident cardician Jeff Eline, using giant home-made funny artwork cards, predicted the one that would be selected ("an inside photo of Napoleon's jacket," from the previous month's *Genii*). Of course, he had to follow with a more traditional card trick, a super display of ace-manship. Jay Silverman showed how coincidences can affect cards. And wrapping things up was guest Jared Raitzyk with a fine Out of This World from a shuffled deck. —Eric Hoffman

The Kellar/Thurston Assembly 6 meets every first Thursday at 8:00 pm at the Magic Warehouse, 11419 Cronridge Drive suite #10 in Owings Mills, Maryland. 410-561-0777. Contact Andy London alondon@comcast.net () www.baltimoresam.com for more details.

8

MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS BEGIN

ST. LOUIS, MO— February 27 was "Everyone Performs Night." President Randy Kalin invited PNP Harry Monti forward and we were treated to our first member spotlight, an interview with our beloved Harry Monti. Harry shared several stories of Blackstone (both Sr. & Jr.), Bro. John Hamman, Jay Marshal, and many more! Steve Barcellona brought two examples on presentation. Harry taught us how to pass one solid object through another. Paul Rygelski taught us STAIRWAY by Marcus Eddie. Columbus Smith taught a great vanish from the archives of *M-U-M*. Dan Todd performed Forced Improv from Jon Allen's *Connection* DVD set. New member and professional performer, Gregory Green,



Columbus discovered that small rings play big

performed his take on the Chicago Opener. Greg Lewis performed an interesting discovery that we are all "Fans" of. Richard Thompson gave an ESP test, but then you knew that.

March 13 was "Teaching Magic Night." The member spotlight was on Greg Lewis, his introduction to magic, professionals magicians he has met, and his Card Cube design! You will be seeing more at the combined IBM/SAM/FISM convention, here in St. Louis!

Randy Kalin gave a lecture on self-working card magic. These effects were both baffling and easy to perform: The Five Card Royal, Four Pile Card Discovery, the Einstein Card Trick, and My Password.

Gregory Green is a professional magician and a new member; he is excellent with cards, but his lecture was on coin magic. Silver dollars visibly vanished and reappeared before our very eyes. There was a large crowd around his table and many were standing.

John Davit was teaching origami, the art of paper folding, with real money. He explained what it was, the various types of dollar rings, and walked us through the actual folding methods. His original Dime-in-Ring is a sure crowd pleaser. Ron White asked Ron Jackson to choose any word from any page in a book, yet he knew exactly which word was chosen. It was well done, very convincing, and looked clean. Dan Todd performed, for the first time, a thought-of card reading called Forte X, from Alexander de Cova's DVD *Enigmatic Volume 2*.

John Davit performed a sympathetic reaction card effect that simply "made cents." He also told us how it works. Gregory Green entertained us with another mental magic effect. He was able to successfully deduce the chosen card by careful observation, humor, and skill. What a great night! —Dan Todd

Assembly 8 meets at Mount Tabor United Church of Christ located at 6520 Arsenal in Saint Louis, Missouri 63139. Contact Dick Blowers rmblowers@aol.com (213) 846-8468 Assembly8.com for more details.

9

AWAITING SPRING WITH UPLIFT AND ENLIGHTENMENT

BOSTON, MA— In March, new compeer Ada Kaliszewska presented the pre-meeting workshop, a discussion of invisible thread levitation that included a demonstration of the Hummer Card. Ada explained how to obtain, prepare, and store invisible thread, recommending sources of information for thread handling and effects.

Following the business meeting, Murray Hatfield delivered an inspiring talk on “The Building Blocks of Show Business.” Re-counting his globe-trotting career, he described his experience building a successful annual touring show in Canada. Analyzing audiences’ responses to these shows, he has developed a theory of successful show-building that he summarizes with the acronym “SPIFF,” which stands for Spectacle, Personality, Intimacy, False ending, and Finale. He then elaborated on each of these ingredients and provided examples. Showing us a DVD of his touring show’s opening, he demonstrated how modernized costumes, exciting dance, novel props, and contemporary music grab the audience’s attention. He has developed a stage persona that distinguishes him as a funny, hip, and inventive magician. He shares a touching, personal story to build a more intimate relationship with the audience. Many of his effects build to a false ending in which expectations are raised and then disappointed, to increase the triumph of the more definitive ending that follows. He leaves the audience in amazement with a big finish.



Jim Moses scrutinizes Murray Hatfield’s shuffle

The effects he taught that illustrate his points included a touching story about letters from his mother when he was a homesick boy at camp, narrating this while showing a skillful transposition of marked torn card pieces into an assisting volunteer’s closed hand. In another example, he recovered

from a presumed mishap with a fascinating burning tissue effect that revealed the actual chosen card’s identity. He performed a routine he calls Compatibility that, through use of a funny story and two volunteers, gave new life to some familiar card location techniques. In a similar vein, he presented an amusing approach to vanishing an initialed silk handkerchief, making it reappear inside a dinner roll. In another false ending, he attempted to locate three spectator-chosen cards, apparently failing to find the final one, until he produced a newspaper with a comic headline that revealed the identity of the final card. For his finale, he performed a fast-paced and original rendition of the Linking Rings. As the group disbanded, it was clear that this lecture was a hit, and that the lesson of SPIFF was appreciated. —Jim Ellison
Herman Hanson Boston Assembly 9 meets at the Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center at the St. James Armenian Church, corner of Mt. Auburn and School Streets in Watertown, Massachusetts 02472 Contact Jim Ellison jellison@mclean.harvard.edu (617) 233-8623 for more details.

13

SCHOOL AND LIBRARY SHOWS

DALLAS, TX— President Derrel Allen called the meeting to order and welcomed the following visitors: Joe Byers, Don Harris, James Sullivan, and his grandson William. Geoff Grimes gave a few highlights of a recent Cups and Balls special interest group (SIG) and mentioned that the next SIG will be a card manipulation session. Frank Seltzer also briefly discussed the upcoming DMC Magician of the Year contest, taking place in April. Cinde Sanders led a discussion on kid shows, particularly focusing on booking preschool, school, and library shows. For many of us, our focus is on the magic itself. However, it is easy to forget details like liability insurance, background checks, and regulations governing the use of animals in shows. It is very important that the performer knows exactly who his audience is and write the show accordingly. With smaller children, crowd control is extremely important; never forget to entertain the parents as well.

After a break, the night’s performances started with Kendal Kane, who began by asking guest James Sullivan if he would like to be a magician. As Kendal acted as James’s assistant, James had a



Geoff Grimes performs for visitor William

card selected from a jumbo deck. After the selection was made, it was revealed that the name of the card was written across two chalk slates that had been shown earlier to be blank. Kendal followed this with a mind reading routine using Disney princess characters.

Dr. Mike Smith worked some of his marriage counseling skills into a routine with Dal and Cinde Sanders. Mike asked Cinde to hold three coins (US half dollar, Canadian coin, and Mexican centavo) and asked her and Dal to select a vacation destination, represented by the coins. In the end, Mike revealed that the Mexican centavo had traveled from Cinde’s hand back to his coin purse.

Geoff Grimes performed a card trick for visiting young magician William Sullivan. Mike Squires performed a card trick from *Scarne on Card Tricks*, and Frank Seltzer performed another card trick for visitor Joe Byers. Wrapping up the night, Derrel Allen performed a Square Circle effect (Axtell Green Machine) while discussing the merits of recycling.
The Dallas Magic Clubs meet at Crosspointe in Carrollton, TX the third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM. Check out www.dallasmagic.org for directions. Contact Reade Quinton reade.quinton@gmail.com (972) 400-0195 www.dallascounty.org for more details.

16

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2014

ASHLAND, MA— It has been a cold, snowy winter in Massachusetts. Pipes broke in the Magic Barn, causing Assembly 16 to move its meeting to Peter’s Raceway, a magical place of slot car racetracks and, on the night of our January/February meetings, a wonderful place to meet. During the January/February meeting we had three terrific lectures.

The first lecture was in conjunction with a visit from visit from President Dal Sanders. Dal showed us many wonderful children’s effects suitable for holiday school performances as well adult functions. Dal was great. Our next lecturer was a very pleasant surprise. Gregory Wilson dropped

in on a snowy Sunday evening. The word was passed throughout the magic community, but the threat of snow kept many away. Those of us who braved the elements were rewarded with great conversation and terrific magic. The session lasted until midnight, followed by a long snowy drive. Well worth it.

The following evening was the long-awaited lecture by Kainoa Harbottle; this lecture had been cancelled because of snow. Unfortunately, Kainoa did not get to visit the barn because the plumbing was not repaired. Kainoa has a very engaging personality and extraordinary skill. He showed us his Pendulum Hanging Coins, Flying Wombat, Deja Flew, Daley’s Conformed Twins, Trifecta, and Like Mike – a fast-paced, high-octane, entertaining lecture. Fantastic!!

Well, the snow still falls and there is one more winter lecture to look forward to. For those in the area come visit Assembly 16. —Joe Berman

Assembly 16 meets first Monday of the month at 7:00. We meet at the Magic Barn, 175R Main Street, Ashland, MA 01721 (508) 881-1818.

17

MARCH MADNESS

SPRINGFIELD, MA— Our theme was rope magic and Ed Kazar delivered. Our resident expert showed us how to do the block on a rope and then amazed us with his “Houdinini” ring-off-rope escape. Jeff Kempton did a nice version of Professor’s Nightmare and Rich Pinsonnault made us laugh with his cut and restored pop-off knot. Tom Gentile cut a rope in half ala Cords of Shastrie. Next, Jeff Pyzocha did a special version of rope through block. Then Rick Meyers changed things up with his frozen quarter wrapped in a napkin.

Len Nadeau did a mathematical card-count routine and PJ Pinsonnault showed his new routine Paradolia: order out of chaos. He dealt out four hands and had each person think of a card; he was able to read their mind as to which card they chose.

The assembly put on a fundraiser magic show. We had a great



Murray Hatfield and Ed Kazar

time and performed some of our best routines. Thank you Butch Papianou for letting us entertain at your church. Later in the month, Murray Hatfield gave a great lecture about how to put a show together and tips for making your routine memorable and exciting. He was very generous with his magic and we loved his final three ring illusion. Make sure you come by and visit for a spell. We have some special lectures planned. —Karen Gibson

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

19

MARCH MAGIC MADNESS IN HOUSTON

HOUSTON, TX— March in Houston was filled with magic. We continued our contest theme with money magic. Dick Olson made several tries at a large bill routine that just didn't pay out. John McGrath shared a fine silver/copper transposition routine that included the use of washers.

Johan McElroy changed a \$1 bill into a \$100 bill, and back again, just by folding it. Rick Hebert had Kim Lampkin sign a \$5 bill that was then moved along the strands of two stretched rubber bands held between his fingers. Scott Wells used a silver half dollar and an Irish copper coin as the two coins that changed places in both Miles Root's hand and his. Randy Stulken changed two colored chips into a copper and then a silver coin in a very deliberate and magic manner.

Shane Wilson used David McCaffey's hand as he counted out several bills that just didn't seem to add up the same when counted multiple times. Angus Seamans performed a quaint Coins Across routine using real Victorian half pennies. Frank Price predicted the sum of bills that Dick Olson ended up with after a series of fair choices.

The winner of this contest was Shane Wilson. John McGrath was second, and Angus Seamans was third. Nice prizes were awarded and everyone had a good time. Kim Lampkin formally joined our group and was presented with her new membership packet by Miles Root.

Miles Root began the regular performance session with a nice Coins Across routine using a pneumatic bank tube and a story line to go with it. Scott Wells changed a \$1 bill into a \$20 as



Kim Lampkin receives membership certificate from Miles Root

part of a scratch-off prize. Randy Stulken had America help out as the four Aces turned over one at a time as they were mixed, with America having the last one turn over in her hand. Johan McElroy borrowed a dollar bill from Rick Hebert, which then folded up in Johan's outstretched hand as we all watched. John McGrath's classy ring and rope routine revolved around jewelry security measures in Scotland.

Rick Hebert folded a dollar bill in and around a card, which then turned inside out and outside in as it moved through the bill. David Rangel magically threaded nuts on and off a bolt in very quick fashion. Shane Wilson's Coins Across routine using a drinking glass was a stunner. Marti Stein shared some four-penny puns. —Miles Root

Assembly 19 meets the first Monday of every month at the International Alliance of Theatrical State Employees Local 51 Meeting Hall, 3030 North Freeway, Houston, TX. A teaching lecture begins at 7:30 pm with the meeting beginning at 8:00 pm. Contact Miles Root milesroot@aol.com (281) 334-7508 houstonmagic.com for more details.

21

MAGIC HISTORY IN CONNECTICUT

HARTFORD, CT— Historian/Dealer/Collector Dave Haversat gave a talk on the magic that Connecticut has produced over the years. Subjects he touched upon include John Petrie, A. C. Gilbert, the Mysto Magic sets, F. Eugene Powell, and Bob Sherman. It was a fascinating look into our state's



Some of Dave's Connecticut Treasures

magical past. —Dana T. Ring
Angelo's on Main, 289 South Main Street, West Hartford Connecticut meets on second Mondays except December Contact Dana T. Ring dana@danaring.com (860) 5239888 www.ctmagic.org for more details.

22

CLASSIC MAGIC--CLASSIC MAGIC BOOKS

LOS ANGELES, CA— St. Patrick's Day 2014 became the evening of the seventeenth annual *Classics of Magic Show* for the Southern California Assembly 22. Predated by vaudeville nights, this type of program has a long tradition in Los Angeles as an anniversary celebration of the assembly's March 1931 charter. Long produced by the late P.N.P. John Zweers, the program is now produced by Steve Jennings. Tonight featured classic magic from classic magic books or 1940s era magic dealer catalogs.

Opening the show was Nate Kvetny performing with some of the props acquired from William Mayoh, who performed a pseudo Chinese act as "Ho Yam" during the 1920s. The delicately decorated production props are reminiscent of Okito apparatus. This magic is recorded in *Magic by Hoyam* (1949) by William Mayoh. The second performer was our assembly secretary, P.N.P. Ed Thomas, who presented a medley of rope magic effects from the pages of *Abbott's Encyclopedia of Rope Tricks* (1941) by Stewart James. Prior to introducing each performer, Steve Jennings provided a book review and author biography as a background history for the magic that would follow.

The third act was John Engman, President of the S.A.M. Hall of Fame. John performed parts of the silk manipulation routine from *More Naughty Silks* (1947) and the card trick that fooled Houdini. That trick, *The Cards Rising Through The Air*, page 205 of August Roterberg's *New Era Card Tricks* (1897). Next, Jim Callen selected magic from the 1940 Abbott's Magic Novelty Company catalog. These included Yellow Joe, a 20th Century Silks trick with patter about two Irish cops and a crook. Jim also did Last Card, which is a selected card revelation using some colorful Jack Hughes apparatus.

The sixth performer was Ted "Suds" Sudbrack, a Los Angeles area professional with decades of experience. Suds performed a routine with Grant's Temple Screen (U.F. Grant catalog circa 1940) and Out of My Hat from Abbott's catalog. This is a vent

routine with a rabbit hand-puppet. As always, Suds's performance was full of gags, laughs, and lots of fun. Closing the show was Michael Perovich, whose performances are always exhibitions of classic magic. His act, "Water Everywhere," used copious amounts of Lota bowls, Foo Cans, and other props associated with liquid tricks. The props and their use are described by Henry Hay (June Barrows Mussey) in *The Amateur Magician's Handbook* (1950). Mike's act was unique, with an amusing patter story. —Steven L. Jennings

Southern California Assembly 22 meets the third Monday each month at 8:00 PM, St. Thomas More Parish Hall, 2510 South Fremont Avenue, Alhambra, California Contact Ed Thomas magicmred@earthlink.net () for more details.

30

MAGIC CASTLE TIMES

ATLANTA, GA— Since we were snowed out in February, everyone was glad to get together for the March meeting. Martin Baratz served as our emcee for the evening.

Joe Turner gave our Professional Development session on a tour of the Magic Castle in Hollywood, California. Joe presented a series of slides showing the various rooms of the Castle and spoke on his experiences of performing at the venue. It was an informative and interesting presentation.

West Evans started the magic for the evening with an interesting Three-Card Monte effect. Matt Baker brought a gentleman named Johannes who is visiting from Belgium. He used the Jokers to find Johannes's selected card. Merritt Ambrose performed his card effect to some jazz music. He performed an assembly using the four Fives and a blank-faced deck.

Mal Simpson asked Johannes and Gene Hendrix to help with a lucky card experiment. Each was asked to think of their lucky card. Then, through a three step process of shuffling, cutting, and dealing down the top card, the lucky cards were found.

Jim Mangham brought his favorite hat to use for a card receptacle. He performed a Cards Across routine using the hat, two contrasting decks, and some rubber bands. Rick Hinze showed us the first magic trick he had from a magic kit. It was the Alladin bottle and rope. The January *M-U-M* featured an effect with a beer bottle and a rope. For kids, he uses a coke bottle with a dollar bill wrapped around the neck.

Gene Hendrix showed us a naked

deck of cards (no printing at all). He asked for a card to be named and he “dressed” the card to the chosen card. All the others were still naked. Not for the faint of heart...

Jim Driscoll noted that celebrities had people who do things for them. Jim chose Johannes to be his celebrity helper. Johannes chose and initialed a card. The deck was spread face up and the chosen card was inserted face down. Jim then chose a card and put it in his pocket. With a snap of his fingers, the card in his pocket changed places; the signed card was in Jim’s pocket. —Carol Garrett

[Assembly 30 meets the second Tuesday of the month at Piccadilly Cafeteria, I-85/North Druid Hills Road, Atlanta, GA.](#)

31

BEWARE THE IDES OF MARCH

INDIANAPOLIS, IN— Beware the Ides of March! Also beware magicians tasked with presenting “Dangerous Magic” (this month’s theme). After a brief business meeting during which we approved the May 17 lecture by Joshua Jay and also once again nominated Steve Spence for Central Plains RVP, things got seriously dangerous.

President Taylor Martin presented Truth, an effect designed to discourage bullying in which the “bully” is required to promise that they will never bully another person in the future. The punishment for lying is being cut in half by a rope. Fortunately, the “bully” passed the test. Next up, Tom Winterrowd presented the mystery of a tube in which he placed a golden wooden cube. The tube was bisected with a dagger and yet the golden cube passed straight through the dagger, undamaged. Daniel Lee shared that he became fascinated with dangerous magic after watching Barry Rice perform his razor-swallowing act at last year’s *Winter Spectacle*. Daniel’s mother made him promise right then and there that he wouldn’t swallow razors. Instead, Daniel dazzled us with his gut-wrenching needle swallowing routine, ably assisted by compeer Jim Croop, who verified that Daniel had truly swallowed the twenty or so needles before they reappeared from his mouth threaded upon black thread.

Jay Newby continued the theme using a switchblade, a brown paper bag, and a deck of cards. After brazenly announcing is his real name (for security reasons I won’t list it here) prior to entering the local witness protection program, he proceeded to find a chosen



Don’t let your head drop on the floor

card by blindly sticking the knife through it. Don Miller, ever the professional, called Jay (if that is his name) back in front of the room to try out his rope through neck routine that he swore he’d only just learned that day. Fortunately for Jay, Don is a quick learner and no blood was spilt. Finally, although diverging from the theme, Dou Juave, after swearing us all to secrecy, demonstrated and explained his unique and original method of producing a sponge ball from a flame. What made it unique was that after the production the audience visibly sees smoke emanating from inside the sponge ball. Additionally, he demonstrated how he could do a double production using the same principal. Thankfully, considering the theme of the night, all compeers left the building unscathed and unscarred! —Steven A. Spence

Assembly 31 meets the first Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Irvington United Methodist Church, 30 Audubon Rd., on the east side of the City unless otherwise announced. If the first Monday conflicts with a holiday weekend, we postpone the meeting for one week. Contact Taylor Martin kazoo23@aol.com (317) 431-1320 sam31.com for more details.

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MAGICIANS FIND MAGIC FROM M-U-M

LYNCHBURG, VA— March brought a small but lively turnout for our assembly meeting; the icy weather of the morning may have influenced some members to stay home, but the roads were clear by meeting time. It was as if a wizard had made all the slush (just slush, not powder) disappear – good trick, if you can do it.

Program chairman Mike Kinnaird headed a discussion in regards to members performing for a Relay-for-Life event coming up in May and the consensus was to go forward with planning performances that day.

Associate Member Carl Hoegerl, after first visiting in February, requested to become an assembly member. All attending were in favor and we welcome our newest

member.

The theme of the meeting was “The Magic of *M-U-M*.” Our local tech wizard Mike Kinnaird demonstrated a powerful mental effect, namely a book test found as Trick #3 by Mikael Montier as written up by Bruce Kalver in his Tech Tricks column on page 29 of the March issue of *M-U-M*. It’s a good effect that the mentalist breed of performers should check out.

Glen Rae chose to stay with the March issue of *M-U-M* as he performed Play It Straight Triumph as found on page 54 (Ebook Nook, excerpt from *Impossibilia* by John Bannon). This was a card effect that includes a highly visual revelation. John Jennings finished the theme-related magic by going back to page 34 the May 2012 issue and finding a contribution by Peter Dommel in the I Left My Cards at Home column by Steve Marshall. It was a very clever Straw though Straw that lends itself readily to an impromptu presentation.

Thus the gathering of Lynchburg compeers proved there is quite a bit of good magic to be found in our society’s publication, if we only take the time to read it. —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 investigatefire@aol.com (434) 851-6240 for more details.

35

MAGIC FROM UP NORTH

POUGHKEEPSIE, NY— On (another) cold evening during this winter (which –apparently – will never end), we welcomed two new members into our assembly: Carlos La Borde and Gary Croniser. These gentlemen picked a good night to show up because our guest speaker tonight was someone who knows a thing or two about cold weather, Mr. Murray Hatfield from British Columbia, Canada.

Mr. Hatfield’s occupation was cemented in the fourth grade; that was when he knew that he wanted to be a magician. He performed his first show at age eleven, and since then he has run the gamut from corporate shows to cruise ships, and also being named the Canadian Magician of the Year. He can now add “Lecturer in Poughkeepsie” to his many accolades.

For twenty-five years he has been the producer/director of a large touring show in Canada, which becomes a completely new show every year. During the evening he gave us insights that only years on the road can provide. He talked

about different aspects of a show and how they all coalesce into one cohesive unit. He also showed us a video of his current show’s opening so that we could see that he practices what he preaches.

Terry Morgan assisted with a card trick in which the cards were mixed up, and the number listed on Murray’s coffee cup matched the card that was picked. In a few effects in which a female was needed, Murray was assisted by the lovely Adrienne, who was the only female present tonight. Thank you for showing up tonight, Adrienne!

Ron Levine, AKA “Professor Platypus,” helped with an effect in which a picked card was shuffled, a tissue was placed on top of the deck, and when touched by a lighter, the name of the card was revealed in the burn pattern of the tissue. This certainly got everyone’s attention. Contrary to popular opinion, Professor Platypus is not the name of the villain in the new Spiderman movie. Maybe in the next sequel.

Ryan Dutcher and Adrienne (her last name would be listed if I could read my own handwriting) helped out with an effect showing how compatible people can be, using nothing more than cards. Ryan, Gale Alexander, and Tig then helped with a card trick in which the end result was already printed in a newspaper.

Thank you Murray Hatfield. Besides Canadian bacon, this Canadian also knows how to sizzle! —Darryl Bielski

Assembly 35 meetings are held at Milanese Restaurant in Poughkeepsie, NY. Typically, meetings are held every 2nd Tuesday of each month. Meetings begin at 7:30 pm. Contact Joel Zaritsky jizdds@optonline.net (845) 546-1559 www.sam35.com for more details.

37

COMEDY MENTALIST NIGHT AT A MILE HIGH

DENVER, CO— President Matt Brandt opened the unique February meeting with a big thank you to the Mile High membership for always being a perfect audience. He then handed the reins for a Comedy Mentalism Night over to Vice President Andrew Bates, who performed a spellbinding mind reading routine. The evening went off without any hitches and had a grand start with a performance by Rich Nakata. Rich threw in loads of comedy with the help of a projector and a few eager assistants from the audience, including the forever-happy Elliott Baskin. Past Sergeant at Arms Larry Betz

wore an incredibly flashy shirt for his segment that became a running joke of the evening. He chose to be assisted by the ever-funny Bruce and Kitty Spangler. Larry served the club as a past board member for more than ten years.

Newlywed member Scott Oekton and his beautiful new bride assisted card guru and current Sergeant at Arms Gene Gordon with a fun psychic card trick. Newly-instated club member The Great Loudini (a.k.a. Lew Wymisner) traveled down from Ft. Collins, Colorado, with his buddy Tim Pendergast to perform a very funny mentalism routine while reminiscing about Denver's old mentalism club the Psyclones.



President Matt Brandt leads his MHMS fellowship

Speaking of the Psyclones, the next performance was by longtime member Don Krill, who performed a hilarious bag over the head power of suggestion trick. President Brandt performed a pick a card or just think of it routine before he announced break and snack time. A lovely array of cupcakes was provided by Celine Perea in honor of A.J.'s March birthday. The second half of the evening began with funny stories from carnivals by Mysto the Magi, who recently returned to the Mile High city. Member Greg Tobo chose several members of the audience to adorn themselves with costumes from the game of Clue. Professor Plumb, Colonel Mustard and Mr. Green were played by Karen Wake, Rich Nakata, Bruce Erickson, and Tommy Walker. Then magically the case was solved. A very funny rendition of Miss Scarlett was played by Jeff Wake and Mrs. White was attempted by Lindsay Smith. The body was magnificently played by President Brandt. Who did it? Why everybody of course. Mark Strivings had to follow that to close the evening with a professional and very funny word from a book routine. —Connie Elstun
Assembly 37 meets at the Riverpointe Senior Center in Littleton Colorado Contact **Connie Elstun (303) 933-4118** www.milehighmagicians.com for more details.

47

MURRAY HATFIELD LECTURE/MEETING

ROCHESTER, NY— Instead of having our normal meeting, we had a lecture. Murray Hatfield, one of Canada's finest illusionists, gave a great lecture. Murray interspersed his philosophy with some great magic. Not tipping off the "enlightening" part of the lecture, Murray talked about his theory: SPIFF, which equates to Spectacle, Personality, Intimacy,



Murray Hatfield and Theresa Barniak

False ending, and Finale. The magic he performed was well thought out; what you'd expect from a stage magician performing close-up. He used two commercial effects: Rewelded and Fuse. Murray also explained a neat trick with the "magician's friend," called Queen's Hanky and Kisses, in which a candy kiss appears as a finale. Murray definitely has a love affair with magic and it shows. His lecture notes are well written and explain most everything in concise detail. By the way, his silk winder is by far the best and easiest that I have ever seen! Next month: The Close-Up Contest! —Mike Ihrig
Assembly 47 meets at 7:00 PM at St. Joseph's School, 43 Gebhardt Rd in Penfield, NY from September to May. Contact Mike Ihrig ihrigmagic@aol.com (585) 377-1566 www.sam47.com for more details.

52

A FAVORITE ALDO EFFECT OR ST. PATRICK'S DAY MAGIC

SAN ANTONIO, TX— March 6, 2014, Brother John Hamman Assembly 52 held its monthly meeting at LaMadeleine Restaurant. We had a small but enthusiastic crowd tonight. One hundred and twenty eight years ago was the fall of the Alamo. It is interesting to note that Aldo Colombini was a student of the Alamo and loved visiting San Antonio. Tonight's suggested theme: perform a favorite Aldo effect in memory of him, and/or St. Patrick's Day magic.

Don Moravits started off the open performances by doing an effect from Brian Brushwood's Scam School called Paper, Scissors, Rock. He also performed his favorite Aldo trick called Contact Colors. John Murphy and Ray Adams both did rope effects in honor of Aldo. Ed Solomon regaled us with one of his Irish stories about Clancy O'Brian. Doug Gorman did two Aldo effects: Trifle and Draw a Blank. Michael Tallon performed via cell phone, since he was in California on business. He did the effect called Nu-Sense.

Sal Manfredo was at the Teaching Table this month. He presented a series of methods for secretly discerning which of several envelopes, bags, or pouches each spectator might possess, thereby opening a virtually infinite number of possible effects one might perform. Thanks, Sal, for providing us with this useful theory that each of us can use in his own way. Door Prize winners were Doug Gorman, Ray Adams, and John Murphy. Doug won Robbeproof Rope and Silk EZ Blendo Silk; Ray won Blue Collar Aces by Tom Craven; and John won Pop-Eyed Popper Deck. Thanks to both Don Moravits and Doug Gorman, who were willing to share the methods for the tricks they performed earlier in the evening.

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.

77

MAGIC JEOPARDY

MASSAPEQUA, NY— We had a nice turnout for the March meeting with Mike Maione's exclusive (for now) high tech and fun version of everybody's favorite game show: This Is Magic Jeopardy!

After a brief business meeting including the mention of the passing of one of our own members Joe LoBue, VP Mitch Goodkin adjourned so that membership chair and magician's photographer Mike Maione could take the stage as host of Magic Jeopardy.

Complete with laptop, wireless sound system, name tags, noise makers, a "studio" audience, two projectors, prizes, and screens donated by club members, Mike ran a tight show along with Pat Darienzo on the laptop and Mitch Goodkin on scoreboard. Three teams of four each were tested

in their magic knowledge with diverse topics with subjects like "The 52 Assistants," "A Rose by Any Other Name," "Only Time Will Tell," and many more. Who played? Glad you asked.



Mike Maione and his Magic Jeopardy Set (Complete with Applause Sign)

Charlie Muschiatti was captain for Andromeda with Sergeant-at-Arms Bob Weinowitz, John Lepre, and T.J. Tana. John Ragone sat in the captain's chair for team Presto with Mark Henig, Steve Rodman, and Steve Schwimmer. Dave Levitan led his team The Winnahs featuring Gary Levenson, Jose Merced, and Zach Mandel. In the end the team called, The Winnahs came in first, Presto with the comeback of the game came in second, and Andromeda pulled in third. Magical prizes were given to all the players. Good game! —Lou Johnson

Long Island Mystics Assembly 77 meets at 7:30PM on the second Monday of the month at The Community United Methodist Church. For more information, check www.limystics.org. Contact Lou Johnson loucircus@aol.com (516) 978-7735 www.limystics.org for more details.

88

HANK MOREHOUSE ASSEMBLY 88 MARCH 2014

ANN ARBOR, MI— On March 1, 2014 there were great food, great friends, and a great magic show at the annual Ann Arbor Magic Club's Installation of Officers Banquet held at the Wayne Tree Manor. Officers for the coming year are: President – Bill Brang; Vice President – Scott Kindschy; Treasurer – John Russell; Secretary – Jim Folkl; and Sergeant at Arms – Bob Waite.

The show featured Jim Placido presenting the topical theme of income inequality with the production of money (and lots of it). Bill Brang weaved a whimsical story of twin clowns ala Fraidy Cat Rabbit. Marvin Mathena revealed a birthday prediction with jumbo cards, and Jim Folkl did a variant of Michel Ammar's Card on Ceiling. Gordon Schott closed the show with a comical Bill in Lemon

routine and startling (Losander's) Floating Table. John Luka, Territorial VP for Michigan, shared a few closing remarks and graciously presented a very clever card routine with the Bendix Bombshell wallet.

The theme of the March meeting was Mental Magic. Our members honed their ESP skills in anticipation of presenting feats of inexplicable mysticism. Unfortunately, no one predicted the massive snowstorm that hit Ann Arbor, forcing a rare cancellation of the meeting. Undaunted, we proceeded to prepare for our April gathering, which will feature demonstrations of Silk Sorcery. May will bring our very popular Flea Market/Swap Meet. —Jim Folkl
 Assembly 88 meets 2nd Wednesday of the month, 7pm, Faith Lutheran Church, 12555 East Forest Avenue, Ypsilanti, Michigan Contact Jim Folkl Folkinimagic@yahoo.com (248) 8514839 www.aamagic.org for more details.

95

GIMMICKED CARDS

VANCOUVER, CANADA— The March 2014 meeting was held at the home of Lon Mandrake. Congratulations to new National S.A.M. member Alex Seaman who was voted in by the members as a new Assembly 95 member. President Lon Mandrake and Regional V.P. of Canada Rod Chow gave a warm welcome to Alex, who has already achieved numerous awards and accolades over his very youthful magic career, and who promises to be a very active and contributing member of Assembly 95.

After pizza, chicken wings, and coffee by Lon and Linda Mandrake, the evening of gimmicked card magic began. Lon started off with a convincing card prediction in a wallet with Jeff Christensen and Alex Seaman as volunteers. Jeff had several cards chosen and read Billy Hsueh's mind to identify the cards in his hands, with a kicker prediction finish involving the guarantee card. Dennis Hewson performed a card location with a one-way deck made from off-printed cards. Trevor Watters had Steve Dickson think of a card, and after claiming that he caused the card to vanish from the deck, Trevor showed an empty box.

Rod said he thought the theme was gimmicked money night, and then went on to show his original new Chroma-Therapy money change in which he changed the color and denomination of a stack of bills multiple times. Anthony Young produced a pack of ciga-



New S.A.M. Assembly #95 Member, Alex Seaman (c), is congratulated by Assembly President, Lon Mandrake (l) and S.A.M. Regional V.P. for Canada, Rod Chow (r)

rettes from a jumbo card and then caused a cigarette to rise. Henry Tom performed a successful card prediction with Billy as volunteer. Juan Garcia had five cards selected and said that he would attempt the impossible. Juan turned four cards around to match, and then showed a jumbo card for the last match. Steve Dickson worked on Trevor with a puzzling four card trick. —Rod Chow

The Carl Hemeon Assembly No. 95 meets the first Tuesday of each month at members' homes. Contact Rod Chow rod@rodchow.com (604) 669-7777 www.sam95.com for more details.

104

FOOD AND FUN PROVIDE A DOUBLE LIFT FOR 104

WITCH CITY, SALEM, MA— The March 5, 2014 meeting of Assembly 104 was begun in high spirits. While the unusually cold weather prevailed outside the church, Len Lazar conducted the pre-meeting magic class. Later, the business portion of the night found us breezily tackling preliminary plans for this year's SAMCON in November. Vice President Ed Gardner reported on the success of our S.Y.M. 124 group's end of February meeting. It was highlighted by local pro Lyn Dillies's informal and highly instructive lecture. The kids loved Lyn and all the insights she shared.

Now, after having suffered setbacks in climate and staff, the adult gang kicked back, setting business aside for our overdue feast and entertainment. The cuisine was potluck eclectic, covering everything from pizza and doughnuts to veggies and President Bill Jensen's now-legendary sweet-and-sour meatballs.

The entertainment, like the buffet, was long overdue, both having been cancelled by snow last month. Compeers were clearly in the mood to enthusiastically devour both. The magic menu was as varied as the buffet itself and expertly prepared by Steve Kradolfer, a founding father of the

Mystery Lounge, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Steve was kind enough to reschedule his planned February performance for us and the constant applause he garnered made it clear that the effort wasn't wasted. A quick rope routine got things going, with a cut and restored length of it flowing into a Professor's Nightmare. Steve generated equal measures of laughter and applause as he shifted into pasteboard gear. This was followed by money magic. A bill survived spindling and tearing by a pen, no feds involved, followed by a volunteer's hundred going through its own paces, only to land, sealed inside the Kradolfer wallet. S.Y.M. 124 member Angela DeAngelis assisted for a torn and restored tissue routine and Kathy Forrest and Debbie Loscutoff, both 104 treasurer emeriti, assisted for



Jay Fraser's hundred dollar bill is in jeopardy

Steve's hilarious, seated Cards Across. "Doc" Rogers did the honors, shaking a die in Steve's medical specimen jar, allowing for a humorous number "five" revelation. Finally, for a closer, a book test employing several volunteers and mining as many laughs as possible wrapped up the evening. It was a great night. The fellowship was rewarding, the food was ample and the subliminal message of our guest's magic was clear to anyone enjoying it: a lot of fun and not one knuckle was busted. Next month's guest lecturer will be an inspiration: David Oliver. —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 captainalbrightsql@comcast.net (339) 227-0797 www.sam104.com for more details.

110

JOSHUA JAY LECTURE AND CONTEST

HARRISBURG, PA— At our regularly scheduled meeting on March 13, we reviewed the superb lecture given to us by Joshua Jay on the preceding Monday. Joshua provided us with his new lecture

that is certainly up to the high standard of his previous lectures. Lots of new, easy to accomplish, astonishing magic with some Internet "freebies" and plenty of complete explanations. Our member, Jack Ritter, provided for an open bar for soft drinks and beer (for those of age) and a fine buffet for some "quality" time before the lecture. Thanks Jack! Joshua gave us an impromptu close-up set to further enhance this time. You are missing a good time when you miss a lecture at the Capital Area Professional Magicians group of Harrisburg, PA.

Future lectures were discussed: John Reid, Wayne Hauchin, Tom McDonald, and the possibility of a special lecture by Joshua Jay on historical magicians at a local college, if it can be arranged. By the time you read this Penn & Teller will have given their show at a nearby theater on May 16 and the R. G. Smith tour will have come through on April 5.

The after-meeting contest had eight performers out of the ten members and two guests in attendance. Frank Bianco led off with a superbly executed Pinnacle. Next, Joe Noll performed Joshua Jay's Phantom Deck and Tom Narin had a great twist on the floating matchstick, in which the card is handed out. Almar showed us how his tongue was pierced and immediately healed. John Sergott provided Your Name is Here, which is a variation of an effect he learned at a recent Duane Laughlin lecture. Lou Abbottiello showed how a European "Man Bag" is actually large enough to hold a large bottle of Champagne. Scott Correll showed us a very nice routine on Imagine the Queen in which the object is to place a large clip on a named card in a spread of six or seven cards printed on a plastic card. The climax was to place the clip on any card except the Queen. Wrapping up the contest was President Mike Snyder, who told us about a mouse named Pete.

The four non-performers were hard pressed to decide the top three best efforts. Their final decision was first place Frank Bianco, second place was a tie between Scott Correl and Joe Noll and third place went to Tom Narin. Joe Homecheck, SAM Assembly 110 meets 2nd Thursdays, 7:00pm, at John's Diner 146 Sheraton Drive New Cumberland, PA 17070 Email: secretary@sam110.com

112

NEW FORMAT

PLEASANT HILL, CA— For our February meeting, our assembly initiated a new format

for conducting the meetings. In the first half of the meeting, an experienced magician teaches a trick to everyone, after which the members pair off for a practice session. To kick off the new format, President Larry "Zappo" Wright demonstrated a Daryl trick known as Untouched, an effect traced back to Tony Faro in *Pabular*. The interesting part of this trick is that the magician never touches the cards during performance; the assisting audience member does all the work, yet the chosen card is correctly named.

The practice sessions went very well, and a number of members stepped up to the stage to check out their performance, followed by a critique with helpful comments and suggestions from the rest of the group.



Kara Ewing ends up holding a bunch of miniature rabbits

Afterwards, Rick Allen circulated a greeting card for everyone to sign, a card destined for noted magician Lee Grabel and wife Helene, congratulating the couple on their seventy years of marriage.

Following a short break, Ric Ewing took the stage to perform a little card magic. Assistant Michael McGriff was asked to cut a shuffled deck into four piles. Ric then turned over the top card of each pile to reveal that Michael had cut to all four Kings.

Nate Wilson then stepped up to perform the multiplying rabbits with assistant Kara Ewing. Nate's rabbits are unique in that they are three-dimensional foam rabbits as opposed to the usual flat cutouts.

Next up was Michael McGriff, who demonstrated a work in progress: a coin sleight known as the retention vanish. Michael asked for tips on how to improve his technique, and others offered suggestions on different ways to do a similar vanish.

Following Michael was Erich Biggs performing a routine based on Valentine's Day, an effect in which one red card appears in the deck. A spectator provides the number of dates he has had with his special girl, and the same card appears at that number in the deck. As a finale, Erich shows that all the cards have blank faces except for the matching card.

Zappo then performed a silk dye routine with multiple phases. Finishing up the evening's performances was new member David Hirata, who demonstrated several effects from a ring-on-rope routine.

It seems as though the new meeting format has gotten off to a good start. —Bill Marquardt
Diablo Assembly 112 meets on the third Wednesday of every month at the VFW building in Pleasant Hill, California Contact Larry Wright Zappo@zappothemagician.com (925) 685-5129 http://sam112.com/ for more details.

115 MAGIC TIME IS PEPSI TIME

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA— Our March meeting opened with a presentation of a Past President lapel pin to David Clauss. John Jennings talked to us on regional, state and national S.A.M. news and gave us an update on the national convention.

Our business meeting started with President George Buckley expressing our thanks to Everette Anderson for kindly volunteering the meeting room at the Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company building. Everyone agreed that the meeting room was perfect for all of our future meetings and lectures. George reported on available lectures coming up in the next few months and reported that Shoot Ogawa had offered to come to Charlottesville on June 6th. George reported that he had talked to Mark Davis and was glad to report Mark was in good spirits and said he would be coming back to the assembly meeting in a couple of months. Wes Iseli suggested that the members try to have an assembly magic show to help raise funds for future events.

The theme for March was Penetrations. Wes Iseli started us off by showing us his Sword Through the Neck with the help of Bethany Hall. Next he performed his own Bermuda Circle, a DVD and rope penetration routine. He closed with his "McCombical" Poster Prediction. George was next with his new Messado Rings and some



You can't cut off the great taste of a Pepsi

of the Linking Ring moves he has learned. He then performed his Ring and String routine. Nathan Clauss performed Soft Coins – the Pencil Penetration Trick, in which three pencils penetrated paper and three quarters. Daniel Rowan performed a ring and rope penetration, followed by a borrowed pencil through a silk routine, and then an excellent coin through silk routine. John Jennings then performed a wonderful coin through table routine followed by an excellent teach-in on the routine. An excellent night of entertainment and learning was enjoyed by all. —Bethany Hall
Assembly 115 meets on the first Friday of every month starting at 7:00 pm at the Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company Building at, 1150 Pepsi Place, Charlottesville, VA 22901. For more information contact samassembly115@gmail.com. Contact George Buckley gbbuckley@mac.com (434) 409-2643 for more details.

120 TRICKS THAT SUCK

CHAMPAIGN, IL— Discussion this month included the new I.B.M. pricing structure and the recent online Ammar lecture which was enjoyed by all who watched it.

Dues were paid. If you haven't paid yet, the price is \$20 and may get you a discount at upcoming lectures. Elections were held and the results are as follows: President – Jim Percy, Vice President - Professor Rob (The Human Torch) Higgins, Treasurer – Dennis Reed, Secretary – Ken Barham.

The topic this month was "Tricks that Suck," and it led to much discussion and many stories. Some of the items presented were good thirty years ago but due to changes in the culture and technologies, they aren't really usable anymore.

Jim Percy started us off with a Color Pallet and Dropping Quarters, and a disappearing Coke can. Professor Higgins displayed his Jumping Hanky and Ball in a Box, a levitation named after a famous TV magician, and a Disappearing/Re-appearing Ring. Kiera Percy eagerly joined the fray with her Color Changing Poker Chips. Roy Stoutenborough showed his Smoking Corn Cob Pipe. Christ Bontjes discussed his Color Changing 45 Records and how no one knows what they are anymore; Professor Higgins closed us out with his Bent and Restored Nail.

There is no way I could describe how much fun the demos and discussions were. If you weren't there, you missed a great meeting. See ya at the meeting.

—Ken Barham
Assembly 120, Andy Dallas Assembly, meets the third Wednesday at 7:00pm (except Nov. and Dec.) For location call Jim Percy at 217-494-2222 or Ken Barham Sec, 2318 Winchester Dr, Champaign, IL 61821 217-841-5616 email: Kebram@aol.com

127 A TRIBUTE TO ALDO COLOMBINI

WALLINGFORD, CT— There was a tremendous turnout at the Tom Prete Assembly March meeting to pay tribute to one of magic's greatest ambassadors. After a brief business meeting and voting in our newest member Jon Cap, President Dave Wyskiel presented last year's president, Jeff Doskos, with a special wand for all his hard work for the assembly.

The members then took their turns recounting stories of the first and funniest meetings with Aldo while performing some of favorite effects, and telling our favorite Aldo one-liners. Bill Rotella presented a *Linking Ring* magazine, the first appearance of Aldo on the cover and read a short bio. Bill Hoagland showed off a very useful misdirection tool that Aldo called The Laughing Sleight. Then Bill fooled us when a prediction matched a random card found by adding up some tossed out dice. Jeff Doskos performed Twist Of Fate, a wonderful card routine in which freely selected cards continued to match up with their mates in seemingly increasingly impossible conditions.



Tony Salutes Aldo Colombini

Pat Guida superbly performed Contact Colors, an extraordinary routine combining finding a selected card from a shuffled pack at the same times as the four Aces and separating all the suits. Jon Cap performed some slick sleight of hand with a pen cap jumping from his hand to reappear back on the pen then the whole pen vanishing at the end. Finally Tony Lenti presented Dice It Up, an old Aldo effect that shows that you should always have a backup plan. It was a great night of fun and magic, but sadly we had to say goodbye to a friend. From

S.A.M. 127, *addio mio amico!*
—Adam Parisi
Assembly 127 meets at the First United Methodist Church (Downstairs) 941 Old Rock Hill Road, Wallingford, CT Contact www.magicsam127.org for more details.

131

DANBURY TOP HATTERS MARCH 2014

DANBURY, CT— Due to the cold front, our attendees consisted of one new guest and six members. The meeting came to order and NEMCON was discussed. Our club was well represented at the convention. Our Acting President, Vice president Magic Marty, presented a Miser's Dream variation with a galvanized pail and about twenty half dollars Various coil moves and drops were discussed.



Magic Marty SAM 131 poster

Bob Abel displayed a handcrafted mechanical four coin to glass then to shot glass. Tony Spiro presented a few card effects with a green deck of cards in honor of St Patrick. New member Thomas DeMouth presented a few really good card flourishes and effects plus some rubber band magic. President Magic Mo is still having problems with his foot; all present wish him well. We would like to encourage all state assemblies to use our Danbury Top Hatters Facebook to network their club events. —Magic Marty Steinberg
Assembly 131 meets at the Methodist Church, 5 Clapboard Ridge Rd., Danbury Ct Contact MagicMarty@aol.com (845) 7978363 Danbury Top Hatters Facebook for more details.

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MARCH ASSEMBLY REPORT

FORT WORTH, TX— President Michael Stein opened the March FWMC meeting at

7:12 p.m. Announcements were made and visitors Luis Martinez and Edgar Salas were introduced. Matthew Martin introduced the evening's program, "History of Magic and History of the Club."

Six pending members passed their qualifying demonstrations. The following are now members of the Fort Worth Magicians Club: Jordan "Tiny" Burgess, Susie Schulwitz, Mike Smith, Joel Tay, Vanessa Ayala (& Baby J), and Ross Lampe.

Geoff Grimes gave a positive review of the Ricky Jay DVD, *Deceptive Practice: The Mysteries and Mentors of Ricky Jay*. Matthew Martin reviewed the two-volume set of *Non Plus Ultra* about Johann Nepomuk Hofzinger, a magician from Austria. Michael Dimsdle raffled off six items, consisting magic books and DVDs.

Bruce Chadwick introduced a new program segment, "Magic Old and Seldom Seen." He showed and explained the Rat Bottle trick, also known as the Dove Bottle trick. He had tricks from Donald Brandon, Thayer (1930-35), National Magic Company, and Owen Magic Supreme. The meeting adjourned at 9:05. —Cindy Bighorse-Chadwick

The FWMC meet at the Tarrant County College Trinity Campus Contact Cindy Bighorse-Chadwick cabighorse@gmail.com (817 8464062) 817 8464062 www.fortworthmagiciansclub.org for more details.

157

BUSY TIME APPROACHING

BEAVER, PA— The Mystic Magicians of Beaver Valley (Assembly 157) have an eventful time approaching. Our picnic is being planned for June 8 at Brady's Run Park by Rich Howard. We had nice proceeds from the Canton Auction in February with the items donated by Ed VanDusen and Nick Gallia. The high school fundraiser we have done for the last four years has been cancelled because of various complications. Ray Lucas announced the Riverplex shows are going forward as planned. The May 10 show with a Mother's Day theme will be coordinated by Don Moody. The Kranzo lecture will be June 5. The membership present voted to put an ad in the program for the combined IBM and SAM convention in July. Teach and Learn was conducted by Doug Ries on "Bottle Magic" with several members presenting ideas and tricks.

Performances were emceed by Eric Davis. Don Moody presented

the 41-Cent Challenge, which had a prediction envelope and four other envelopes attached to a Plexiglas frame with colored clips. The audience called out the color of three. The prediction and fourth were the same amounts. Bill Cornelius presented a beer bottle and its cap. He tapped bottom of bottle with cap and it went into the bottle. He also presented ways to perform other bottle tricks.

Doug Ries showed how to wrap a beer bottle in a newspaper to try to make it change. When it didn't, he crumpled paper and bottle and threw it away. He also explained how to empty air from a bottle. Blow in it, turn it over. To make it easier to see air, he placed a balloon in the bottle and blew it up. Upright, the balloon stayed inflated, turned to pour and air came out of balloon. Ray Lucas dealt five cards to a participant and himself. Placed behind their backs, participant chose card and placed it face down on table. Ray did same; they switched cards, replaced in deck face up. When spread, both had Aces up. The remaining cards were Kings. Eric ended the evening with showing a paper coffee cup with lid and a quarter. He tapped bottom of cup with quarter. It went into the cup. Audience member examined cup before and after. —Judy Steed
The Mystic Magicians of Beaver Valley (157) meet at the Towne Square Restaurant in Beaver, PA, the second Thursday of every month. Contact Judy Steed heyjude1943@msn.com (330) 525-5389 for more details.

170

PAST OFFICERS PERFORM

COLORADO SPRINGS, CO— In our February meeting, the topic was Past Officers Perform. We had a great turnout. The meeting started with the description of a new matrix system that would encourage members to perform at the meetings. This would promote member involvement, allow for feedback to the performers, and teach others. The matrix will be composed of the following categories: *M-U-M* Highlight (share something that got your attention in the magazine), Magic Book (show a magic book, set of notes or magazine you use), Teach a Trick, Last Trick or Show (demonstrate the last trick performed that was found to be a hit with your audience), Next Trick or Show (demonstrate the magic trick, illusion, or piece of mentalism that has yet to be performed for the general public; get feedback from your peers before taking it

to the stage or streets), Your Pick or Other (an open category). We also had Mark Modeer, owner of Zeezo's, present some new magic products that are available.



Our Past Officers Performing

Next, the performances began with Larry Mahan, who performed three different routines: two with predictions and another routine that involved a card-picking duck. Following Larry was Dr. Dave Wintermute, whom shared a presentation with the club that he had been performing for the Boy Scouts. This presentation involved magic arrows, a super-washing magical washing machine, and predictions. Lastly, Frank Klein performed various close-up magic routines with coins, a card trick, and a trick that involved two watches being set to the same time. —Bischoff
SAM Magical Assembly 170 (Pikes Peak Prestidigitators) meets on the 4th Friday of every month in the Community Room of the Sand Creek Police Station at 4125 Center Park Drive Colorado Springs, CO 80916. Contact Dr Dave Wintermute bWintermute@juno.com (719) 494-0171 <http://170sam.org> for more details

172

MARCH MADNESS

PORT ST. LUCIE, FL— March Madness of a different variety, I might add: with ropes, cards, Cracker Barrel pegs, pirates, professors, and a treasure chest! "Really?" you might ask. YUP!

We started the evening with an excellent workshop on rope magic from Paul Hilko. Paul presented the workings of several rope effects as well as several solid pointers on performance and presentation. Variations on the handling of several cut-and-restored rope effects and the Panama Rope Trick were among several of Paul's favorites, and Paul disclosed not so much the workings of the effects as he did the subtleties of their presentation. Thank you, Paul. Great job.

James was next up with an astonishing "matching cards" effect and then challenged a spectator to beat

the Cracker Barrel pegs game. Al Chiaverini, as usual, presented a new mental effect by which he divined the name of a spectator's friend, and then, with the use of a small box, accurately determined the emotion that bound these two friends together.

Al then presented a sizable treasure chest from which he produced some rather interesting booty: small books, some pirate loot, candles that lit at his fingertips, and a seven-foot pencil with which to take notes on what he had discovered – a great story line, a very nice presentation, and a just plain *fun* routine. Nice!

Danny Eisen followed Al with one of his infamous “no-name-what-happened-how’d-he-do-that” card tricks that, as usual, just kinda blew everybody away. I have no way of describing what happened...I just can't believe that it did! Harley Salas, our youngest and newest associate, closed out the evening with several variations on an old standard, the Professor's Nightmare. At least I think he did. His handling was so smooth and fluid that, like Danny's cards, I have nothing more to say than “wow.”

Harley's going places. Until next time. —Dean F. Devitt

Assembly 172 meets at the Port St. Lucie Lanes on Route 1 in PSL at 7:00pm on the fourth Tuesday of every month. Contact Dean F. Devitt quindar46@yahoo.com (772) 332-8412 for more details.

181

MARCH MADNESS

HIGHTSTOWN, NJ— Our March Madness was an evening of book tests. Dean Hank Strasser conducted a workshop on book tests that he completed by performing the Chad Long effect called Spineless using an off-the-shelf Janet Evanovich novel. Spineless begins when a pile of loose pages are mixed by several spectators and ends with astonishment.

Ralpho, the ten-percent magician, did an effect using numbered beer coasters, because everyone is sick of card tricks (his admonishment, not mine). The passing out of the numbered beer coasters allowed Ralpho to force a number in a very smooth and convincing way. Rocco in red, using a Marilyn Manson autobiography, did a book test using a little know fact about credit cards. These book tests, which use common ungimmicked items are very convincing and leave you clean at the end.

One of the advantages of the open performance time after

each workshop allows us to see a diverse scope of performers and performances. Each magician uses a unique method that shows how a common magical plot can be presented.



Assembly Dean, Hank Strasser

Les the Mentalist used a regular phone book and a simple method to recall a phone number from a randomly selected page. Jeff did a book test that creates an instant stooge, bringing the comedy “ball over the head effect” to the mentalist. It was hilarious, and I would bet it is something that several of our members will try in their shows. All you need is two identical dime stores paperbacks, and the comedy can begin.

Reba performed using a Scott Correll prediction book. President Stephan Sloan completed the meeting's performances with a memory demonstration using a current *Mind* magazine. Spectators can choose any page that is torn out of the magazine and Stephan can describe all the photographs on the named pages.

This meeting concluded our winter season. It has been a brutal winter. Our next meeting will be in the spring. Hope you can stop by with your bright ideas. —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.

188

MARCH MONEY MAGIC

OREM, UT— The theme for our March meeting was “Money Magic,” and the bills and coins were flying!

Cameron Smith opened the evening with a very smooth and convincing quarter bending routine with a spectator. Theron Christensen followed with his excellent Miser's Dream, with coins ringing in his bucket and a shower of coins from a specta-

tor's nose. He also showed his finger-flinging skill by doing an amazing coin roll and taught the grateful magicians in attendance his handling of the Osaka Bills, a kind of Miser's Dream with paper currency.

Rodane then performed a fine version of Gene Anderson's Newspaper Tear and a short discussion followed concerning variations of this classic effect. Steve Dawson followed with a penetrating bill effect and Coin Alchemy, in which copper English pennies changed to silver, American silver half-dollars changed to copper, and another half-dollar changed to solid gold.

Jason Carling borrowed a \$20 bill and, without touching the bill, successfully predicted the serial number. He then vanished a penny with the assistance of a mysterious little “helping hand.” Visitor Chris Lopez, president of the assembly in Bakersfield, did an effective Coins Across routine, followed by President Curtis Hickman, who performed some superb single coin manipulations that ended with a jumbo coin. He then performed a number of very convincing copper-silver transpositions.

Al Lampkin had a card selected and signed, then put back into a mixed deck. The deck was replaced in the box, and a spectator shook the box. When the cards were removed, they were back in factory order with the signed card in the proper place. Visitor John Reid, who now manufactures the David Cressey line of mouth coils, showed a number of one-dollar bills that changed into real hundred dollar bills. He also shared a video of some of the amazing balloon sculptures he has done, a great finish to an equally great evening.

We are looking forward to our next month's theme: discovering “Easter eggs” (in the computer sense), those great effects “hidden” in classic books. —Steve Dawson
Assembly 188 meets the second Thursday of each month at the Courtyard Jamestown, 3352 North 100 East in Provo, Utah. Contact Brian South brian@teachbymagic.com (801) 916-2442 www.utahmagicclub.org for more details.

206

HANDSOME JACK COMES TO AUSTIN

AUSTIN, TX— John Lovick, aka Handsome Jack, deep dove into questions of technique and theory during a recent Assembly 206 meeting. The Los Angeles-based magician appeared at the Austin club as a special guest for

its annual membership meeting. Lovick performed a bottle production, feats of mentalism, and other effects; he then provided important performance tips.



John Lovick and Brad Henderson during a recent meeting

One overarching message from Lovick: be consistent. The Magic Castle veteran told members that consistency is important when performing tiny effects, when performing more drawn out routines, and within larger performances. He said it's important when picking effects, and when thinking about the premise of a show. It's important when considering your costume and character.

“With some tricks, it's not clear what the premise is,” explained Lovick. “You have to decide what the premise is; once you decide what the trick is about, be consistent about it. Some tricks include more than one effects; those effects have to be consistent and work together as well.”

Lovick also had the club in stitches with a very uncomfortable Andy Kaufman-type prediction routine that cast a random audience member as an ex-lover. Lovick has served on the Board of Trustees of the Magic Castle and has been nominated for the “Parlor Magician of the Year” award eleven years in a row. He is also a prolific writer on magic.

Assembly 206 meets at the Omni South Park Hotel, 4140 Governors Row, Austin, TX, 78744. Contact Jake Dyer jakedyer@yahoo.com (512) 658-0017 <http://sam206.com/> for more details.

215

MARCH LECTURES

LOUISVILLE, KY— The Bruce Amato Lecture: Nearly forty members of the Louisville Magic Club, including new members Sam Smallwood and Guy Townsend, turned out on March 18 for Bruce Amato's lecture “This, That, and The Other.” Bruce's lecture consisted of close-up, stage, and mentalism. From a technical standpoint, Bruce's magic is well within the ability-range of beginners; but the effects are, none the less, clear and

magical.

His performed the following effects: Meltdown, in which two half-dollars fuse to become a silver dollar; Poor Man's Dream, in which four quarters drop into a glass held in a small, closed cloth bag; Ring of Fire, a ring on string effect; Crafty Calculation, in which three rows of numbers written by spectators add up to a previously predicted number; X Marks the Spot, a card trick from Jerry Mentzer's *Close Up Cavalcade*; Hey, Buddy, There's a Frog on Your Back, a spelling effect using nine cards; Are You Having a Good Day?, in which the three different colored segments of a rope mysteriously change positions, followed by a surprise ending; Ultimate Estimate, in which a spectator cuts off some cards and the magician immediately tells how many cards the spectator has cut off the deck.

The Eric Roumestan lecture: The last day of March brought a second lecturer to the LMC this month. French magician Eric Roumestan gave a presentation that was entertaining, informative, and educational. Eric has performed street magic for years and has developed his lecture from routines he has done completely surrounded and tested by real life situations. His first routine involved a shot glass, a "stick," and four coins. The coins are placed under the shot glass and one by one, they are found outside the glass and on the far edge of the presentation table. Experienced magicians will recognize this as the Coins Across routine, but with a twist unique to Eric, his personal touch, making it sheer magic to watch. Four cards and four coins were laid on the close up mat and Mr. Roumestan's version of Matrix was performed, again, with his touch and unexpected moves – truly a class act.

Eric's ability to manipulate coins in and out of pockets, his and spectator's, is spellbinding. To watch as he puts the coin in the most unpredictable places and be surprised when it is revealed takes one back to the time of magic viewed as a child – enchanting.

Thank you, Eric, for the lecture, for the entertainment, for the explanations, for the wonderful time and information you gave us. —Roger L. Omanson

The LMC, Assembly 215, meets at the Kosair Community Center on Eastern Parkway. Contact Roger L. Omanson rlomanson@gmail.com (502) 296-6577 www.lmcmagic.com for more details.

226
CHARTER NIGHT
VIDEO

WILLIAMSBURG, VA— The Baker-Temple Assembly 226 tried to meet in January but Mother Nature would have none of that! A freezing rain/snow storm (not to mention temps in the teens) forced the cancellation in a month we had previously never met (maybe this was a sign). We did meet in February and got everyone caught up after the Christmas holiday.

The main event for the evening was watching the first hour of the 1991 Charter Night Magic Show. The assembly videotaped the show for the archives and we recently converted a bunch of those VHS tapes to DVD and we happened to come across this show. The magic was very good and showed the early days of our club. While it is sad to think that several performers in that show have passed away, it was nice to see how strong our assembly started out twenty-three years ago.



Harold Wood Teaches Card to Pocket

Magic by members featured performances by Harold Wood, Watt Hyer, and Michael Heckenberger. Harold Wood did a very polished card to pocket routine and then taught it to the assembly. Next up was Watt Hyer, who did several rope tricks he learned from a video in the assembly library (maybe we should have a theme one month of "Magic Learned from the Assembly Library"). Last up was Michael Heckenberger who performed Isolator by Roy Walton from *Epilogue* 1973 and then did Modernized Slop Shuffle from Harry Lorayne's *Deck-sterity*.

—Michael Heckenberger
Assembly 226 meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month (except August and December) at the Williamsburg Regional Library, Room B, 515 Scotland St, Williamsburg, VA 23185 Contact Michael Heckenberger heck_mike@verizon.net (757) 812-3299 <http://sites.google.com/site/samassembly226gmail.com> for more details.

266
MAGICAL MARCH
MADNESS!

LAKELAND, FL— The Lakeland magi marched right into

another amazing meeting this month. Prez Jerry Kardos helmed our meeting through a discussion of lectures, our meeting night, and reviews of the recent *Masters of Illusion* touring show. Our guests from St. Petersburg, Dick Laneau and Vincent, were introduced and given the opening spot on the evening's show.

Dick did a Bank Night effect in which he ended up with a Rolex watch and the rest got a coupon for a free hug. Vincent followed with a smooth mentalism effect; he controlled two peoples' minds to think as one, very entertaining. Beverly Kenemuth proved she was just as adept with comedy as storytelling when she told us a story about a princess that had to kiss a few frogs before finding her prince.

Brad Breaux delved into money magic by showing his allowance from his wife of five one-dollar bills and magically made them change to five twenties. He then demonstrated a magnetic quarter effect in which the quarter ended up stretched at the end.

Randy then made Jerry's chosen card appear from a group of others in a flash of fire. Jerry then return the favor by having his magical domino reveal the selected domino Randy chose. Two great effects. Al D'Alfonso practiced his Shakespeare with David Regal's Perchance to Dream and demonstrated the magical power of words.

Clean-up batter card wizard Ed McGowan showed why Alexander was called "The Man Who Knows" with his entertaining prediction effect. As our St. Pete visitors found out, magic is alive and well in Lakeland. We hope to welcome you to our next meeting. —Al D'Alfonso

Jim Zee Assembly 266 meets the second Wednesday of teh month at 7PM at the Lakeland I-HOP - Rt 98 and I-4. Contact Al D'Alfonso keeper0499@embarqmail.com (321) 437-3814 for more details.

277

THE PMMC OFFERS UP A SACRIFICE!

STROUDSBURG, PA— The Pocono Mountains Magic Club had lots of stuff to discuss at the March meeting, including the review of the performers who recently appeared on the local Big Brothers/Big Sisters Telethon and the preparations for the performers who were to appear on the upcoming Red Cross Telethon two days after the meeting. Thanks go to all the performers who make these annual events successful for the PMMC.

After some discussion about all the upcoming lectures, conventions, and club activities, the PMMC got down to business with some great magic, both close-up and platform.

Our close-up performers included S. Patrick, Joseph Raven, and Austin Miller. Each performer pulled something out of their current repertoire to share with the group.

Our stage performers then took over the floor. The theme of the night was suggested by Odes Odhner and was labeled as "Sacrificial" magic. This, of course, was due to the fact that our meeting was being held on the evening of the first full moon after the vernal equinox, which as many know is a pagan holiday that ushers in the arrival of Spring.

First up was Ryne Gade, who showed us a clever new adaption of the Professor's Nightmare routine. Scripting the routine differently allowed Ryne to show the ropes turning equal and unequal several times with surprisingly funny results. Great job to Ryne for thinking outside the box with this one.

Next up was Mark Mysterrio and Ricardo. Ricardo built, from scratch, a dollhouse illusion for Mark to use on the upcoming telethon TV spot. After Mark and his assistant went through the illusion a couple of times, the club suggested a couple of small details to add to the enhancement of the routine, and S. Patrick suggested a piece of music that would make the routine play even better on TV. Check it out on YouTube.

The last formal presentation was from our own S. Patrick. S. told everyone a story all about the spring arrival, the vernal equinox, and the goddess Ostara. He even wove in a sacrifice into the story as he performed a body cleansing ritual with a member of the audience. All the bad blood, toxins, and poisons that came out of the human volunteer ended up trapped in an egg that S. sacrificed for the ritual. Truly some cool bizarre magick and a great story that fit the theme of the evening. Great job! —S. Patrick Toman

Assembly 277 meets each third Friday at the "Art Space Gallery" (18 N. 7th St. Stroudsburg PA. 18360) starting at 7PM. Contact S. Patrick damagician@verizon.net (570) 242-6821 www.pmmc.webs.com for more details.

291

A THRILLING ADVENTURE WITH WOODY PITTMAN

LOS ANGELES, CA— In attendance was one of our wonderful mentor's, and fellow magician –

Paul Greene.

Woody Pittman is a performance to behold because he is like a runaway roller coaster in which you notice your adrenaline pumping as you reach the peak, and then a wonderful thrill is released as he concludes his act. Mr. Pittman tends to gravitate towards tricks that other magicians don't like. This is because his rise in magic came from developing his chops in the comedy clubs of Phoenix in the mid 1980s. Therefore, a lot of what he does is impromptu, goofy, and he doesn't like professional introductions. He also uses classic props, instead of any specially made ones. After each performance he even explained to us how he makes all his props. There is a real innocent quality about him that he brings to his performances. As a result, his acts appeal to any age group. He even has his own style of entering the stage and setting the mood.

His performances included his renditions of the torn and restored newspaper, the Tide-box production, his silly goldfish production, the Change Bag, the chopsticks, and with the help of one of our newest members, Heather, he performed the Peanut Butter Sandwich Trick.

As the meeting started running out of time, Woody recommended some of the props and other items that can be acquired from his wife. Katie can be reached at Woodypittman@gmail.com; she will respond to your inquiries. The items include Woody's remarkable tools of the trade. Also, there are various DVDs that include Woody's explanations for his tricks, his routines, his last



**The wonderful
Woody and Katie Pittman**

performance at California Magic, his 1995 performance in Cincinnati, Ohio, a 1994 performance at the Magic Castle, silent movies that he and Katie have made, and also a book by Woody that talks about how to "bring yourself to the stage." Don't let the roller coaster ride pass you by. You are sure to have a lot of fun and gain a lot of knowledge from having Woody Pittman as your guest. —William Dow Jr.

Assembly 291 meets the second Tuesday of every month at OPICA Adult Day Care Facility, 11759 Missouri Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90025. *This is subject to change.* Contact Les Cooper Cooperl@ucla.edu (310) 473-1820 www.westsidewizards.org for more details.

292

CHRISTOPHER MANOS GIVES LOADED LECTURE

GREELEY, CO— Over lunch in March, Lew "The Great Loudini" Wymisner taught a sound way to practice and perform card sleights. Jim Pope ran a short business meeting during which Tim "Tim Foolery" Pendergast gave a show

report.

Our program was by an easy-going and entertaining lecturer, Christopher A. Manos. Chris has marketed eight magic books and numerous tricks and props. (While he had plenty to sell, this was not a dealer lecture.) He is a relaxed and genial comedy magician who uses lots of props. Chris was the subject of a cover photo and feature article in the April 2008 *M-U-M*. He has performed more than fourteen thousand shows in some thirty countries.

He presented the second of his two similar lectures: "Magical Things I Really Do Do Too." Each of the effects he taught came straight from his shows over the years. Almost all of the tricks were familiar and easy to do, but greatly enhanced by his superb patter. Chris shared humorous anecdotes about working Playboy Clubs and cruise ships, and dealing with celebrities such as his friend the late Doug Henning. Chris performed and taught some funny, crowd-pleasing routines. Some material was from his first lecture. Most of this second lecture provided an enormous load of very concise pointers on an unusually wide variety of card, coin, close-up, and platform effects.

His audience-involvement opener was Thumb Twister. He did Block Off Cord Escape (Lyman Allen's Blok-Kord) with the assistance of Gary Hickox and James Lopez. Chris made his ingenious Binary Box himself, a five-switch, one-light device (far simpler than the Magic Switchboard from Wellington Enterprises). He showed a clever Illusion Card Box and did a

card trick, Fred and Other Folks. He discussed his Slightly Easy Miser's Dream Routine. Marilyn Dutton assisted in both his classic Three Card Match performance (made visible on a rack), and in his comedy routine with an elaborate Thought Transmitter he constructed.

Chris discussed his sophisticated Naughty Duck routine (Laurie Ireland's Shirley, later known as Warren Hamilton's JoAnne). Kryptonite! was a Pea Can routine. Chris closed with brief remarks about Dazzling Divina-



Fun with "Thumb Twister"

tion safety pins; Vegas 21 cards making a magic square; an endless chain trick; and (with Danny Archer's permission) an adaptation of Danny's Animental, Sweet Sixteen.

We recommend his second ("too") lecture to other assemblies. —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 Jim Pope jlpl616@comcast.net (970) 339-3277 www.SAM292.com for more details. ♦

Good Cheer List

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

Daniel Cudenec
"Dany Trick"
225, Stang-ar-Veild'an-Traon, Mellac-29300, Quimperle, France

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

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

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

Bob King
304 Suburban Court,
Rochester, NY 14620

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

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

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

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

James J. Morrisey
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Wayland, MA 01788

Anthony Murphy
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North Reading, MA 01864

Nahmen Nissen
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241 W. Lakeshore
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Harry Riser
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Zionsville, IN 46077

Pat Ryan
43 Fairbanks Rd.
Churchville, NY 14428

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

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

Jack White
4288 Arguello St.
San Diego, CA 92103

Jim Zachary
2801 South Creek Drive
Mulberry, FL 33860

ANTHONY N. MURPHY

Anthony N. Murphy, a Charter Life Member of the S.A.M. died on December 13, 2013, in North Reading, Massachusetts, after a long illness.

Anthony was born on September 6, 1931, in Lynn, Massachusetts. He served in the United States Air Force from 1951-55. He graduated from Boston College in 1959 with a B.A. degree in economics and from New England School of Law in Boston. Anthony was a lawyer for many years at the Boston-based workers compensation law firm of Sullivan and Cronin.

Anthony was a dedicated member of the S.A.M. National Council and served as National Treasurer from 1989-1992. He also served as National Convention Treasurer and as National Magic Week Chair for several years. In those roles, he brought a unique blend of sound judgment, level-headedness, financial discipline, and wisdom to the deliberations of that body. He joined the S.A.M. in 1978.

A member of Assembly 104 in Salem, Massachusetts, Anthony was a frequent performer at local club events. He served as that assembly's president in 1982. Anthony could often be seen emerging from dealer's rooms at conventions with the latest effect. He "never met a piece of magic that he didn't like," according to one friend.

He also enjoyed watching Wheel of Fortune, assembling picture puzzles, and was a coin collector and a rabid Boston Red Sox fan.

He is survived by his wife of fifty-four years, Lois, and three children.

GEORGE POST



George Post, past president and longtime member of Al Baker Assembly 35, passed away at the age of eighty-seven on March 11, 2014. He joined the S.A.M. in 1957 with membership number 6107-35 and appeared on the

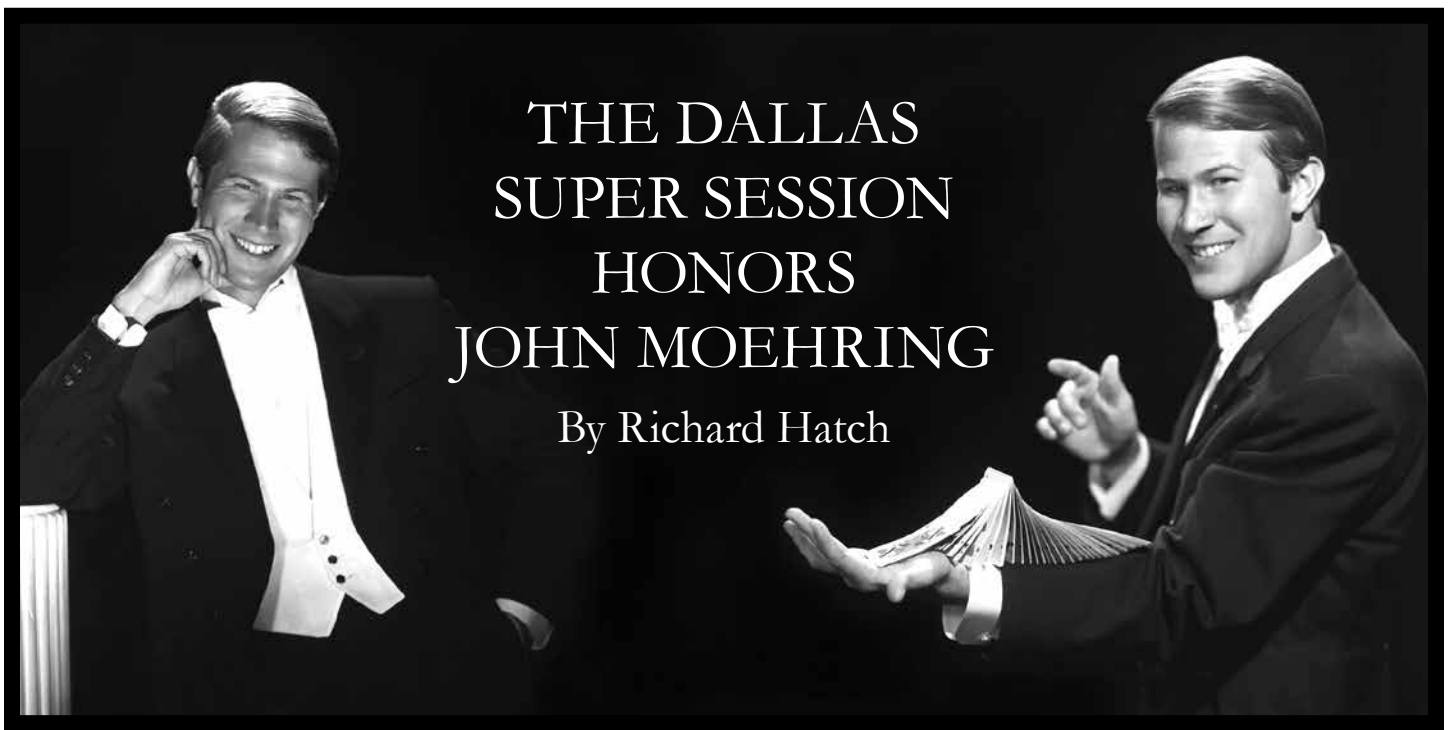
cover of the March 1966 issue of *M-U-M*. He was also a member of the International Brotherhood of Magicians with number 19484M. He was born in Wiccopee, New York and was a retired technician for the Texaco Research Facility in Glenham, New York. He was a World War II U.S. Navy veteran, a member of Wiccopee Fire Company, and loved by all who knew him.

George performed over three thousand magic shows and was a fixture in the Hudson Valley magic community. The wonder he gave to tens of thousands of people over six decades can't be measured. He was a friend and mentor to many who made magic their careers, such as Rudy Coby, David Haines, Steve Johnson, and others. Steve Johnson recalls if a magician was passing through the area, George would always be at the show and Steve would always be amazed that everybody seemed to know our unassuming local magician. Past assembly president Jack Shea credits George for helping him get his foot in the local assembly door when the two would have magic sessions after sneaking into the backroom of a local beauty parlor.

George was also known for being a prankster. One favorite recollection is when George used a squeaker toy in the produce section of the grocery store. He asked a clerk who was stocking fruit if all of the fruit squeaked. After the clerk squeezed a few oranges and was unable to produce any sound, the clerk replied "No, only some of them."

Everybody knew George as a gentleman; he was often accompanied to assembly meetings and magic functions with his lifelong companion Gerry Arquilla. His performances of making rainbow doves appear, vanishing a cane in a newspaper, Ones to Fives, pulling coins from his pants, and many other effects have become legendary within our assembly over the last several decades.

George lived an amazing life and was still performing and entertaining others during his final days. During his one of his last sessions, he played with a squeaker toy and made a silk hanky disappear. While George has disappeared from this earth, the joyful moments he gave to so many and his memory will never leave from our hearts and minds. —Craig Kunaschk



THE DALLAS SUPER SESSION HONORS JOHN MOEHRING

By Richard Hatch

IT'S ALL ABOUT TESS!

The Dallas Super Session (www.thesupersession.com) is an invitation-only annual event that grew out of a birthday bash that Brian O'Neil threw for himself in November 1999; this subsequently became the Dallas Close-Up Convention. After Brian hosted the last of those in 2002, Bob White decided to keep the momentum going by inviting a few magical friends to an informal annual "super session" in Dallas starting in 2003. The ground rules have always been pretty simple: a nominal fee is collected to cover the cost of the meeting space at the hotel; everyone attending must perform for the group on Saturday afternoon. In recent years, Jordan "Tiny" Burgess has taken over organizing these and a guest lecturer on Saturday night has been featured. Among the attendees at past Super Sessions have been such well-known figures as Roger Klause (a special Super Session was held in Roger's hometown of Borger, Texas, in the spring of 2008 during his final illness), Eric DeCamps, Bill Malone, Lance Pierce, Tom Gaudette, Barrie Richardson, and Gary Plants.

The guest of honor at this year's Super Session was "the Texan Trixter" and former *M-U-M* editor, John Moehring. Rather than deliver a traditional magic lecture, John, with the assistance of Gary Plants, put together a video scrapbook of his magical career. Prior to the inaugural screening, Bob White gave a heartfelt introduction, recounting stories of his longtime association with Moehring. The video began with photos and news clippings of a crew-cut teenage magician in Rockdale, Texas, and then told of his climb to magical prominence with an award-winning manipulative act featuring cards, canes, and doves that was honed to perfection through numerous summer theme park performances. This eventually took him to being a featured act at the Texas Pavilion at the 1964 World's Fair in New York City during his final year of college.

Super agent Mark Leddy spotted John at the World's Fair and advised him to eliminate the doves from his act if he wanted to be booked on the *Ed Sullivan Show*, at the time the highest-rated television variety show, broadcast live from New York each Sunday evening. After completing college in Texas, Moehring returned to New York and Leddy sent him on club and cruise dates to polish the act while waiting for an opening on the Sullivan show. His call came in March 1966 while working a cruise; he had been booked to appear on the Sullivan Show on April 24 of that year. At the dress rehearsal Sunday afternoon, Moehring was asked to cut his tightly polished six-minute act in half just a few hours before the live broadcast. Working with a stopwatch in his dressing room, he was able to trim the act to the needed time. The final result may be seen here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=34FApakZXtg

Thanks to his Sullivan appearance, Leddy was able to book Moehring at top night-clubs throughout Europe and back home in the States. Moehring eventually accepted a



John working the cruise ships



John on the Ed Sullivan Show - 1966



John with his sister, Jeanie, and his son, Charles



Clockwise from top left: Performers Richard Hatch, Lance Pierce, Bob White, and John Moehring

steady contract at the newly opened Astroworld in Houston; he quickly moved up the theme park corporate ladder, producing shows throughout the US and abroad, rather than performing in them himself. In addition to archival footage of Moehring performances, tributes from those who knew and admired him help put

his influence at the time in context. Among those commenting on aspects of his career on the tape are Bob White, Mike Christian (who was mentored by Moehring), Trixie Bond, and Walter Blaney.

In 1991, Moehring helped put together an evening performance at the I.B.M. convention in Baltimore that featured only acts that had appeared on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. This allowed him to do the full six-minute act and was also the last time he performed it. Fortunately, footage of the act was included in the video. After that final performance, Moehring gradually transitioned from show production to writing and editing, becoming a contributing editor, then associate editor, and finally editor of *MAGIC* magazine until 2005. He then succeeded David Goodsell as editor of *M-U-M* for three years (2006-2008), and then authored acclaimed books about Marshall Brodien and Del Ray.

Last year, for family and health reasons, John moved from Las Vegas back to Houston, Texas. The video concluded with surprise tributes to John (coordinated by Gary Plants) from many of John's friends, including Charlie Frye, Jody Baran and Kathlene, Stan Allen, Alan Howard, Michael Close, Greg Gleason, Peter Studebaker, Bill Spooner, and Mike Perovich. At the conclusion of the video, John received a prolonged standing ovation from the forty-plus Super Session attendees. In the audience were John's son Charles (a sophomore at Colorado State), his sister and brother-in-law, and longtime friends Mike Christian from Tennessee and Dexter Cleveland from South Carolina. It is hoped that the video will receive wider distribution, possibly being accessible soon via a link on John's own website (<http://johnmoehring.com>).

And if you're wondering about the title of this piece, it is taken from one of the titles of the videotape. It turns out that TESS was not an early romantic interest of John's, but something he strived for and achieved: an iconic appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. ♦



Super Session 2014



EL ROBERTO ENIGMATICO THE MAGIC OF BOB FARMER

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH

BY R.D. MICHAELS

MONTE BONES

“New York now leads the world’s great cities in the number of people around whom you shouldn’t make a sudden move.”

– David Letterman

There are no sudden moves this month, just slow ones, the kind you can use with impunity on the streets of New York. Monte Bones is something brand new in scrambling, something that I’m sure will keep you busy experimenting for months. It has all the features of Three Card Monte and The Shell Game, but it’s much easier to learn, has no angles, can be performed on any surface, and everything can be examined at the end.

The Basic Effect: The performer shows three cubes: two are blank; one contains a single spot. The cubes are mixed on the table with the spot face down. The spectator tries to find the cube with the spot. He repeatedly fails to do this, even when the performer reduces the odds to a virtual certain win.

The Props: You’ll need four blank cubes, three of one color and the fourth of a contrasting color. You could use blank plastic cubes (these can sometimes be found at war game stores and are used to make custom dice) or you could sand all the spots off of poker dice. Because of the poor quality of the printing on poker dice, you should be able to do this very quickly. You can also find wooden cubes at crafts shops such as Michael’s. However, if you use hard, solid dice, you’ll have to change the patten.

The cubes used in the routine below are of a stiff spongy material and can be found in dollar stores. Each cube measures three-quarters of an inch. Three are yellow; one is blue. A blue spot is placed on two of the yellow cubes; a yellow spot is placed on the blue cube. These spots could be painted or colored on the cubes, or a spot sticker could be used. In the routine, the spots are “smiley faces,” which can be found at Michael’s. An important factor is that the cubes and the size of the sticker should fit

the size of your hands. You should be able to cover the spot with the tip of your forefinger. The complete props are shown in Photo 1.

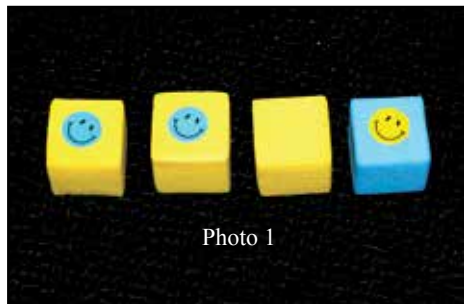


Photo 1

The Basic Secret: The double turnover (also known as the Paddle Move) is used to show a spotted die as a blank. Detailed descriptions of this move can be found in Sack’s Spotted Sorcery (*Phoenix*, Number 152, page 615) and in Bruce Elliott’s *Classic Secrets of Magic* (page 36). In this routine the turnover is done in a slightly different manner and is covered by a larger (but completely natural and motivated) movement of the hand. Bob discovered that when picking a cube off the table, it was necessary to use the middle finger to perform the secret double turnover. Here is the handling.

Place a spotted cube on the table with the spot side down. The right hand approaches from the right and grasps the cube at the top with the thumb at the back and the first finger at the front (Photo 2).



Photo 2

The right hand lifts the cube off the table; as it does so, the right middle finger takes a position at the lower front edge (Photo 3, a side view). When the right hand gets to about chest high, it turns so the palm faces



Photo 3

the audience. If you perform this action without subterfuge, the audience will see the spot on the bottom of the cube. We’ll call this the Normal Show (NS). However, to hide the spot one other action is done. Just as the right hand turns its palm to the audience, the middle finger exerts some pressure on the lower edge of the cube. This will cause the cube to rotate between the fingers (Photo 4 is a stop-action shot, showing how the right thumb slides over what had been the top side of the cube). The spot ends up at the top of the cube, covered by the right first and middle fingers (Photo 5, an audience view). This action is reversed as the hand turns to replace the cube on the table. Let’s call this the Fake Show (FS).

This Paddle Move is easy to do and is completely covered. (It is especially



Photo 4

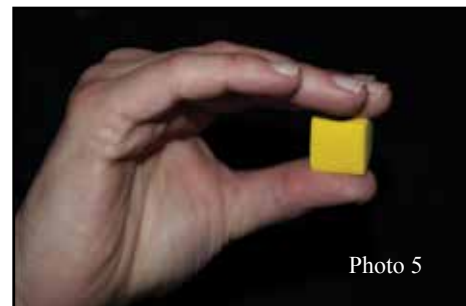


Photo 5

easy with the spongy cubes, because they provide some much needed friction.) You'll want to spend some mirror-practice time to find out exactly when to begin the secret rotation. If you do it too soon or too late, the spectators will see it. Timed properly, the turnover happens behind the cover of the fingers and is invisible.

You'll need to have ambidextrous facility with this turnover, so spend enough time that you can do it easily with either hand.

[Note: In the following routine, you will do a double turnover *every* time you show the bottom of a cube, except when you need to show the location of the spot. In this way, almost all your turnovers will look identical, and you won't have to think about whether to do the move or not. Always do the move, except when showing the spot.]

Setting the Props: It's important that you bring out the cubes without inadvertently revealing a spot. Here's one way to accomplish this; you may have to work out something else depending on your performance wardrobe. I will assume you are wearing a jacket.

Place the blue cube in your left jacket pocket with the spot pointing away from the audience. Place a yellow spot-cube on the table with the spot on top. On top of this cube, place the blank cube. On top of these two cubes, place the other spot-cube with the spot on the bottom. Pick up this stack of three (right thumb on the left side, middle and ring fingers on the right side, and index finger on the top), tilt it forward to a horizontal position, and place it into your right jacket pocket.

The Routine: "When I was a kid, I loved going to the library; I went there almost every day. It wasn't that I cared for books that much. I'd go there to win lunch money from my friends." As you deliver these lines, reach into your right jacket pocket and remove the two front-most cubes (one with a spot and the blank underneath). These two are grasped with the thumb one side and the index and middle fingers on the other. They are removed as shown in Photo 6 and are immediately turned to a vertical position as in Photo 7.

"I used to play a game with these cubes. These are made of stiff, spongy rubber." As these two lines are spoken, you'll do a cube version of the Flustration count. While saying the first line, turn the right hand so the spectators can see the bottom of the lower cube (Photo 8). Return the hand to its original position and immediately take the top cube with the left



Photo 6



Photo 7

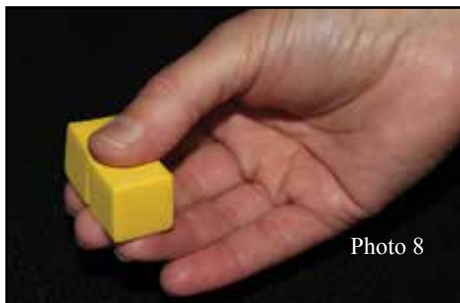


Photo 8



Photo 9

hand (Photo 9). The left hand moves to the left as the right hand turns, flashing the bottom of the cube it holds (Photo 10). As the right hand turns, the left hand tables its cube. Without saying anything about the condition of the cubes, the spectators have been given the impression that they are both blank. This will be reinforced by

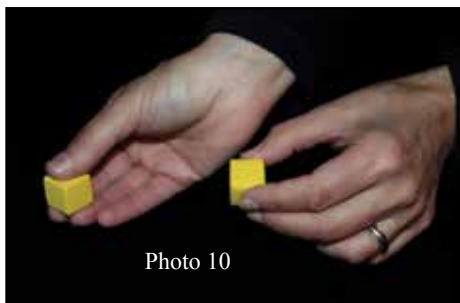


Photo 10

the next series of actions.

"They use dice for games in Las Vegas, but what you're about to see isn't a dice game, and these certainly aren't casino-quality dice. In Vegas they use special calipers to make sure that the sides of the die are precise and the die isn't weighted. Take a look; try it yourself."

The sequence of actions that accompanies the above patter shows that all six sides of the two cubes are blank without actually making any mention of whether or not they are blank. The goal is to establish a condition without overtly claiming that condition. (In other words, we avoid ever saying, "These are blank cubes.") The following move is based on a sequence Ed Marlo created for use with the Colorvision trick (*Arcade Dreams*, *Optical Revolve*, page 69). It is a tremendous visual swindle.

The right hand holds a blank cube. The fingers adjust their grip so the cube is held by the forefinger at the outer left corner and by the thumb at the inner right corner. The other fingers lift up and curl away so they do not obscure the cube (Photo 11). The left first finger reaches into the arch formed by the right thumb and forefinger; it touches the outer right corner (Photo 12). Keeping the right fingers and hand *completely motionless*, the left first finger moves back and to the left, which spins the cube between the two corners held by the right hand. The cube rotates as it spins; it ends up resting on the side of the left forefinger (Photo 13.) The right thumb pivots the cube slightly, and the middle finger comes down to the lower edge. This is exactly the preparatory position for the FS, and this is exactly what you do, turning the right hand to flash the bottom (?) of the cube. Turn the right hand back down and hand the cube to the spectator. All this happens during the patter above.

"I realize that these cubes are nowhere near as nice as casino dice, but for me they had one big advantage – they don't make any noise. And that means I could play a game with them in the library and win a little cash without the adults noticing." Pick up the tabled cube with the spot on the bottom and grip it in preparation for the *Optical Revolve* as explained above. Make sure that the bottom of the cube is parallel to the floor. If the cube is tilted, there will be a problem. Now do the *Optical Revolve*; if you do this in front of a mirror you'll discover an amazing thing: the spot on the bottom of the cube is never seen. The optical impression is that all six sides of the cube are seen, but the spotted side stays out of sight. The only bad angle is directly to

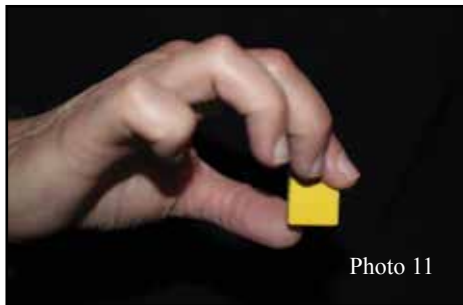


Photo 11



Photo 12



Photo 13

the left. At the end of the rotation, shift the cube slightly, do the FS, reverse the action, returning the hand to its original position, and table the cube to the right. Retrieve the other cube from the spectator and table it to the left.

Here's the timing of the moves to the above patter. *"I realize that these cubes are nowhere near as nice as casino dice (pick up and Optical Revolve), but for me they had one big advantage – they don't make any noise (FS and tabling cube). And that means I could play a game with them in the library and win a little cash without the adults noticing (take cube from spectator).*

"In order to play the game, we need one more cube. This one is the exact size and shape of the other two, but it has a spot on it." Reach into the right jacket pocket and remove the third yellow cube. Because of the way it was positioned, it will come out with the spot facing the audience. A slight variation of the Optical Revolve will be performed. Hold the cube in the right-hand grip explained above with the spot facing the spectators. Do the Optical Revolve, but as you do so, turn the right hand so the palm is toward the floor. At the conclusion of the Optical Revolve, the left thumb

helps turn the cube a bit more so the spot ends up facing the spectators again. (This sequence is not absolutely necessary, but it reinforces the idea that all sides of the cube are seen when the spin is done, and this in turn reinforces the blank condition of the first two cubes.)

"The cube has a smiley face, and it's smiling because this is the 'money cube.' Just keep track of it and you'll win some dough." The spot cube is placed between the other two cubes with the spot on the bottom. *"Let's give it a try."*

At this point you will perform a Monte-type mix-up sequence to confuse the spectator as to the whereabouts of the spotted cube. You can work out any combination that feels comfortable to you, but here are two possibilities, which I will refer to as Mix-up One and Mix-up Two.

Mix-up One: Consider the cubes as 1, 2, and 3 from your left to right. (2 and 3 have spots on the bottom.) The left hand grasps 1 and moves slightly to the left as the right hand grasps 3 and lifts it from the table. 3 is placed between 1 and 2 (order is 1, 3, 2). Immediately after it releases 3, the right hand grasps 2 and moves slightly to the right. The left hand places 1 (which it is holding) between 3 and 2 (order is 3, 1, 2). Immediately after it releases 1, the left hand moves to the left, grasps 3, and moves slightly to the left. The right hand places 2 (which it holds) between 3 and 1 (order is 3, 2, 1). Immediately after it releases 2, the right hand grasps 1 and moves slightly to the right. The left hand places 3 (which it holds) between 2 and 1 (order is 2, 3, 1). The left moves to the left but does not grab a cube. The right hand places 1 (which it holds) to the left of 2 and 3. The order has been restored to 1, 2, and 3.

The above instructions read like gibberish, but the sequence flows rhythmically and easily in a five-beat pattern. Try it a few times with the cubes in hand and you'll rapidly get a feel for it. The best thing about this sequence is that it restores the order of the cubes, so you unhesitatingly know where the spotted cubes are.

Mix-up Two: This sequence is simpler. The cubes are handled two at a time by the right hand. The left hand's job is to move the single cube to the right. The sequence begins with the cubes in the same order as in Mix-up One (1, 2, and 3) with cubes 2 and 3 having spots. The right hand slides 3 to the left until it touches 2. It picks up both cubes and places them to the left of cube 1. As the right hand lifts its cubes, the left hand slides cube 1 to the right to make space for them (order is 2, 3, 1). The right

hand grasps 3 and 1 and places them to the left of 2 (order is 3, 1, 2). The right hand grasps 1 and 2 and places them to the left of 3. The sequence is finished and the order is restored. The entire thing is a done to a quick three-beat.

Let's get back to the routine. The spectators know that the middle cube has a spot on its bottom. Perform Mix-up One. As you do so say, *"The object, of course, is to keep your eye on the cube with the spot. And the best thing about this is that the cubes made no noise on the hardwood tables in the back of the library."*

Finish Mix-up One and ask, *"Where do you think the cube with the spot is? You want this one? How did you do? No? That's because it's over here."* Whatever cube the spectator picks, show that the bottom of that cube is blank by doing a FS. (Do this even if he picks the blank cube on the left.) Then reveal that one of the other cubes has the spot on the bottom by doing a NS. Place the cube that you've just shown in between the other two cubes so they are in the original starting position (blank, spot, spot).

[Note: Because of the way the double turnover is handled, you (as the performer) never see the side of the cube the spectator sees. Never turn the cube so you can see the spot. There is some additional mystery to this.]

"Let's try it again." Perform Mix-up One while looking down at the cubes. Look up at the spectator as if you're going to ask him to pick one, and then immediately look back down and perform Mix-up Two. Played properly, this can be funny. *"Where do you think it is now?"*

You are going to get rid of one of the spotted cubes. Exactly when and how you do this depends on which cube is picked up.

A. If he picks a cube with a spot (2 or 3), show it to be blank on the bottom with a FS and say, *"Is it there? No? Let's get rid of this one."* Place the cube in your pocket.

B. If he picks the blank cube (1), show it blank using a FS and replace it. Say, *"Is it there? No? I'll tell you what. I'll give you another chance. Pick one of the other two."* Whichever one is picked, show it to be blank with a FS. *"Is it there? No? Then let's get rid of this one."* Place the cube in your pocket. There are now two cubes on the table. Pick up the one with the spot and show it with a NS. *"It's here. Let me make this a little easier for you."*

Reach in your left pocket and bring out the blue cube. Because of the way it was positioned, the spot will face away from

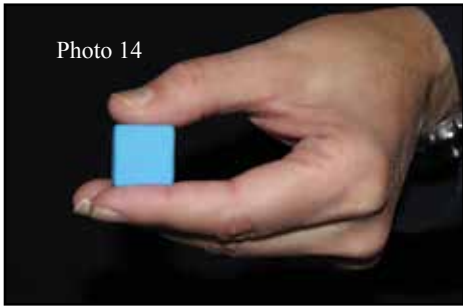


Photo 14

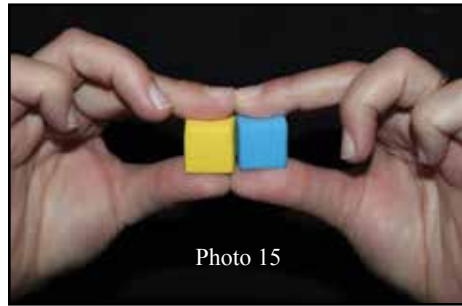


Photo 15

the spectators (Photo 14). "Let's use this cube. This cube is exactly the same size as the others, but there is a discrepancy that will give you a slight advantage." As the blue cube is brought out, pick up the blank cube with the right hand. You're going to put the two cubes side by side, as though to compare them. The hands come together and then both hands turn so the palms face the audience. During this turn a FS is performed with both hands. (Photo 15 shows the conclusion of this.) The position is held for a moment and then both hands return to their starting positions. The blue cube is placed to the left; the blank cube is placed to the right. The blue cube has been shown blank without ever commenting on that fact.

The cube with the spot is shown by a NS and is placed spot down between the other two cubes. "I think you'll find this to be much easier to follow, as long as you don't get distracted by the blue cube." Now perform two very rapid iterations of Mix-up One, followed by Mix-up Two. At the end of this, as an apparent afterthought, very slowly change the positions of 2 and 3. (This brings the spot cube to the right end.) "Where do you think it is?"

What happens next depends on which of the cubes the spectator picks. The end result will always be that the cube with the spot is pocketed.

A. If the spectator picks 3 (the right-hand cube), pick it up and show it as blank with a FS. "Nope. Sorry. Maybe I should

make it even easier." Put the cube in your right jacket pocket.

B. If the spectator picks 2 (the center cube), say, "Hey you finally got it right!" Pick up cube 3 (the right-hand cube), show it blank with a FS, and put the cube in your right jacket pocket. "Let's try it one last time, for all the dough."

There are two cubes on the table. Pick up the yellow cube, very slowly lift it over the blue cube, and put it to the left of it. "Where is the spot now? Oh, you were so close." The spectator will point to the yellow cube. Pick it up, show it blank using a FS, and then roll the cube over to the spectator. "You lost, but have a nice day anyway." Turn over the blue cube, showing the yellow smiley face to end. ♦

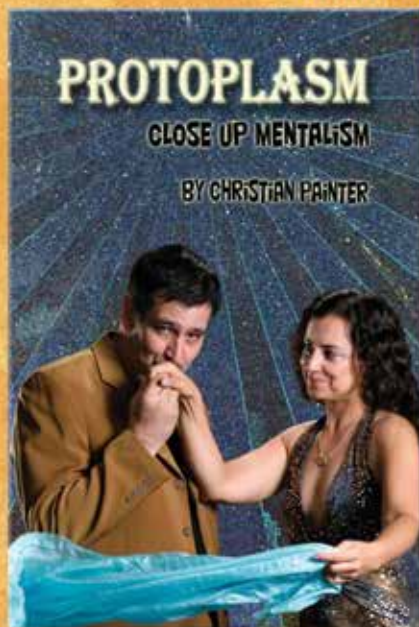
Bob Farmer created *Monte Bones* in 1991. It turns out the late Peter Kane was thinking along similar lines and independently developed a *Monte* routine using cubes with spots. Peter's routine appeared as *Di-A-Monte* in *Apocalypse* (Vol. 17, No. 7, July, 1994). It is a clever routine, but it has some serious angle restrictions.

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PROTOPLASM

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THE EMERGENCY KIT

I have decided to be more prepared in case the airline loses my show that I carry in my checked baggage. No matter what happens, I can do an hour-long show of visual and varied magical effects that will be funny and entertaining and will play to a room of a thousand people. But what do you carry with you that will allow you to do all these varied effects with a minimum of props? These props all have to fit into an 8x6x4-inch zippered leather case. They have to be small but effective, compact yet powerful – kind of like having your own magical Navy Seal Team Six.

The Emergency Kit Contents: Ring Flight Gimmick, Humber Ring Gimmick/Pencil, Invisible Deck, Egg Bag/Shot Glass Gimmick/Plastic Egg, Deck of Regular Cards, Sharpie, Crown Royal Bag for Bill in Lemon, Thumb Tip (Multiple Uses), Cigarette Papers, Envelopes/Cards.

Ring Flight: This is a self-contained effect that is easy to pack small and play big. My routine can go about six minutes long and is full of jokes and gags that ultimately lead to a powerful finish. In my lecture notes I have a few subtle touches on how to make this type of close-up effect play big on a large stage. The main key is to frame the action high and use descriptive language to convey the action.

Invisible Deck: This is a routine that allows you to play with the spectator and get a lot of mileage out of shuffling the deck, having the spectator think of a card, and all those jokey-joke chestnuts we all groan over but audiences still gobble up. I think this effect is so strong it is worth carrying the extra gaffed deck.

Cards Across: My routine Superfly is a version of Cards Across that is twelve minutes long. All it requires is a setup deck and a few envelopes. There is another gimmick that provides some comic relief in the middle of the trick. This gimmick can easily be constructed by swiping a knife, a fork, and a linen napkin from a dinner place setting. Or it can be cobbled together with a coat hanger and a bandana.

The process of having the cards selected and sealed in the envelope holds the interest of the spectators and adds to the deceptiveness of the routine. It is a killer trick based on Denny Haney's version of the Zen's Cards Across.

Thumb Tip: What can't you do with a thumb tip? One of the tricks I do that plays really big is David Williamson's Salt Transposition taught on multiple videos he has put out; it is also in his book *Williamson's Wonders*. This is a great trick that can get a lot of laughs and has a really visual ending. It also happens to be a real fooler. I also perform my Matches Melt routine from my *10 O'Clock Show* DVD. This is a reimagining of the classic Terry Seabrooke Cigarette in Coat Routine, but done with a book of matches. I find that this version goes down better in this anti-smoking world; you still get all the classic gags. I have also added a production of a glass or bottle of water as a kicker. On the DVD I also talk about how to produce a fire extinguisher that you may be able to find lying around backstage. This plays really big.

Egg Bag: This is quite possibly the most perfect trick in magic. It is deceptive and compact, yet it plays to the largest of audiences. The Egg Bag has all you could want in a magic effect: disappearances, transpositions, vanishes, and if you use Sure Shot at the end as Denny does, you get the added kicker of a shot glass of liquid appearing at the end. This puts a nice caper on the trick. Although I normally use a blown egg for this routine, my emergency kit has a plastic one so I never have to worry about it breaking.

Crown Royal Bag – Bill in Lemon: You can always find a lemon or an orange at any venue you are working. They are readily available at buffets, hotels, and cruise ships, or just pop into a grocery store or convenience store and grab one on the way to the gig. I include the Crown Royal bag to do a commando version of my Final Cut Routine. Those of you who have the routine know that if you are careful, you can use a slightly modified table knife to pull off the effect. For those who know the Steve Spill method, a finger tip or thumb tip is all you need to include this killer classic. The bang for buck ratio makes it well worth including the Crown

Royal bag in your prop case.

Cigarette Papers: What about a cut and restored routine? A good torn and restored cigarette paper packs really small and plays just as well as any Torn and Restored Newspaper or Cut and Restored Rope routine. If you really sell the sizzle and not the steak, you can make this play huge. I once saw Jonathan Pendragon do a Torn and Restored Cigarette Paper as a part of his regular program in a tent in Florida for 2000 people. They loved it. Again, really make sure to narrate the procedure and describe the action while working with the spectator. This provides verification that everything you are doing is legit. At the end of the routine, if you blow the paper skyward with a short blast of air and allow it to gently drift down to the stage, the paper twisting and turning in the breeze like a falling leaf makes a very nice picture to end the effect.

Humber Rings: This is probably the most powerful trick you can do with the simplest of props. All you need is a Humber Ring and a pencil and you can create a miracle. Now when I say miracle, you must have a super-clean handling. I have seen the Humber Rings performed in such a clumsy and convoluted way that nobody could tell what the hell was going on. I will be releasing my Humber Ring routine sometime in the near future through Bob Kohler. This can be a very powerful routine with very minimal props and, if done properly, can be the highlight of your show.

A fifty-five minute stage show from the emergency kit would run like this:

Cigarette Paper Tear (three minutes), Invisible Deck (four minutes), Ring Flight (six minutes), Matches Melt (six minutes), Bill in Lemon (nine minutes), Humber Rings (nine minutes), Super Fly Cards Across (twelve minutes), Egg Bag with Shot Glass Finale (six minutes).

You may have noticed that there are not any "pick a card" tricks in this lineup. You can always throw a few of these in the mix, such as a Card to Mouth, Card on Forehead, Card in Fly, or perhaps a multiple selection routine to fill out your program. If you carry your emergency kit with you, you will never be without a show, no matter where you go. ♦

HIT THE ROAD

WITH SCOTT ALEXANDER, PUCK,
JENNY ALEXANDER, AND ADAM ACE

SOUNDS TERRIFIC



I was doing a show and needed lots of cues to be executed by my sound person in the booth. I wanted to make the process easy for her. I've recommended many sound cue programs before and each one had its merits and its limitations. What I found for this particular situation

is truly spectacular – introducing **iMix16**.

iMix16 comes in various “flavors”; let's talk about the computer one first. If you look at the photo, you will see that there are sixteen channels or fader switches. The way I use it is to assign each fader to a specific trick. Then you add a song from your iTunes library to that fader. When you are ready for the song, the sound person hits the “IN” button and your song fades in. When the trick is over, she hits the “OUT” button and the song fades away.

You can adjust the volume on each channel along with the fades. It is a very versatile program. There is a version of the program that controls audio *and* video. They have now added to their line an iOS version, which means you can now get an iPad version.

I really, really like this program and will be using it in all my stage shows when someone else is running my music. Please visit their website at www.mix16apps.com There are free versions of their apps as well as pro versions starting at \$9.

WALK AROUND HOLSTER



In the quest to find the perfect case to carry your magic for walk-around, I found something a bit different, but useful. Our friends at www.thinkgeek.com have an item called the **Grab-It Pack Gadget Holster**.

Originally created to hold your keys, cell phone, and wallet, it is worn like a holster around your waist and leg. If you

are doing outside walk-around and don't have enough pockets in your pants, this could be the answer. The cell phone pocket is 5x4x1 and can hold your packet tricks. The wallet pocket is 9x5x1 and holds a deck of cards perfectly. The key pocket is 6½x3x1 and is perfect for coins.

This is not for everyone, because you are wearing a strap

around your waist as well as a holster around your leg, but I am sure there are some magicians out there who are going to appreciate this gadget. The gadget holster sells for \$30 - \$60 depending on whether you want Velcro or buckles to keep the pockets closed. Check it out. I'm sure you'll find a use for this case.

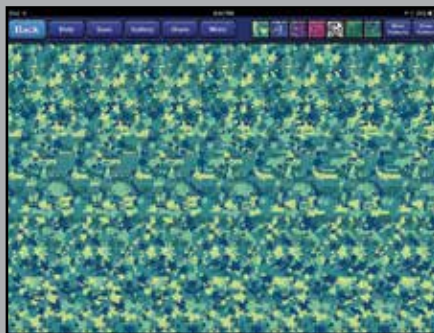
BIZARRE MAGICK



If you are into bizarre magick or you can't get to Salem, Massachusetts, around Halloween, check out this new website with lots of skull and pentagram gifts. The folks at

www.pyewackettandpecke.com have some really magical, yet witchy, props and pieces of art. There's something for everyone.

3-D STARING



Remember those magic 3-D pictures that you would stare at in malls to find the floating objects or words? My old IBM computer had a program that made them. Whenever I did a school show, I would make one up with the school

mascot and the name of the school. I'd print them up at the local print shop and hand them out as giveaways to the kids.

Now you can make them on your iPad or iPhone with **Draw 3D!** This is a very easy app that allows you to create magic eye 3-D pictures of objects and words. I made my first one in under a minute. The photo showing this app has one of my famous spirals with my name underneath.

There is a free version to try out, or you can get the pro version, which has additional backgrounds and bells and whistles. Download the free one and give it a try. After you create them, you can share them on Facebook or Twitter. You can also save them to your camera roll for printing or emailing to friends or clients. **Draw 3D!** is free; **Draw 3D! Pro** is available in the iTunes App Store for \$1.99. ♦

Bruce is always on the lookout for computer magic, iPhone/iPod Touch apps, and tech toys that can be used in magic applications. If you have any suggestions for future columns, write to him (SAMtalkBruce@cox.net).

The Nielsen Gallery

The Great McEwen - Scottish Hypnotist

Dimensions: Quarter-sheet: 14.5" x 19.5" • Lithographer: Caxton Printing, Dunedin, New Zealand

Date: 1910 • Nielsen Rating: Unique

This month's poster features "The Great McEwen," mentalist and stage hypnotist. Many performers working as mentalists, magicians, or both have claimed the title "Great," but how great was our subject? Magic historians generally consider C.A. George Newmann to have been one of the greatest in this field. So who did Newmann feel could justify the title? Newmann said the greatest hypnotic entertainer of all time was Peter Hartley McEwen, a mentalist of Scottish birth who played to packed houses with his hypnotic magical company.

As is frequently the case, there was a lot of misinformation concerning McEwen's actual name, his nationality, and other biographic details. Much of this was clarified by the late Australian magic historian Brian McCullagh, who just recently passed away. Through his diligent research we know that McEwen was born in 1861 in Hawich, Scotland. By the late 1890s the theatrical journals begin mentioning his combination hypnotism, mesmerism, and magic performances. These theatrical publications corroborate Newmann's claim that McEwen caused an absolute sensation wherever he appeared.

When he finally began appearing in America around the turn of the last century, he did so mainly in small towns in the Midwest, Northwest, and Canada. It was a practice he continued to duplicate as he traveled across the globe. In Benton Harbor, Michigan, he caused a sensation with his startling act and gave an entire change of program every night for a week.

One of the greatest theatrical managers of all time was Felix Bley, who toured more magicians around the world than probably anyone else. He started in 1900 with Clivette, "The Man in Black." Later he managed "Dr." Herbert Flint, the eminent American hypnotist and then went on to represent The Great Jansen, Fasola, Carter, LeRoy, Talma and Bosco, George, and Dante. McEwen came under Bley's management in 1908 and 1909.

In 1910, McEwen played the Winter Garden Theater in New Orleans and then afterward went to Australia. He reportedly played India in mid-1913 and may have done so on his way to Australia.

There is no extensive description of his act, although this month's poster depicts him performing the hypnotic feat in which McEwen's wife Florence is mesmerized and placed horizontally between two chairs with her head and feet resting only upon the chair backs. More amazingly, spectators are invited up from the audience to stand upon her as if she were a platform.

McEwen's greatest sensations, though, was when he invited noted citizens of the towns where he played to come up on the stage and allow themselves to be hypnotized. He then had them act in thoroughly undignified ways. A reviewer for Australia's *Bulletin* newspaper wrote on October 10, 1912:

This paper viewed the Great McEwen in his lair at Sydney

Town Hall last week. To those who delight to see their fellow humans publicly debased, and to those who rejoice at the spectacle of the populace plunged in what is mostly known as "innocent merriment," the labors of McEwen will appeal vastly. He gets a dozen or more citizens on the platform, and at a word from him they immediately behave like members of the NSW Opposition (author's note: This refers to one of New South Wales' political parties).

The reviewer went on to report that onlookers were on "the verge of hysterics" and noted with tongue firmly planted in his cheek that he was "oppressed by grief at such ruthless martyrdom of man's self-respect." In other words, he enjoyed it tremendously.

McEwen also performed the feat in which small objects were hidden about the theater and then by lightly touching a spectator, McEwen would move off with the spectator in tow, and eventually the person would lead him subconsciously to the object. It was an effect popularized by John Randall-Brown, Newmann, and others.

Little is known of the magic he performed, but it was all part of his show, which also included classic songs by his wife, who was formerly with the Boston Lyric Opera Company. And if McEwen was popular in Australia, he was even more so in New Zealand. McCullagh found newspaper accounts that confirmed that McEwen's business was "sensational."

At one point McEwen claimed that he was related to Scotsman John Henry Anderson, The Great Wizard of the North. His mother's maiden name was Kate Anderson, but no link to that great magician can be established. Publicly he gave his full name as Philip Hartley McEwen and even wrote a book under that name titled *Hypnotism Made Plain* (1912).

Magic historian and author David Price wrote that Newmann's categorization of McEwen as a "great showman" led him to conclude that he could have been just as great in large cities (with proper management) as he was in small towns. He certainly was more than a "town hall" magician, but not quite a "Broadway" performer. However, Price asserted that regardless of what type of places he played, it in no way reflected on his ability as a performer.

In his later years McEwen suffered from diabetes and was in and out of hospitals in Australia and New Zealand. His last show occurred in Cairns, New Zealand, in December 1934. Near the end he often remarked on a treasured book of newspaper clippings, letters of thanks, and photographs; he alluded to it being stored in a boarding house in town. It was never recovered. The Great McEwen, who according to his posters performed demonstrations "funny enough to make a cat laugh," died peacefully in his sleep on July 19, 1935. ♦

—Tom Ewing

THE GREAT
MC EWEN
SCOTTISH
HYPNOTIST

STUPENDOUS CATALEPTIC TEST
CAPTIVATING THE INTELLIGENCE OF EVERY CITY

CANTON PTO CO. LEO. BUREAU, N.Y.

© 1907 G. & J. S. D. Co. N.Y.

The poster features a central illustration of a man in a white suit lying on a table, surrounded by several men in suits. One man stands to the right, gesturing towards the subject. The background is a mix of green and red. The text is in large, stylized fonts. The entire poster is framed in a dark wood frame.



MAKING THE ARRANGEMENTS

One of my favorite little booklets from bygone days is Victor Farelli's *Lend Me Your Pack*. It's a slim volume from the 1930s that contains some quaint advice of the times ("In a drawing room, no woman should ever be requested to stand, no matter what the circumstances may be. It is not done."); it also contains some impressively modern thinking. As the title implies, it focuses on tricks that can be done with a borrowed deck. While there have always been plenty of good tricks that can be done at the drop of a hat, what surprised me about *Lend Me Your Pack* was Farelli's emphasis on culling.

Most card magic, implicitly or explicitly, is largely about control. The time-honored, quintessential (and oft-reviled) trick of "pick a card and the magician finds it" speaks directly to this. Any effect related to "order out of chaos" – Triumph, Out of This World, etc. – relates directly to this as well. Gambling material is of course about controlling cards – for fun and, more important, for profit. So it follows that the less control you appear to have at the outset of such a trick, the more impressive it's going to be when you get the required cards back in your control at the end. It's a no-brainer, then, that if you can hand the deck off to be shuffled by someone else at the start, and then shortly after manage to produce, say, the four Aces in some surprising and effortless manner, your audience will be duly impressed. The skills that allow you to do that pay dividends.

At the time Farelli wrote *Lend Me Your Pack*, magicians arranged impromptu setups quickly in between tricks or right before a performance under the guise of checking to see if the pack was complete or simply "toying with the cards." While those are decent enough motivations for quickly spreading through the pack, back then the Hofzinsler Cull was a long way off from being common knowledge. A

CHEATS & DECEPTIONS (FOR ENTERTAINMENT PURPOSES ONLY)

BY ANTONIO M. CABRAL

properly executed under-the-spread cull will be invisible and will fly even under a flimsy excuse. Without a tool like that, the problem was – and is – in Farelli's words: "The audience may not know exactly what the artist is doing, but they must have a pretty good idea that he is 'fixing' the pack in some way, especially as it is usually quite obvious that the order of the cards is being changed."

The answer, as Farelli noted, was to apply some strategy and subtlety. Again, it's common knowledge today that you can set up for one trick during the course of a previous trick, or occasionally set up for an impressive climax from a shuffled pack over the course of a trick. What struck me was Farelli's emphasis on these kinds of strategies as tools in the card worker's arsenal. Many beginning card magicians run into card tricks that require four Aces or Kings or whatever on top of the deck, and have no way to get there except sneaking the deck around the corner or into the bathroom for five minutes – again, not very convincing or deceptive. Farelli's examples are much more subtle, following what I call the Rule of Spectator Multitasking: if your audience is convinced you're focused on one task, they'll focus on that task along with you. This allows you to get away with quite a bit.

Lend Me Your Pack features a few good examples of this kind of thinking. For example, he describes openly removing one four of a kind while secretly removing another four of a kind using a very accessible cull known now as a down-jog cull (see *Card College 4*, p. 899). His first offering, however, struck me as "almost, but not quite." He starts that trick by removing, say, four Kings plus two random cards, and using them to apparently make some kind of calculation before the trick begins. My thinking is, if you're going to remove a group of cards from the deck, place them aside for the bulk of the trick, and then replace them at the end, it's a little too "on the nose." If you're going to take those cards out of the deck, you might as well use them. Here's an alternative approach I've used to good effect.

JUST AS I THOUGHT

Hand the deck out for shuffling, such that you can call back to it later on. As your participant is shuffling, ask him to think of any card in the deck. "*In fact, just to make it really difficult for me, go with your third choice!*" When he has a card in mind, have him remove the card he's thinking of and hold it against his chest – either to show the rest of the audience what the card is, or if he's alone, to "solidify the image in his mind" with one last look. When he has his selection, take the deck back and casually glimpse the bottom card.

Begin an overhand shuffle, shuffling off about two-thirds of the deck before interrupting yourself. Have him replace his card on the shuffled half. Drop the remaining cards on top and immediately go into another brief overhand shuffle, making sure the first block of that shuffle is larger than the last block you threw on top of the selection. This is an easy and subtle key card placement. The overhand shuffle doesn't disturb the key and selection, but should throw off any suspicion of a key. Pay little or no attention to the deck as you place it down on the table; ideally, after you've glimpsed your key, don't look at the deck at all. "*I didn't make you take that card, you thought of it on your own. There's absolutely no way I could know what that card is. But I'm pretty sure I already do. I'm not one hundred percent sure – eighty-seven percent tops.*"

Pick up the deck and begin to take a quick look through it. The shuffle should have positioned your key (and the selection in front of it) very near the face of the deck, so you should spot it almost right away. Once you spot your key and know the selection, immediately appear to change your mind and hand the deck off for another shuffle. As he shuffles, watch as if you're looking for something in the way he shuffles. Relax and say, "*Ah. Just as I thought! Let's try something.*"

Take the deck back and spread through with the faces towards you. Remove and table the following cards face down: four Aces, the selection, and any random card,

without showing any of them. Place them on the table in a face-down row so that it's the four Aces, followed by the selection, and then the random card. The whole time you should appear confident (but not smug) in anticipating where all this is going – as well you should!

Now use equivoque to get the spectator to his selection. Have him remove two cards from either side, then push any two towards you, and then have him place each hand on top of the remaining two and lift one, for example. You, of course, keep track of which cards are where. As you remove the “discards,” give each a brief look and say confidently, “*Just as I thought!*” As you gather the “discards,” arrange them so that the Aces end up together and the random card ends up underneath them (you can do this by using the odd card out to scoop up the pile and drop it on top of the deck whenever you get the opportunity). When you're down to one card, ask the spectator to name his card. Reveal it and say, “*Just as I thought!*”

This is a very simple, almost self-working trick that plays strongly and allows you to end up with four Aces (or whatever small stock) under your control after quite a bit of shuffling. It follows the same thinking as Farelli's approach – the number of cards in play helps disguise your secret agenda – but rather than place them aside with a flimsy excuse, you cast them in an active role as potential selections. By the time the trick is over, the audience is too busy wondering how you knew which card was picked and you would end up with, and your stock is safely out of play on top of the deck.

A nice feature of this trick is that, if you have a decent under-spread cull or learn the down-jog cull, you can get two separate groups of cards under your

control at once. Say you want to follow this with a version of the Gardner/Marlo Poker Deal (for example, Lorayne's Poker Deal from his *Close-Up Card Magic*). This requires a setup of four Aces, followed by the other four cards of a royal flush (Ten, Jack, Queen, King) in one suit. As you go to remove the cards for the equivoque, table one of the royal flush cards as your random card, then under-spread or down-jog cull the remaining three royal flush cards as you table the Aces and the selection in whatever order you come to them. Following the procedure above, at the end the Aces will be on top (ready to be produced) and the royal flush cards will be directly underneath them, ready to go. Not bad at all.

It's absolutely worth it to keep an eye out in the literature for tricks that allow you to get ahead for further miracles. Some good places to start:

- Roberto Giobbi, *Card College 5*, p. 1124, Secret Setup. This is a variation of a great strategy of Juan Tamariz that not only allows you to cull a setup, but arrange it in a specific sequence.
- John Bannon, *Dear Mr. Fantasy*, p. 51, Line of Sight (Control). Similar thinking to the trick I described, but it is a little more direct and doesn't require a table.
- Harry Lorayne, *Deck-sterity*, p. 23, Foursome. Harry has a lot of tricks that involve low-impact methods of arranging cards. Foursome is an impromptu classic that allows you to produce a four-of-a-kind climax from a shuffled deck. If you can lay hands on it, I highly recommend my friend Andrew Wimhurst's *Down Under Deals*, which has a double-barreled version of this trick.

- Michael Vincent performs and explains a terrific sequence of effects on the third volume of his *Classic Magic of Michael Vincent* DVD set, specifically to share his thoughts on these kinds of impromptu performances. Well worth the price and your attention.
- Paul Cummins created a trademark out of the abbreviation FASDIU: “from a shuffled deck in use.” His lecture notes by that name, *FASDIU* and *FASDIU II*, contain a number of strong effects that can be set up...well, from a shuffled deck in use.

For a slightly more specific, yet very accessible and strong cull technique, check out Separating the Colors in *Expert Card Technique* (p. 115), which allows you to separate out a half-deck setup using the slop shuffle.

It's also worth making note of any trick that requires you to spread through the deck in search of a selection. If that card's identity can be known quickly – through a key card, glimpse, or force – you can use it to quickly cull a small stock as described. A good example of that is Now You See It from *The Royal Road to Card Magic* (p. 92). The key should be that the trick by itself is a strong one, and allows you to hand the deck out for shuffling at some point.

A number of years back, the Hofzinsler Cull (and various finessed versions) became the hot move of the moment for the card magic community. It's an incredibly powerful tool as I said. However, an equally strong tool is the ability to think strategically, regardless of your chops, to get ahead of your audience. It'll definitely take your card magic out of the beginner class. ♦

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Magic Moments: The Bruce and Kitty Spangler Story

By Dan Rodriguez, PNP

“The whole thing was Alfred’s fault!” Alfred Carlton Gilbert was a magician and inventor who, back in 1909, provided supplies for magic shows. Bruce says that it was that darn picture on Gilbert’s *Mysto Magic Set* box that changed his life. The picture showed a rabbit in a hat, a ball and vase, colorful hanks, and a young performer magishing a pot of flowers. “As a five year old, I was enthralled! I wanted to be that boy. I wanted to do those tricks – especially the flower trick!” said Bruce. “Had it not been for that Gilbert *Mysto Magic Set*, I might not have been bitten by the magic bug. Without magic, I might not have been able to afford college, and I might not have met Kitty and spent the last fifty years with her. And without Kitty, there might not be a *Magic Moments* act, or a magic collection. Yep! It was all Alfred’s fault!”

Kitty and Bruce Spangler are third generation natives of Denver, Colorado, and have recently celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary. Throughout their marriage, magic has been an integral part of their lives, and today, their three children, Steve, Holly, and Wayne, are carrying on the tradition. While the Spanglers have traveled extensively performing their stage act, their hearts have always been close to home. Bruce and Kitty have always been consummate supporters and mentors to the Colorado magic community.

Magic Beginnings

Bruce discovered magic on his fifth birthday in 1946 when a neighbor gave him a Gilbert *Mysto Magic Exhibition Set* #1½. In those days, the magic set was most likely purchased for about a buck and a half from a national department store chain. Although his original magic set is no longer around, a few years ago Bruce



The Spanglers 1964



bought a replica of the same set on eBay for nearly \$300. Bruce says, “It was worth every penny! It was like being reunited with an old friend.”

One of Bruce’s defining moments was in the second grade when his teacher announced a talent show in which everyone was to participate. “I couldn’t sing, dance, or play an instru-

ment,” Bruce said. He added, “In desperation, I looked through my toy closet and came upon my Gilbert *Mysto Magic Set*. I practiced a few tricks and performed them in the talent show. From that point on during my school years, and into college, my classmates would refer to me as the magician.

“When I was around ten years old, my mentor was a local magician by the name of Wayne Minge. He was the resident magician (he ran the magic counter) at Pratt’s Book Store in Denver.” Bruce



*Kitty - a young ballerina,
Bruce - Thirteen years old*

remembers those classes well. He says that a dozen teen- and preteen-aged boys would enthusiastically attend each Saturday afternoon at Pratt's.

The classes were held in the ancient and dimly lit basement of the store. "To me, it was a scary place; I was quite reluctant to join the group at first, even though my parents reassured me that it was perfectly safe. After several weeks of consternation, I decided to embark upon the adventure. To my delight, I found the other young magicians to be quite supportive and willing to share their experiences with me."

In the years that followed, and with the help of some veteran adult stagehands, a stage was constructed in that spooky ol' bookstore basement. It had a professionally installed platform, curtains, and even lighting equipment. It was a safe place to meet, learn, and perform.

Each week, one of the members would do a show and the resident magician at the counter upstairs would come down to offer his critique of the show and teach something from the realm of the professional magicians. "I can't imagine a better environment to foster an interest in magic."

Each Saturday after magic class, Bruce and many other students would run across the street to Major's Camera Shop, which also had a magic department and was located only a half-block away from Pratt's. The magician working the magic counter at Major Magic was Earl Reum – another one of Bruce's mentors.

Eventually, Bruce landed his first job at Pratt's Book Store. It was his dream job! Now he had the responsibility of sweeping the floors, removing fingerprints and drool

from the glass on the magic showcases, demonstrating tricks, and teaching Saturday magic classes.

"Many famous magicians came through the shop, but I was not seasoned enough to recognize them. One day, while working the magic counter, a couple of rough-looking 'cowboys' came into the shop and began browsing the magic in the showcases. These two guys did not look like what I thought magicians should look like.

"The character with the cigar and fishing creel hanging at his side pointed to a Walsh cane and said to me, 'Would you get that out so that I can play with it a bit?' I politely told him that it was a magic prop that could only be handled by professional magicians. The other cowboy leaned over the counter and whispered into my ear, 'Don't you know who that is? That's Senator Clarke Crandall.' I remember thinking, 'Holy cow! I just insulted a real United States Senator!'

"Senator or not, I wasn't about to hand over the cane. He politely asked if I was allowed to tell him the price. I did. He bought it. Only after several days did word get around town, and somebody let me in on who the senator really was." (Author's note: Senator Clarke Crandall was a well-known magician of his era. However, "Senator" was just his nickname; he was never a U.S. Senator.)

Downtown Denver Theater Shows

The Orpheum Theatre was less than a five-minute walk from Pratt's Book Store; the manager of the theatre, Bill Hastings, was a true fan of magic. He wandered into Pratt's one day and introduced himself. Bruce remembers how truly impressed he was with Mr. Hastings's knowledge of

magic and magicians.

"I need a publicity stunt for our lobby to promote a horror film," said Mr. Hastings. "Would you fellows (referring to Bruce and several other young magicians in the store) bring that guillotine over to the theater and demonstrate it in our lobby? It would be worth fifty bucks to me." That was a lot of money back then, and Bruce was quick to take Mr. Hastings up on his offer.

"It was a smashing success for drawing a crowd in the lobby and attracting a newspaper photographer," Bruce recalled. "That's what it was all about."

There were about a dozen theaters in downtown Denver during that era, and soon after the Orpheum Theatre publicity stunt, the manager of the Paramount Theatre asked Bruce to think up something to do in front of his theater to publicize an upcoming voodoo-themed movie called *Macumba Love*.

"In my mind's eye, I visualized the marquee adorned with skulls and skeletons, and a platform upon which a witch doctor was sticking voodoo needles



Opening of Macumba Love with guillotine in the lobby

the first half of the show. Jane stood in front of the glass with the balloon between her hands.

By now Jane was quite accustomed to the balloon's pop and the sound of breaking glass, but she had no knowledge of how the loaded gun sounded when the trigger was pulled, and she had no expectation that a foot-long flame appeared at the gun's muzzle. Upon hearing the gun's report and seeing the flame, Jane thought that she had really been shot, and collapsed in a heap on the stage!

into an unwilling spectator.”

That was the event that triggered the creation of Bruce's now famous You-Do Voodoo (Needle Thru Arm) effect. The stunt drew big crowds. Bob Roe, the manager, loved it. Executives from United Artists Pictures loved it. The photographers loved it, and Bruce says he loved making money on that bloody thing for over half a century!

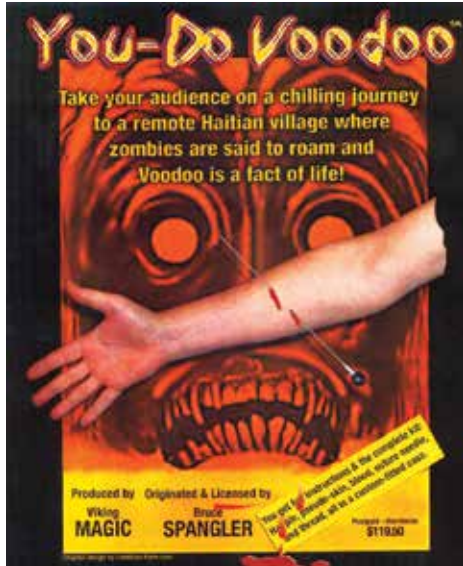
The students could now critique their own performances on videotape. They learned to do magic and to run the cameras and other electronic production gear.

More than a thousand students took lessons in Bruce's studio during the twenty years it was in operation. Many of these students went on to become professional magicians.

thought that she had been shot, too, and closed the main curtain. However, the audience of college kids thought that it was the greatest thing they had ever seen!

After a few moments, an uninjured, but very embarrassed, Jane woke up. Bruce believes it was then that she decided that the job of magician's assistant wasn't for her. She informed Bruce that she quit, and as she walked off, she muttered something about his being the spawn of Satan.

The College Years



The childhood experience of attending magic class at Pratt's Book Store inspired Bruce to carry on the tradition. In the early 1970s, Bruce and Kitty built a studio in the basement of their Denver home, similar to the bookstore's basement, including a stage with lights and curtains.

But Bruce's studio went well beyond that. In 1974 he added a control room, three TV cameras, and a suite of video/audio recorders and special effects equipment.

Magic served Bruce very well during his college years. While many of his friends earned money waiting tables, pumping gas, and mowing lawns, he found that he could surpass their financial results by performing magic.

At the beginning of his second semester of college, he recruited a fellow female student (who we will call "Jane") as a magic assistant. Jane was to assist him in a Halloween Spook Show at a local theater; the feature effect was the Owen Brothers' Shooting Illusion. Jane and Bruce had not previously performed this effect together, but since they had several weeks to rehearse, they decided to include it in the show.

The success of the shooting effect depended on perfectly synchronized timing between magician and assistant. Bruce wanted Jane to get used to the sound of the balloon popping and the pane of glass crashing to the floor behind her, so they rehearsed it no less than two dozen times – but without loading the "special bullet" into the pistol. Bruce simply shouted, "Bang!" and at the appropriate time, Jane tugged on the string, the balloon burst, and the glass shattered. It was perfect!

On the night of the performance, the Shooting Illusion was scheduled to close

How Bruce and Kitty Met

As Bruce's professional magic career began gaining momentum, he remembers heading into the holiday season with a handful of party and club bookings. But with no assistant, and precious little time to train one, Bruce decided that he needed someone who already had considerable onstage experience. He decided that a dancer might possess many of the skills that were needed, so Bruce called a local dance studio, and made it known that the job was available.

Bruce says, "This is where I met and hired Kitty, fifty-one years ago."

Soon after Bruce and Kitty married, their first big adventure was a trip to Abbott's Get-together in Colon, Michigan, some 1,100 miles from their home in Denver. Recil Bordner, president of Abbott's, had booked their act at his annual convention.

"With eight trunks full of equipment, the only way to get there was to drive in our 1957 Ford," Bruce described "We got as far as Chicago when the rear main engine seal started to leak oil profusely, to the tune of about a quart every hundred miles, and in the middle of the night. But, we made it, and the act was well received.

"When children ask, 'How did you do that?' their mind is open and they're ready to learn. A magic trick will provoke the question, and science can provide the answer. Magic is the ultimate teacher!"



Steve and Holly Spangler

"The next day we were eating dinner at Colon's Magic Carpet restaurant when Recil and a gentleman, unknown to us at the time, sat down with us at our table. The gentleman complimented us on our act and said he would like to book our act on *The Hollywood Palace* or the *Ed Sullivan Show*." His parting words were, "Drop me a line and we'll see if we can work it out." With that, the gentleman gave Bruce his business card and left.

The gentleman was Mark Leddy, a well-known booking agent for those shows. They exchanged several letters over the next few months. Mr. Leddy's last letter said that he was sorry, but the network had cancelled both of the shows and, as Bruce concludes, "That's as close as we ever got to the big time."

Early Denver Television

In the early days of television in Denver, there were many opportunities for a young magician to perform. A local car dealer sponsored a live TV talent show in about 1954 called *Doorway to Fame*. Viewers would vote for the talent by writing to the station. Bruce tried out for the show, got on, and eventually won! The grand prize was a wristwatch.

Under the bright studio lights back then, shiny things like linking rings and table legs "burned" into the black-and-white camera's tube and had to be sprayed with a soapy substance that dulled them down.

In 1955, a show called *George Byron's Shock Theatre* aired. The late-night Friday program featured horror films with some type of stunt during the breaks. George would often have a young magician

perform a quick, but spooky, trick or illusion following each commercial. The pay was zero, but the publicity was wonderful!

A tall, red-haired fellow by the name of Rex Morgan did a late-night talk show from Denver's Channel 2 in 1958-59. "Rex was a delightful show host and welcomed unusual guests. He had heard about the Shooting through a Lady illusion that I had performed at the Boulder Theatre (the performance with the fainting assistant). I thought the trick was a disaster, but to Rex, it sounded like something that would be great for his show, exactly as it was performed in Boulder."

The new assistant did a believable job of faking passing out and the phone lines lit up with calls from viewers who either loved it or hated it. Apparently, that was what Rex was anticipating. He loved it and had Bruce back to do the Needle through Arm and fire eating.

In later years, Bruce did weekly performances on *Blinky's Fun Club* and *Gene's Junction*. Blinky was a clown who hosted an afternoon TV show with kids as guests. Bruce did a magic segment on the Friday show for over two years. *Gene's Junction*, hosted by Gene Dolph, was an afternoon program on Denver's educational channel. For several years, Bruce and Kitty were regular performers on his show.

The Collector

Bruce has always been an avid collector of magic; he will tell you that his mentor, Wayne Minge, urged him early on to never sell or trade his magic props. As for the few times he did part with something, he felt like he was selling one of his kids. So,

as Bruce says, "From that point on I kept most of the magic I acquired over the years."

When Bruce and Kitty got married fifty years ago, they started displaying their magic props on shelves in their home. But soon, they began adding to their display by purchasing other collections. Their first acquisition was the John Holoubek collection. John was a well-known magician and was the person who did the cover artwork on the 1949 S.A.M. convention program. That was the year the S.A.M. held its national convention in Denver.

When John felt he could no longer perform, he contacted Bruce and said that he had several pieces of magic that he wanted to sell; he asked if Bruce wanted to buy them. By that time, as Bruce recalls, John had about thirty feet of shelving full of his magic props.

"When I saw John's collection I realized that I couldn't break it up. Everything needed to stay together, so I offered to buy the entire collection. Kitty and I had just gotten married and we didn't have the money to buy everything, so we made a deal to keep the collection together. I agreed to pay for and take half of the collection and, when Kitty and I had the money for the remainder of the collection, he would sell it to us, which he eventually did."

Back in the 1970s, as the Spangler's collection grew, the magic props were displayed on shelves in the basement of their Denver home. This is also where Bruce taught magic lessons in the evenings and on weekends.

Over time, several opportunities arose to purchase the props of other magicians who were retiring, had lost interest in magic, or had passed away. As the Spangler



Earl Reum Collection

collection grew, Bruce and Kitty purchased more shelf units upon which to display the newly acquired props. Repeating that process, over and over, as batches of magic became available, resulted in a collection of magic grouped by the person who previously owned it.

Bruce says, "We discovered that it was interesting to see the sub-collections of their former owners, especially if they enjoyed some level of fame." Many of these sub-collections had their own duplicates, since each magician had his or her favorite type of props such as wands, Linking Rings, Cups and Balls, gaffed coins, and trick cards.

very valuable papers and treasures from the trash, proving that one man's trash is another's treasures."

Currently, Bruce and Kitty are progressing along with updating a complete inventory and comprehensive cataloging of the collection. They estimate that the final count of items in the collection to be in the range of 8,000 to 10,000.

Among the thousands of items displayed in this mini-museum, Bruce proudly declares that there are more than 1,500 decks of cards, 800 gimmick coins, ninety-two sets of handcuffs and magic locks, thirty-eight Die Boxes, thirty-two sets of Linking Rings, fifty sets of Cups

Often when a collection becomes available, Bruce is called upon to assist in its appraisal and disposition. And as Bruce explains, "Appraisal values are often determined by finding comparable items that have sold on Internet auction sites. When all parties agree on the value of the props, we'll often make a cash offer. That's how most of the items have found their way into our mini-museum."

Upon the successful negotiation for a collection, Bruce will ask that it include *everything*. "We even ask for all papers, photos, trash, and even floor sweepings. We've rescued some

and Balls, twenty Dove/Chick Pans, twenty Change Bags, fifteen Choppers/Guillotines, 900 silk hanks, 350 packet tricks, and 800 books.

Although most of the collections are displayed together by their original owner, for reasons of security or special storage/display requirements, some categories of props are separated from their original owner's groupings. Due to their small size and relatively high value, coins are displayed in an isolated environment. Silk hanks, too, required special handling and controlled storage.

As of this writing, the Spanglers have accumulated thirty-two collections from professional magicians. Some of these magicians were national or international performers, but most were based out of Colorado or neighboring states.

Wisdom Begins in Wonder

Bruce has always considered himself a part-time professional magician. His major in college was chemistry, but he spent most of his working experience with computers and electronics. Both of those disciplines are useful in the design of magic effects, and they provided him with a vocation in the corporate world.



When Bruce resigned from corporate life in 1995, he wanted to fill his time with something meaningful and to do something that would make a difference with children. Since Bruce's career had always focused on science, he wanted to encourage kids to pursue a career in science; Bruce and Kitty formed FutureQuest, Inc. and developed a series of science/magic assembly programs designed to stimulate interests in science. They retired from performing professionally in 2012.

Bruce explains, "Socrates knew a simple secret: wisdom begins in wonder. When children ask, 'How did you do that?' their mind is open and they're ready to learn. A magic trick will provoke the question, and science can provide the answer. Magic is the ultimate teacher!"

How to Stay Married for Fifty Years

"For Kitty and I, our lives pretty much focused on the three M's: Marriage, Magic, and Music. Our marriage was of primary importance as evidenced by our celebrating fifty years without killing one another."

Bruce and Kitty both came from fairly strong backgrounds in music. Kitty plays piano, accordion, marimba, drums, and (at the time they met) taught ballet at a dance studio. Bruce had taken several years of formal piano lessons and played the organ. The Spanglers have always had a piano and an organ in the house, each of which gets a daily workout.

Bruce concluded our interview by saying, "In the background, through all of those years, we performed magic part time, while persistently building our magic collection. Our marriage is based upon our love of magic and the magic of love."

For Bruce and Kitty Spangler, magic is not just a hobby; it is a way of life! ♦



A Little More From Bruce Spangler

Thayer's Mummy Case

"Perhaps the most prized item in our collection is the Thayer Mummy Case. According to a letter from magic historian Dr. Robert Albo, 'It was undoubtedly made by Carl Owens in the Thayer workshop in 1934.' It was originally owned by Roscoe Gaylord (aka The Great Leighton of Grand Island, Nebraska).



"Roscoe performed the Mummy Case only a few times, as evidenced by its almost perfect condition. In 1938, he wrapped it in newspapers and returned it to its original Thayer shipping crate, where it remained well preserved until October of 1979 when we found it buried

behind a pile of lumber in an old barn in Casper, Wyoming. Velma Gaylord (Roscoe's widow) had planned to use it for firewood since nobody seemed to be interested in it.

"Velma called her husband's long-time friend, Orville Meyer, asking for assistance in finding a new home for the Mummy Case as well as a small roomful of Roscoe's equipment. Orville called me and asked, 'How would you like to go with me to Casper to appraise a collection?' I was thrilled that Orville had asked me to accompany him. And, of course, I agreed. Fortunately, the value that Velma and Orville set for the collection was within my reach, so I purchased the entire collection, including the Thayer Mummy Case.

"In a letter to me dated October 21, 2010, Dr. Albo stated that 'outside of the picture in Thayer's catalog that introduces his illusions, yours (Mummy Case) is the only one I've ever seen. The trick was first made for the motion picture industry in a movie that featured magic. Yours may be that original.'

"We are, indeed, very fortunate to have Dr. Albo's expert opinion on this illusion. Unfortunately, he passed away on February 21, 2011, shortly after penning his letter to me."

Some Memories Really Suck

"It was a snowy December night, and my agent called in a panic saying that an act had cancelled on her and she needed an emergency fill-in. I eagerly agreed to perform. She agreed to pick me up in two hours and drive me to the show since I wasn't old enough to drive yet.

"We loaded the five trunks of magic equipment into the back of her car and headed for the venue. It was dark and snowing heavily, and I had no idea where we were heading. As we pulled up to a stage door in the back of a large building, the agent informed me that the crowd was finishing dinner and the show would start in about thirty minutes. That was barely enough time to set up, but I made it.

"'You're on!' shouted the emcee. I cued the tape and

pulled the big lever that flooded the stage with light. The curtains parted and the music sounded fantastic! The well-rehearsed act went flawlessly, as usual. I was pretty much blinded by the follow-spot, and couldn't see a thing past the footlights.

"The seasonal big closing was a two-handed multiplying candle routine followed by the production of a four-foot-tall Christmas tree. As the music ended, the pre-recorded announcer thanked the audience and wished them all a very Merry Christmas. Instead of the usual applause, silence came crashing in. After the curtain closed, the agent approached me and said that the eight candles were a wonderful touch for their Chanukah celebration...but the Christmas tree, not so much.

"She apologized for not providing that one relevant piece of information, namely, that the venue was a synagogue."

Earl Reum's Treasures

"One of the largest collections that we recently appraised was that of my life-long friend, Dr. Earl Reum. Over the years, he had filled his basement with his magic treasures – thousands of them! After his passing, his wife Mary asked us to help her evaluate the collection and dispose of it appropriately. We spent all of our spare time for over a month accomplishing the inventory and appraisal. Ultimately, we were able to purchase a goodly number of pieces, but the vast majority were auctioned to the local magicians or sent to be sold by Paul Diamond.

"I was first introduced to Earl when I was about seven years old. At that time, he worked the magic counter at Major's Camera Shop. My father was a high school teacher and Earl was one of his students. Earl later became a teacher, and my wife was his student in middle school. It's a small world (but I wouldn't want to paint it).

"The items that we selected to purchase from Earl's collection were carefully chosen, not so much for their value, but because we knew that Earl treasured them. The Earl Reum collection occupies a very prominent place in our mini-museum and we feel honored to have had the opportunity to acquire it."

The Bank Job

“One evening in 1974, the Mile High Magician’s Society held their monthly meeting at the Southwest State Bank in Denver. The bank was gracious enough to let us use the community room for the after-hours meetings, provided that we locked the outside door when we left. In order to accomplish that, someone had to pick up the key from the bank during the day, lock the door as we left, and drop the key into the night deposit box.

“On several occasions, we had forgotten to pick up the key and had to have the guard come by to lock up at around 11 p.m. The bank people weren’t happy about that and let us know that we would lose our privileges if should it happen again.

“So, as the last small group of us left this particular evening, we discovered that, once again, nobody had the

key. Then, someone in the group said, ‘Bruce knows how to pick locks, let him lock the bank.’

“The bank happened to be located very near a district police station, so patrol cars drove past the bank frequently. Armed with a bobby pin and small screwdriver, I set out to lock the bank’s front door while the brethren tried to shield my actions from any passersby.

“I had visions of having to tell my cellmates that I got arrested for breaking out of a bank. My hands were shaking from either the cold weather or from sheer fear, but after what seemed like hours, but were actually minutes, I got the job done and locked the door.

“Our club may be the only gang of magicians in history who picked the lock on the front door of a bank while escaping after having committed no crime. The good news is that the club got to keep their meeting place, nobody got arrested, and magic prevailed!”

Growing Up in Spanglerland By Steve Spangler



There was never a dull moment in Spanglerland. One minute I was helping Dad set up for a full day of magic classes, and the next minute I’d be on my tippy-toes, precariously perched on a chair operating an enormous camera that was broadcasting the lessons on the closed circuit television network that was also part of the house!

Whether the task at hand was building product for the mail-order business, helping mom mix up a new batch of stage blood, or rehearsing for the weekly television show, we did it as a family. Magic conventions, classes, competitions, and club meetings were all pieces of the puzzle that made growing up Spangler so much fun.

While there are hundreds of stories, here are a few of my favorite memories.

- As a kindergartner I took my dad to show-and-tell to settle the argument once and for all that my dad really did eat fire.*
- For “Bring Your Kids to Work Day,” my mom taught me the process behind making the absolute best fake blood in the business. After sharing the highlights of my day with the class, the school social worker followed me home. Dad performed his Needle through the Arm trick for the nice lady and she went away.*
- Dad taught a class on escapes to members of the Denver Police Department. As part of the opening demonstration, my dad would ask a police officer to lock me up in their handcuffs. In less than sixty seconds, I would use a bobby pin to pick the deadlock and shim my way free. Let’s just say that dad had their undivided attention for the rest of the class.*
- When the Action Magic Academy was in high gear during the 1970s, my parents offered thirty-six different magic classes per month. As dad’s helper, that means I sat in on over a thousand magic classes before graduating from elementary school.*
- My parents taught me the value of learning how to do magic by reading books and practicing new routines to perform at our monthly S.A.M. meeting.*
- The centerpiece in our living room was a beautiful theater organ. I remember dad rehearsing for months and months in preparation to accompany all of the main stage acts at the magic conventions we attended over the summer.*
- I can’t remember a time growing up when Mom and Dad didn’t have some sort of television gig. My experience working in television today was greatly shaped by watching my dad perform on live television week in and week out.*
- When my high school sweetheart was invited over for dinner, my parents measured her to see if she would fit in the Zig-Zag illusion. She did...so I married her.*

Bruce Spangler – A Mentor to Many

By Dan Rodriguez



Thirty-five years ago, as a teenage boy, many of my fondest memories were the times I spent attending magic classes at Bruce and Kitty Spangler's home located on South Grant Street in Denver, Colorado.

Magic classes were held on many weeknights and always on Saturday in their basement. I vividly remember the performance area, curtains, lighting, sound system, video cameras, and the giant videotape machines in the

control room. The Spangler basement was the coolest place to be for any teenage boy and was truly inspiring to me!

I remember he stored magic in dozens of cardboard file boxes labeled coin class, card class, science magic, rope magic, spooky magic, liquid magic, comedy magic, etc. I remember the life lessons and funny stories Bruce interjected during the magic classes he taught.

Bruce Spangler was my first magic mentor and I remember him telling stories about famous magicians, magic shows, and magic clubs. I especially remember Bruce sharing his vision of restarting a young magician's club in Denver. That vision of his stuck with me, and is what inspired me to be a cofounder of the Society of Young Magicians in 1984. My involvement with the SYM led to me becoming S.A.M. National President in 1993, which led me to become the Executive Director of the S.A.M. Magic Center Foundation, and now, a thirty-five-year veteran professional magician. And it's all Bruce's fault.

Because of Bruce's influence, to this day, I still store the magic props I've collected over the years in cardboard file boxes labeled coins, cards, ropes, etc. I still perform many of the same routines Bruce taught me over thirty-five years ago.

Many teenagers from the '70s and '80s have gone on to successful careers, because, they too were inspired by Bruce Spangler. So, on behalf of the former students of the Action Magic Academy: thank you Bruce!

Did You Know?

- Bruce was the show organist/accompanist for several magic conventions including the Midwest Magic Jubilee and the Tulsa Cavalcade of Magic.
- Kitty is an accomplished ballerina, and taught dancing for many years. Her specialties are ballet, tap, gymnastics, and jazz.
- The Spanglers operated the Action Magic Academy, a school for magicians, for over twenty years. Many current and past members of the Mile High Magicians's Society, S.A.M. Assembly 37, and I.B.M. Ring 131 were at one time associated with the school, either as lecturers or students.
- Bruce invented the Needle through Arm trick (a.k.a. You-Do Voodoo) as well as a dozen chemical-based magical effects. One of their most successful products was Micro-Krystal Theatrical Blood, which was used by many professionals, including Tony Andruzzi, Eugene Burger, and Penn & Teller.
- The stage act performed by the Spanglers for many years was named Magic Moments; it was the only act of its kind in that era (late 1950s) to feature fully automated lighting and sound equipment. The act was performed to music prerecorded on a four-track tape. Two tracks were used for stereo sound, the third channel was for cues that controlled the lights, and the fourth channel was used for verbal stage direction cues plugged into the stage intercom.
- In 1974, the Spanglers operated one of the only privately owned video studios in the Denver area. The studio featured both half-inch and one-inch video recorders, six tripod-mounted cameras, two special effects generators, audio mixing/editing equipment, and a lit stage. It was unique for its time.
- Bruce and Kitty operated a successful mail order business for their exclusive effects from 1974 to 1985, and also had booths at many magic conventions.
- Bruce and Kitty have three children. Steve is the oldest and has become an internationally known inventor, manufacturer, science speaker, and accomplished magician. He is the proud father of three sons, all of whom have a strong interest in magic. Holly, an occupational therapist, has two magically-inclined daughters. Wayne is an analytics manager for a major communications company; he continuously amazes his two sons with magical effects. All three of the Spangler children have been invited performers at major magic conventions.

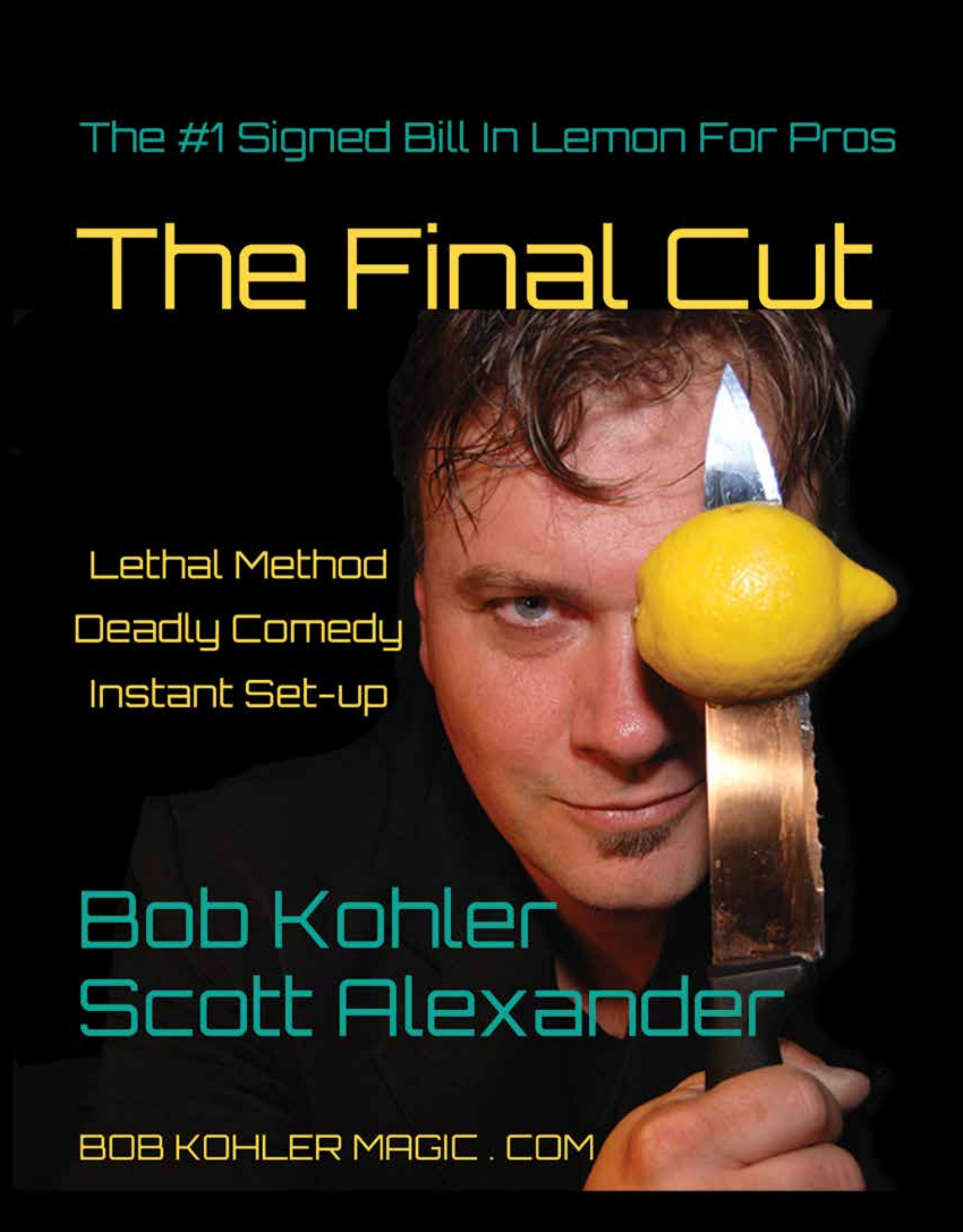
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NOT JUST KID STUFF

BY JIM KLEEFELD



THREE WORKS BEST

This article is for the people who probably will not read this article – perhaps you are one of them. Many times I have heard performers extol the virtues of their own act. Sometimes they are correct in relating that they have put many hours of hard work into honing an act that works well. Often this is not the case. Usually, the performers who give you a blow-by-blow description of how great their act is are wrong, and their act is not really all that great. Certainly anyone can improve, but for that to happen, the person has to want to improve. Since this is basically a self-improvement or self-help series, it is this group that is most likely reading this article. Those of you who are still reading are most likely the ones open to self-improvement, so stop a moment and give yourself a congratulatory pat on the back.

If you feel open to advice and suggestion, take these three words to heart: Three Works Best. In fact, say it three times. Then write it on an index card and glue it to the inside top shelf of your Lefler Table. If there is one tenet of magic (and, in fact show business) it is this. The concept that things happen in threes or that multiples of three are more successful has been a staple in entertainment for decades. Often called The Rule of Threes, there is a solid reason why it works.

At a magic show (and often in other entertainment venues) people see something unexpected. Then they see a second iteration of it and mentally perceive a “rule.” They usually do not define this rule, or even think of it as a rule; but their perception recognizes and internalizes a pattern. Then they see a third version of the event, often one that breaks the rule they had mentally determined. That third action evokes an emotion. If breaking the rule is tragic, then the audience perceives sadness. If the break is incongruous, it evokes laughter. Because this event happened as a series of three smaller events, the set of mental behaviors is predictable. Recognize. Internalize. Emote.

When spectators see an event that

happens four, five, or six times, their mental behavior changes. The mind, which has discovered and applied the “rule” at the second juncture, fatigues. The spectators lose interest. The event’s significance begins to drop. After a couple of times, no one cares how many more times it happens, or whether it ever changes.

Imagine watching a crime film in the theater. A criminal shoots someone who dies. The police arrive and discuss the physical evidence. Then the criminal shoots someone else who dies. The police arrive and investigate. The criminal shoots another victim. More police discussion. Another person is shot followed by more investigation. Are you bored yet? I am. Would you enjoy watching this film if you knew this was going to be the scenario all the way through? Would you be satisfied with your viewing experience even if the perpetrator is caught at the end of the two hours of film time? Almost any entertainment would suffer from this kind of repetition. Would you sit through *Coppelia* if you saw the prime dancer execute an arabesque and lift sequence five times in every scene? What if Abbott told Costello Who was on first six times in a row? In fact, if you study that famous comedy sequence you will see a multiple reliance on threes. At the beginning Abbott answers “Who” three times. When Costello is still confused, he questions Abbott about Who three times and Abbott answers yes three times. Then they pause for the inevitable laugh. Why? Because Three Works Best.

The problem in many children’s shows and with many children’s magicians is that the Rule of Three has been forgotten or ignored because repetition has been overrated. I have personally witnessed many children’s performers who present sight gags four, five, or even ten times. Many have come to believe that “more is better” and use it to death in shows. If kids point at something and call out in your show, that is often a good sign. They are paying attention and interacting. But causing that interaction to happen over and over again in the same way at the same actions is not a good sign.

Here is a basic example. The magician brings out a big inflatable magic wand. He waves it around in the air and “accidentally” bonks himself on the head. Kids laugh. So he does it again. And again. And again.

And again. And again. And again. *And again.* That repetition is annoying, and you are only *reading* it. Imagine that you had to *watch* it. It is no less unsuccessful with children than with adults.

I hate to be the one to point the finger of blame, but from my perspective the endless repetition ploy seems to have been fostered to a large degree by magic dealers and manufacturers. Even Supreme, one of the early and prolific creators of many great tricks and routines, was guilty of it. Edwin Hooper was a brilliant creator of effects and a masterful storyteller, both of which were revealed in his lengthy and detailed instruction sheets. But many of those sheets extolled the virtues of endless repetition of gags and bits of business. Because of Supreme’s great worldwide success in turning kid show magicians into prop-oriented storytelling amazers, many other dealers followed with their own creations. Often these other dealers created props with some built-in situational comedy. And just as often, they, too, offered unwarranted advice of repetitive behaviors. In fact, I have seen such instructions so many times in my acquisition of kid show props, that it has become a major pet peeve of mine. Let me pull some actual quoted references from some real instruction sheets in my collection. I will keep the prop names and manufacturers anonymous.

“Keep repeating this until the kids are all screaming at the top of their lungs.”

“...and so on, over and over.”

“Continue to make the (character) pop up and down as many times as you want.”

“You can keep doing this until everyone is yelling and pointing.”

“The more you repeat this, the longer you can make your routine.”

And my favorite, from an unnamed prop: “Repeat (this) until the children are exhausted from screaming.” Was the writer of these instructions serious? Make your audience hoarse? Does this sound like a good idea to anyone? It is exactly commercial instructions like these that have caused a proliferation of endless, pointless repetition in kid show routines. Many kid show props have been issued with the same basic mindless directions. A manufacturer, eager to sell lots of product, has thrown together an untested routine and put it in print. People buy the prop, read the direc-

tions, and follow them. This routine must work, they figure; it is right there in black and white. This kind of learning has even had spillover into props sold with little or no instructions.

Well, children are not idiots. To children, twice is a funny mistake. If you repeat what they laugh at over and over, they cease to consider you funny and instead consider you a failure. They start telling their friends that you are stupid. They talk and laugh and yell, but often they are honestly upset that a grown adult is not capable of seeing how many times he is doing things wrong.

Several years ago, I was asked to judge a competition of children's performers at a major convention. Some acts were good, some were average, but many of them made the same mistake of ignoring the Rule of Three, and proceeded to repeat funny actions too many times. One of the acts was a genuinely good performer. He had a professional demeanor, brought professional props, and presented some seasoned routines. Most of his act was good magic and worth watching for the children and the adults alike. But one incident in his show kept him from taking away the top prize in the competition. He literally (and I am using that word correctly here) used a break-away fan gag seven times. In a row. As in, "Here take it. Oops, it broke; I'll fix it. Here take it. Oops, it broke; I'll fix it. Here take it. Oops, it broke; I'll fix it. Here take it. Oops, it broke; I'll fix it." If that sounds anything like a routine of yours, please stop presenting it that way. Why? Because Three Works Best.

I'll explain what I mean by describing a novel kind of magic wand. Give this wand routine a try without changing how many times the repeated action happens. I'm betting it will feel right to you.

Almost anyone can make up this wand trick. There are a few simple components as shown in Figure 1. Two ping pong balls, a flat ring cut out of plastic or cardboard, a slim piece of stiff plastic or metal, and a tube. You will be making a magic wand out of the hollow tube. The tube should be almost exactly the same diameter as a ping pong ball. You can use a plastic, metal, or cardboard tube, as long as you can cut it and fasten to it. Most paper towel cores are a bit too large, but you might find an off-brand that works. You might find a plastic tube filled with M&M candies. Or you can simply wrap some flexible plastic around a thick dowel and tape it shut. Your goal is to find one that is rigid but just the right size to slip a ping pong ball in the end. Be sure to get good table tennis balls



Figure 1

at a sporting goods shop. Do not buy cheap ones at a dollar store because these balls have very little spring in them.

The piece of slim stiff plastic also has to have some spring to it. A collar stay works fine. So does the handle of a plastic fork, a piece of hack-saw blade, or a tempered steel shim. You might find a stiff but flexible piece of plastic clam-shell packaging that will work, or cut a strip from a large plastic juice jar. The piece should be about two inches long, half-an inch wide, and springy. Bend one end down at a ninety-degree angle and round off the other end so it is smooth. If you use a plastic fork handle you can melt a bend into it. Cut a slot in one end of the tube near the top. Stick the springy shim through the slot and rivet or glue it to the inside of the tube (Figure 2). If you have a cardboard or plastic wand and shim, you can probably drill a hole through both and use a brass paper fastener to keep them in place. If you use a nice metal tube and a spring steel shim, you can drill and pop-rivet the pieces together. Epoxy might work. Either way, the spring has to be firmly held in place and still able to move up and down a half-inch or so in the slot.



Figure 2

Cut out a ring of plastic or cardboard to fit inside the tube. This is just a spacer to keep the ping pong ball from sliding too far into the tube. Glue it in place a bit above

the shim. The ball should drop neatly into the top part of the tube and rest on the spacer just touching the shim (Figure 3). The spacing here is a bit critical, so adjust carefully before you cement everything in place. When you drop the ball into the tube, exactly half of it should be protruding out the top. The bottom of the ball should be resting on the round spacer, and the spring should be just barely touching the bottom of the ball. If you pull down on the shim and then let go, it should snap back up and hit the ball, shooting the sphere upwards.



Figure 3

Glue the second ball in place at the bottom of the tube so that it matches the look of the tube top. Paint the ends of the tube white and the middle black. Now you have what appears to be a plain black-and-white wand with nice rounded ends.

When you want to begin your routine, bring out the wand, holding it vertically. Claim that the next trick you do needs a special magic wand. Explain that most magic wands are flat on the ends like a dowel, but that for this trick you need one that has round ends. Figure 4 shows the sequence you will initiate. Holding the wand upright, display it and point out both spherical ends. As you do, tip the wand

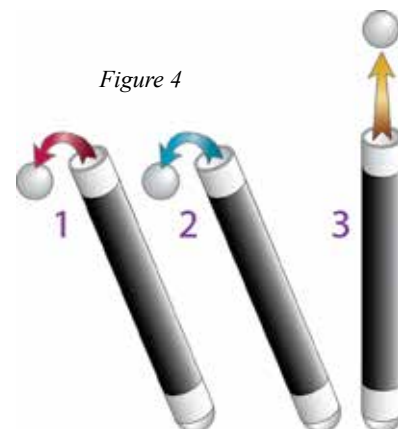


Figure 4

towards the audience and allow the loose ball at the top to drop out onto the floor. Everyone will laugh. (They like to see a stodgy performer get into trouble.) If you are on a nice hard surface the ball will bounce sharply.

Bend over, retrieve the ball, and replace it in the upright wand. Act nonchalant and again start showing off the nice wand with its round ends. As you show it the second time, tilt it and drop the ball onto the floor again. Act just slightly annoyed and retrieve the ball. Replace the ball in

the upright wand, pause for a moment, and take a breath as if you had just been through an unnerving experience. Then smile and start again.

Display the wand upright and begin talking about using a special wand with round ends. As you speak, use your thumb behind the wand to pull down on the shim and then release it. The springy shim will move down in the slot, then snap back up sharply, hitting the ball and causing it to fly straight up into the air. Act very surprised. Catch the ball and put the ball and wand

away. Then go on with your act.

This routine works well because it fits the rule of three: you make two mistakes and then have a surprising event. If you dropped the ball four or five times, the kids in the audience would be so busy telling each other that you were an idiot, that they would not be excited about the surprise ending. You don't need to do it over and over. Because, as I have said twice before, Three Works Best. ♦

NEWSWORTHY

UPDATES FROM OUR S.A.M. MEMBERS

NEMCON 2014 BY ERIC DECAMPS

Over the past thirty-three years, thousands of magicians have congregated at the New England Magicians Conference (NEMCON) to attend lectures and close-up and stage shows, and to visit with old friends and make new ones. NEMCON is sponsored by S.A.M. Assembly 127 and is considered by many to be the premier one-day magic convention in the country. This year the featured performers included Michael Ammar, Joshua Jay, Ben Zabin, David Oliver, and Denny Haney.

Six years ago a special night-before event was added. These special events have featured performances and workshops by Bob Fitch, Peter Samelson, Paul Gertner, and me. This year's event was a special interview on the life and career of Denny Haney; the conference committee invited me to host the interview. Mr. Haney shared fascinating stories of entertaining our troops and his success as a corporate entertainer. At the end of the ninety-minute interview, the packed room rose to their feet in appreciation.

On Saturday, the day began with the close-up show, which starred Ammar, Jay, Haney, and Zabin. The afternoon brought lectures by Jay, Haney, and Ammar. After the dinner break the more than three hundred attendees assembled in the ballroom for the stage show. Prior to the show, Convention Chair Bill Hoagland introduced Michael Gagne and honored him with a plaque commemorating his years of service to Assembly 127 and NEMCON. Bill then announced our emcee for the evening, Denny Haney. Haney brought on young Ben Zabin who enchanted us with a themed act inspired by the movie, *Singing in the Rain*. Ammar proved to us why he is considered the top teacher of magic today. Haney followed with his hilarious act and was rewarded with a standing ovation. To close the show, Denny welcomed the one and only David Oliver. At the end of David's performance the audience, overcome with emotion, jumped to their feet and gave David the second standing ovation of the night.

NEMCON 33 is now in the history books; it was an experience registrants will cherish for years to come. ♦



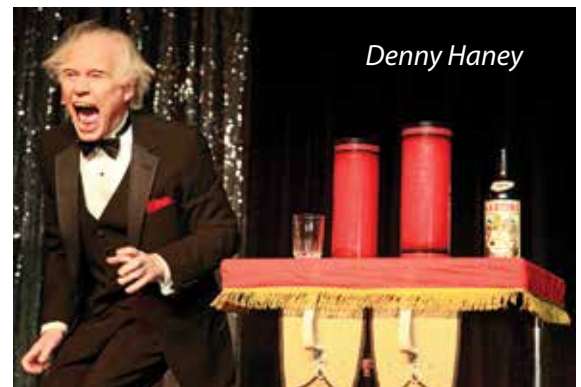
The cast & crew



David Oliver



Joshua Jay



Denny Haney

Photos by Steve Wronker



PARANORMAL HAPPENINGS

BY CHARLES SIEBERT, MD

ESP, or extra sensory perception, refers to information that was obtained by an individual not through the use of the five known senses of sight, touch, taste, smell, or hearing, but rather through the use of the mind alone. This is why ESP is also known as the “sixth sense.”

Parapsychologists believe that an unknown factor, which was named psi by Austrian biologist Berthold P. Wiesner in the 1940s, is responsible for extrasensory perception and psychokinetic experiences that cannot be explained by known physical or biological means. Psi-gamma is used for extrasensory perception and psi-kappa is used for psychokinesis. R.H. Thouless recommended its use as a term for describing ESP in his 1942 article “The Present Position of Experimental Research into Telepathy and Related Phenomena,” which was presented at the Society for Psychical Research. ESP was first coined by J.B. Rhine, a psychologist at Duke University during the 1930s. He used this term to describe psychic abilities such as telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, or retro-cognition. A colleague of Rhine’s, Karl Zener, designed the now famous Zener cards, which consist of a circle, a cross, three wavy lines, a square, and a star. The two psychologists used these cards in experiments in which a “sender” would view the cards from a shuffled deck of twenty-five cards, five of each symbol, and a “receiver” was to guess at what symbol was on the card. They reported significant results suggestive of ESP. The results were not readily believed and were largely discredited due to what was to become known as “sensory leakage” (or cheating), which could account for all of their results. The great illusionist Milbourne Christopher wrote years later that he felt “there are at least a dozen ways a subject who wished to cheat under the conditions Rhine described could deceive the investigator.”

During the 1970s, Ganzfeld experiments became a popular method of proving ESP. It is based on a noise-reduction model of ESP that believes that ESP functions like a weak signal that is ordinarily drowned out by surrounding everyday signals such

as touch, visual, and auditory information. By reducing external and internal sources of distraction, parapsychologists reasoned that any ESP “signal” would be more easily noticed. The methodology was that a “receiver” was placed in a room with ping-pong ball halves placed over his eyes with red lights shining on them. He also had on a headset that transmitted static noise. The “receiver” was left in this sensory deprivation state for thirty minutes, during which time the “sender” would view random targets and telepathically try to transmit these images to the “receiver,” who would describe out loud what images he was receiving. After the thirty minutes, the “receiver” was taken out of his isolated state and shown four images, one of the target image and three decoy images. In 1982, Charles Honorton presented a paper at the Parapsychological Association annual meeting that summarized the results of the experiments; he declared that they showed sufficient evidence for the existence of psi.

The original Ganzfeld studies were subsequently examined by noted parapsychology skeptic psychologist Ray Hyman; he found significant flaws in the methodology of the experiments. Hornorton devised a new series of experiments known as Autoganzfeld based on Hyman’s criticisms, which he hoped would avoid some of the problems in the original study. He again found positive results where others found possible flaws and lack of significance. Many subsequent analyses of the data were found to have significance as well as no significance, depending on who was analyzing the data. Since the 1980s parapsychological research has dropped off in the United States; in the last two decades such research has been on an upswing in Europe. As of 2007, parapsychology studies are being performed in over thirty different countries; a number of universities worldwide have academic parapsychology programs.

All of this leads me to the real topic of this month’s article. In January of this year, headlines appeared in *The Huffington Post*, *MAIL Online*, and *Voice of America* stating that a new study had debunked ESP. In an article titled “Detecting Unidentified Changes” that was published January 13, 2014, in *PLOS One* (an online, open

access, peer-reviewed scientific journal), researchers from the School of Psychological Sciences, University of Melbourne, Parkville, Victoria, Australia, concluded from their experiments that while the test subjects could sense changes during testing, it was due to the brain playing tricks on them as opposed to any sort of special powers.

In one of the phases of the experiment, participants were shown pairs of color photographs of the same women. Each photo was shown for one-and-a-half seconds with one second between pictures. In random sets, there would be a change in the appearance of the woman in the second photo, such as hair, earrings, necklaces, lipstick etc. After viewing the second photo, participants were asked whether a change had occurred and were given a list of nine changes to choose from. Results showed that even though the participants couldn’t identify a specific change from photo one to photo two, they described a sense or feeling that a change occurred. The experiment was repeated, this time with the faces upside down. This was to remove the criticism that the brain processes faces differently from other stimuli. The results were still the same. Further phases tested scene changes that did not involve faces, eliminating that bias altogether. Researchers concluded from their findings that the participants were relying not on ESP or a sixth sense, but information that the brain actually observed but didn’t have enough time to process.

Dr. Howe, one of the authors, states, “In this study we have provided direct behavioral evidence that observers can regularly detect when a change has occurred without necessarily being able to identify what has changed. We found that this ability to detect unidentified changes is not unique to images containing faces. It is possible that the purpose of detection is to alert the observer to the possible presence of a change so that the observer then knows to search for the change using focal attention.”

While this recent study might be getting us closer to an explanation for the paranormal, it still doesn’t explain how those telemarketers always know to call just when you took that mouthful of food at dinner! ♦



THE HIGH ROAD

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

BY MICK AYRES

*“And then there stole into my fancy, like a rich musical note, the thought of what lies ahead.” —Edgar Allen Poe, *The Pit and the Pendulum**

Let’s talk about the fairer sex, shall we? A demographic survey of the average conjurer’s audience would show half the members to be female and the rest male, give or take a few. No surprise there. Sociological studies reveal that when women listen, they easily hear and understand what is being communicated on five separate levels. Women can follow the dialogue in progress, the conversation that is being avoided, the tone being applied to the current conversation, the buried conversation that is being covered only in subtext, and finally the other person’s body language. That’s like a superpower.

When men talk to someone they pay attention to what is said, they consider it, and then they reply to it. That’s all. To be fair, there are probably women who don’t communicate on multiple wavelengths and some men who do. But overall, this is why men can feel as awkward as a hog upstairs when talking to their wife or daughter.

If you are a male conjurer, this information can be intimidating. It sort of makes you want to reconsider that booking for the next business women’s luncheon, doesn’t it?

Scripting then isn’t just a good idea. It is a necessity to sit down and write out the words you wish to use. Speaking on the fly during a performance is a fool’s errand. A wise conjurer gives careful thought to each word because, at the very least, every syllable you utter is being considered, dissected, and interpreted in all its meanings by about half your audience. Why not communicate clearly?

From early on, many magicians buy a trick, read the instructions, practice for a few minutes, and then run out to find someone to watch it. We are not told in those instructions that it is smart to think

about what to say during the trick and write it down so it can be memorized. We are not encouraged to combine the secret we have learned with the words we have chosen and then rehearse them. These obligations should be passed down by mentors, but a significant majority of veteran magicians do not embrace them either.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court noted for his direct and concise opinions, gave this advice to anyone who would address others publicly: “Speak clearly, if you speak at all. Carve every word before you let it fall.” All magicians know that good conjuring requires a tickling of the eye and a teasing of the brain. However, magicians who hope to stand out from the rest understand that it also requires a willing bend of the ear and, if possible, a gentle caress of the heart. Connecting emotionally is important. Blend these elements in every presentation and you are sure to gain and keep the full attention of male and female alike.

All that being said, it must also be understood that the rules of performing magic are not hard and fast; they are fluid. They change with experience, with location, and with the goals of the performer. For example, performers in resort hotels will tell you it is difficult to predict how many guests will attend any given show. Uncontrollable factors such as weather, traffic, or major sporting events can affect attendance. A magician who is accustomed to packed and crowded rooms may have to immediately adjust his presentations so they are appropriate for a smaller, more intimate group. The script itself may not change, but the attitude, vocal tone, and volume of the performer’s delivery certainly will. These conditions must be anticipated and prepared for so the performer does not cope with surprise and considerable stress on top of everything else. It is a fine compliment when the conjurer, who has overcome logistical conflicts to deliver a smooth performance, hears a guest say, “You make the impossible look so easy.”

Arthur Trace is a brilliant magician noted for his jazzy, well-paced manipulation act titled *Postmodern Art*. During one show in a packed theater, Arthur’s music abruptly stopped. Arthur froze when the momentum of his performance was lost and the audience gasped in sympathy. He waited motionless as the sound technician tried to bring the music back. Unfortunately a simple scratch on Arthur’s music disc wouldn’t let it happen. After hearing this news whispered by a stagehand, Arthur grinned. He boldly shouted, “*The art of magic!*” and began stomping his foot against the stage. The crowd picked up on the rhythmic booming and joined him by clapping along. To this inspired beat, Arthur continued his act from where he left off and received an enthusiastic standing ovation. It was beautiful to watch a performer not only overcome adversity but to do so with the audience’s help. It was obvious Arthur had considered the possibility his music might unexpectedly stop someday, and he was prepared to deal with it.

This example shows the necessity of having a tightly scripted act – even one without words – so the choreography itself communicates a clear message. On that day, Arthur Trace won the audience over when everyone in the room felt their emotions switch from sympathy to pride as he conquered an embarrassing situation. Now consider this: what if Arthur’s unfortunate scenario wasn’t an accident? It was, of course; but what if it was intentional? Doesn’t everybody love a good Cinderella story? Good theatre comes from moments like that. Johnny Thompson’s dove once pooped on his lapel during a show and the audience roared with laughter. It’s been in his act ever since.

Whether the goal is humor or sympathy, communicating on multiple levels with the audience can be accomplished via well-chosen words, smartly choreographed physical movements, or (sometimes) with carefully selected props. Here is a theatrical truth: Create intimacy with

even one guest and the rest of the audience will shift to the edge of their seats in a subconscious effort to participate in it.

HEART & SOUL

Nothing is more memorable than causing a mystery to happen in the hands of the guest, which explains the popularity of classic effects such as Sponge Balls, Scotch & Soda, or Eddie Fechter's That's It! However, these particular in-the-hand mysteries are inappropriate during performances focused on mind reading. For mentalists, a presentation with a pendulum fits the bill.

A simple hardware nut tied to a thread will work as a pendulum, but mentalists generally prefer ornate baubles on cords or chains that beg for a creative backstory. Pinching the end of the cord between the finger and thumb allows the weight to swing freely. The pendulum now becomes a way for a guest to answer simple questions. When the pendulum is in motion, small, barely-detectable twitches from the participant's muscles cause the weight to swing either in a straight line or in a circle. Mentalists verbally nudge the guest to subconsciously control these motions by declaring a straight swing means "yes" and a circular swing means "no." Since the pendulum will do this while being held by the guest, a well-scripted presentation can be spooky or humorous – but always personal and intriguing.

Heart & Soul is a pendulum presentation that uses borrowed objects, comes with its own backstory, and is far more personal than usual. If desired, your guests can later recreate the experiment at home, without them being wiser about how it works.

Go to a craft store. There you can find the inexpensive sixteenth-inch diameter leather cord that crafters use to make beaded necklaces or bracelets. You need a piece about thirteen inches long. However, if you want to leave this cord with your guests to take home later, you might want to pick up a roll and cut several lengths.

To begin, direct your attention to a married couple and ask, *"I need help from someone with a bit of psychic ability. Have either of you ever thought of a distant friend or relative and decided to call them, but as you reached for the phone you found it ringing because they were calling you? Both of you have had this happen? Good. When two people connect mentally over great distance and both act upon it,*

it is a genuine paranormal experience. As veterans of this phenomenon, you both qualify.

"This demonstration requires the use of something personal, something valuable. May I please borrow your wedding rings? No harm will come to them. In fact, I will not touch your rings and they will never leave your sight. Thank you."

Bring out the cord. Look at the husband and say, *"As your wife holds her ring, please tie the end of this cord to it."* Look at the wife and say, *"Likewise, as your husband holds his ring, please tie the other end of this cord to it."*

While they assemble this make-shift pendulum, address the audience and say, *"In the sea-islands of South Carolina, there are people who hold a strong belief in 'root magic.' It is based on powders made from various plants and also on natural objects that are bound with the ability to heal or 'see' according to the needs of the root doctor. Your rings and the cord that binds them hold a small amount of this same root magic. Your rings have had powerful emotions tied to them since the day you both put them on. The cord is leather, so at one point, life flowed through every part of it. To put it bluntly, when you hold the small ring so the large ring can swing freely, it will answer simple questions. It will move back and forth to indicate yes and will swing in a circle if the answer is no."*

By now the rings should be tied on each end of the cord. Say, *"The right hand is the working hand but the left hand is the bonding hand closest to the heart; that's why the rings are worn there."* Instruct the woman to hold her ring by its edges between the finger and thumb of her left hand so her husband's ring swings below. Now ask her two simple "calibration" questions that have obvious answers: *"Is the ocean wet?"* and *"Is your husband's name Mickey Mouse?"* Wait for the response. Be patient. Without realizing it, the woman will subconsciously cause her husband's ring to swing in the appropriate manner. The reaction from her and the other observers will be mixed. Some will laugh and some will be nervous because, in truth, no one knows what to think yet. Either way, every soul in the room is intrigued.

It is important to understand that a successful pendulum presentation is not about you; it is about your guest. Your focus must be completely upon the woman

who is about to have a paranormal effect happen in her hands. Ignore everyone else in the room for a moment and say to her, *"Your rings are now ready to answer a question of your own. Do not speak it aloud, but you do have to focus on it before the rings will respond."*

Reach over and grip the husband's ring in your fist without taking your eyes off the lady. With a serious tone, say, *"When you are ready, ask your question. Go ahead. Ask."* Release the ring and move your hand away slowly.

Say, *"Just stare at your husband's ring. It will begin to move. Look, it's started already. It's beginning to answer!"* Once the movement of the ring begins in earnest and the woman's unspoken question is answered, relax and wait. Someone in the room is eager to hold the ring and ask a question. They're just working up the nerve to say so. If the owners of the rings are willing, then go with it. Measure the situation. Use your judgment.

When you are ready to wrap things up, instruct the husband and wife to untie their rings and replace them on their fingers. While they do so, say, *"Your rings are now awake and will continue to answer questions for as long as you are willing to ask. The root doctors believe wearing rings will guide one's head and hands with wisdom. The rings' effectiveness increases as they are handed down from one generation to the next. Older rings such as yours can guide the revelation of truths and falsehoods, the location of water, the sex of unborn children, and lost objects. So, take care of them."*

The guests will attempt to hand you back the leather cord. Refuse it gently by saying, *"The cord is important and should stay with the rings."* The presentation is complete.

This is theatre on a deeper level than most magicians are comfortable with, but if you give the Heart & Soul presentation a try, it could change how you perform. ♦

Heart & Soul copyright 2013 by Mick Ayres. Mick enjoys an eclectic career as a parlor conjurer, storyteller, and musician for the exclusive Walt Disney Resort on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. He welcomes input and dialogue and can be reached at www.mickayreswares.com.



FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

BY GEORGE PARKER

THE SURVIVAL VERSION® PART 2 – THE TORN AND RESTORED CARD

INTRODUCTION

Last month I introduced the concept of my SurvivalVersion as a way to unleash your fantasy on the one hand and be very practical on the other hand. Below you will read about how I applied the concept to the Torn and Restored Card plot so I could come up with my version of it. For those of you who missed Part 1, I will repeat enough of what the SurvivalVersion is so you will understand how it works.

1) **Vision.** This phase requires you to fantasize about what you want to create as if there are no limits. I worked with fellow club member and friend Tommy Wonder on various projects; he used to record his ideal vision without having a clue about how he would be able to achieve that vision. He used camera tricks and editing, allowing himself to see in the real world what he had in mind. In the case of the Torn and Restored Card, it was easy to come up with an ideal vision of the effect. Many magicians have worked on this effect, including Tommy. There are some wonderful, masterful versions out there; Guy Hollingworth's Restoration is a notable example. I'm not claiming I came up with a better version. In the next phase I made different choices about what is essential to me.

2) **Essence.** The second step is meant to help you focus on what you feel are the essential parts of the effect. While your vision is defined by who you are (or who your stage persona is), the choices you are going to make in this phase define you as a performer. Your choices will separate you from other performers. For example, to you the only essential part might be restoring something that you just tore. In that case you can become creative about what else you can tear and restore; think about tearing a bill, a leaf, or a teabag and come up with a method to do that. Maybe

it's essential to you that you tear it at least three times and that you restore it piece by piece. You will end up with quite a different method than when you choose to restore it in a flash like I do. Maybe the style is essential to you. Or perhaps it is the music in the background, the number of moves, the depth of the method, or something else.

I made the following choices: a) Using a playing card was essential, because I planned to do it as an afterthought after a card routine, rather than as a stand-alone act. b) It needed to be a signed card. c) I decided that one tear would suffice; after all, how many times can you kill something? d) I wanted the restoration to be fast because back in the day I was doing a lot of strolling magic.

3) **Action: SurvivalVersion.** Like I said, I perform the effect as an afterthought, for example after an Ambitious Card routine or a card to wallet routine. I switch the signed card with a dummy card, so I need to secretly add the dummy card. There are many ways to get into this. I use a practical technique that you're probably familiar with.

While talking to the audience, I drop my left hand, which holds the face-down deck. On an offbeat moment, I push off the top card half way. I use my left leg as an extra hand to turn it over while I focus all the attention on the signed card.

Next, I need to put the signed card on top of the deck without the audience seeing that there is already a face-up card on top of the face-down deck. In my mind, the best way to direct attention and bury the method deeper is to make everything you do and say part of a narrative that makes sense from the audience's perspective. Their focus will shift once an action or some line feels strange to them. So I say, "You can keep the card as a souvenir." While I deliver this line, I take the signed card and look at it. At the same time I start to lift my left hand, which holds the deck. "I will write today's date on it and sign it as well." When I say this last line, I look at my audience and I bring the deck up at the very last moment, angling it slightly towards me – not too much or it will look suspicious. I put the signed card on top of the face-up top card at the same time, covering it from view. The coordination of movement and timing will prevent the

audience from seeing the top card. Taking my marker out, I write down the date, and I add my signature.

Putting my pen away directs attention from the deck as I do a slight double push off. I then take the two cards as one. (If you need to get ready and get a pinky break first, do that.) I take the card on the long edges between my thumb and second finger of my right hand. I bend it/them by pushing the middle back with my first finger. My first finger slides toward my thumb while I lift my second finger. The card will snap, which adds to the suggestion that it's just the one signed card.

I put the deck down. Refer to Figure 1 for what happens next. The second finger and thumb of my right hand take the card(s) in the middle, while the thumb and four fingers of my left hand take the top and bottom of the card(s). I bring the short ends together with my left fingers and thumb. I align the short ends. Then I fold the card(s) using my right thumb and first finger.

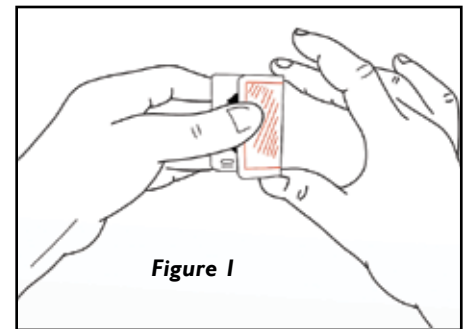


Figure 1

The right thumb and middle finger are on the top and bottom edges of the folded card(s). The left fingers are on the face of the folded card(s); the left thumb is on the back. I allow the card(s) to unfold very slightly and I move the inner card to the left, using my right thumb and middle finger to accomplish this. The inner card is hidden behind the left fingers (Figure 2). Then I get ready to fold a second time. I push up the lower quarter, keeping the middle finger of my right hand on the top edge and using my thumb to take the lower quarter while my first finger pushes back the middle of the card. Figure 3 shows you the last phase of that second fold.

I reinforce the second fold by pinching the fold between the thumb and first finger of both hands. I make rather big gestures

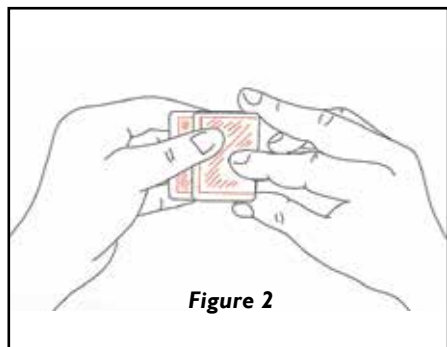


Figure 2

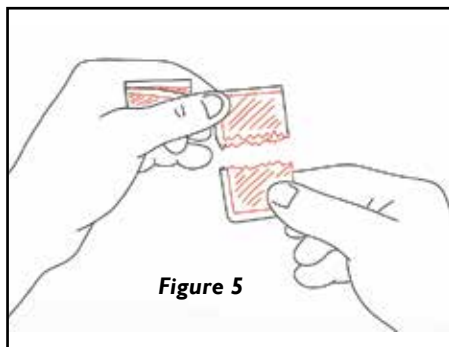


Figure 5

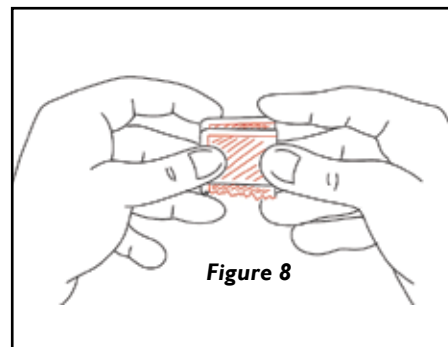


Figure 8

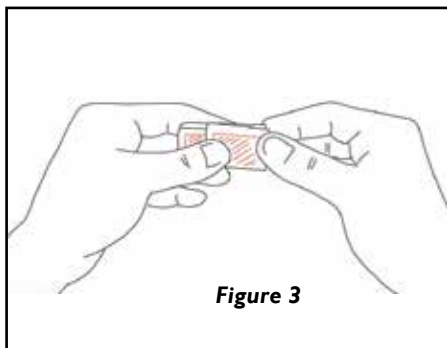


Figure 3

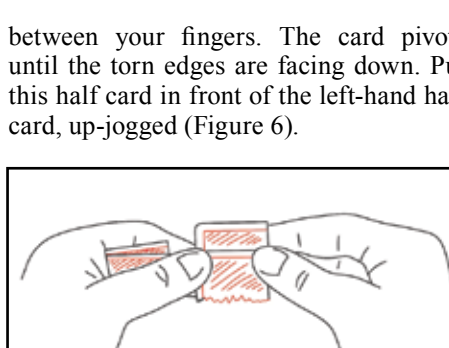


Figure 6

as if I'm really working hard to properly fold the card. This covers the fact that I'm stealing the signed card and putting it into a left-hand finger palm (Figure 4). Turn the indifferent card ninety degrees counterclockwise. The four corners of the card are at the lower left. Open out the duplicate card one time and tear the card in half along the existing crease. (This is the crease produced by the second fold.)

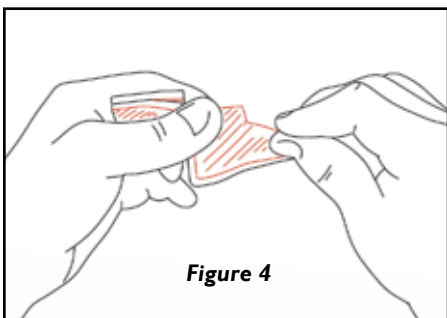
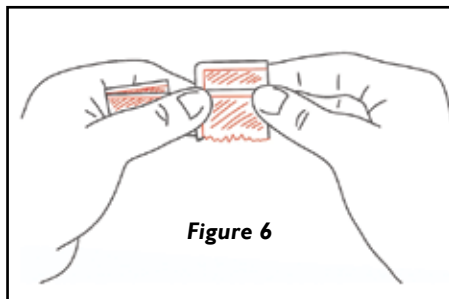


Figure 4

Momentarily place the right-hand half onto the left-hand half and turn the two torn pieces clockwise. Separate them and show them (Figure 5). To hide the palmed card, you only need to close the gap between the first and second finger of your left hand. Try to keep the rest of your hands as open as possible.

You're going to rotate the right-hand half card end for end onto the left-hand half card. The right-hand half is currently held between your right thumb and first finger. Replace your thumb with your middle finger. Push your middle finger forward, which will rotate the half card

between your fingers. The card pivots until the torn edges are facing down. Put this half card in front of the left-hand half card, up-jogged (Figure 6).



Get ready to push the signed card onto the two torn parts. Put your left thumb on the right edges of the signed card. Lift up slightly to create a gap between the card and the fingers. While you look at the audience and say something interesting, you put the signed card onto the torn parts (Figure 7). You can make a gesture with your right hand at this point, underlining whatever you're saying. This helps to create a moment of relaxation. Also,

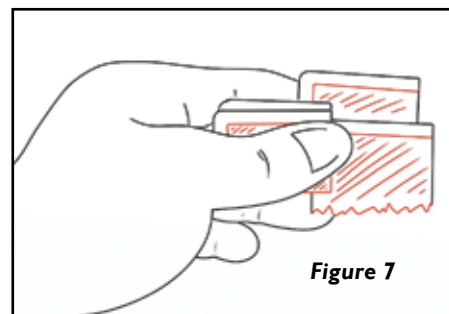


Figure 7

by making a bigger gesture you can camouflage the moment you push the signed card onto the torn cards until they're flush. Figure 8 shows you the result of that. The signed card is hidden behind the shield of the two torn parts. Put your first and ring fingers on all corners. This creates a nice, open picture. Make a big deal of pushing the two torn parts flush. This is the moment the card is restored from the

audience's perspective.

Wait a moment and let go with your right hand. Immediately push your right first finger into the gap at the upper right corner of the folded signed card (Figure 9). Unfold the card by moving the top half outward and down. This rotates the torn parts to the back, much like a bill switch. Pull the torn parts a bit to the right (Figure 10).

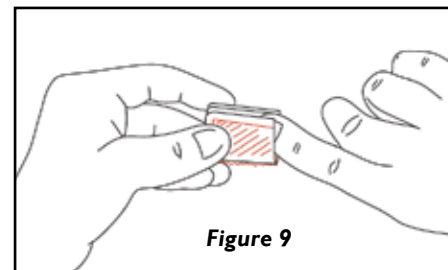


Figure 9

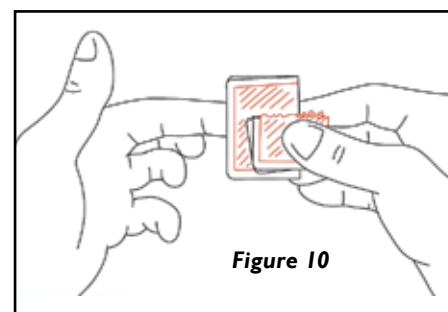


Figure 10

Your left finger goes into the fold of the signed card and pushes to the right, completing the unfolding process and showing the restored signed card. Rotate it upright. To top off the restoration, I let my left middle finger snap against the card (Figure 11). I want to erase any thoughts about me using a second card. That's why I need to create some powerful images in the spectators' mind.

I have two options to hide the two torn pieces. The first way is to hand out the card by clipping it between my right first and second fingers (Figure 12). The torn pieces are hidden under the card (Figure 13). I walk up to the person who signed the card. At the last moment I either steal the

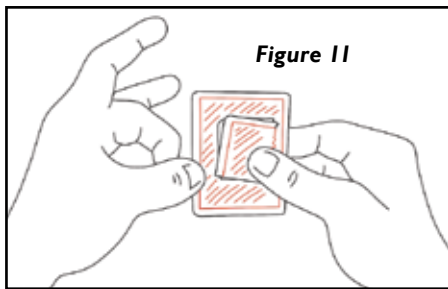


Figure 11

torn pieces by pulling them back with my right hand while turning over the card. Or I will take the card with my left hand while holding back the torn pieces in my right hand, palming them.

An alternative way to clean up is slightly more complex but very effective and clean as well. My left hand approaches

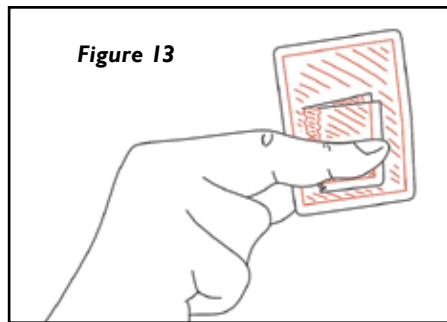


Figure 13

the card. My left thumb reaches out until it covers the torn pieces. (This is the mirror image of my right hand in Figure 11.) The difference is that my left thumb completely covers the torn pieces. I turn my right hand palm towards the audience preparing to rotate the card 360 degrees. My right first and second fingers end up on the back of the card. My right thumb is on the face of the card. I let go with my left hand while my right fingers start to rotate the card to show it on all sides. When that happens my left thumb brings in the pieces and my left first and second fingers push them into thumb palm (Figure 14). When the rotation is complete, I take the card between my

left first and second fingers and hand it out to the person who signed it. It's the mirror image of Figure 12. This all happens in less than a second while I'm moving towards the person who signed the card.

I've had a lot of fun fooling magicians with this method. I realize it's a bold method that requires you to practice a lot. You need to feel completely relaxed. We

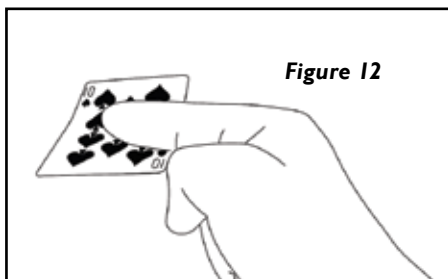


Figure 12

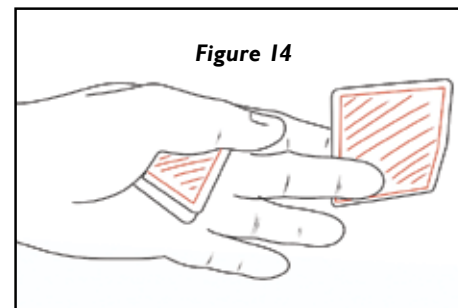


Figure 14

all know how guilt generates terrible tells. The motions need to be fluid. But if you're willing to practice, you will have a very strong, no-preparation-required, torn and restored card effect that you will perform often. ♦



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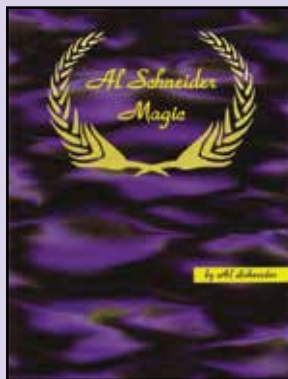
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Excerpt From:

Al Schneider Magic

Written By:

Al Schneider

Description:

Ebook, 734 pages

Available From:

www.llepub.com

If Al Schneider had only come up with one routine, the coin assembly known as Matrix, his name would live on in magic history. But Al has created much, much more than that one routine, as the large collection of his magic, *Al Schneider Magic*, demonstrates. In this 734-page ebook you'll find routines with cards, coins, rings, cups and balls, and even a snake basket (!). You'll also find a substantial amount of magic theory, because Al Schneider is a performer who thinks deeply about the magic he performs. A thorough study of this ebook will provide much food for thought.

The two routines excerpted for this month's Ebook Nook will be perfect for impromptu performances. The first is a pretty sequence with two small balls made from a crumpled up napkin. The second has an interesting and deceptive twist on the classic vanishing saltshaker trick. My thanks to L&L Publishing for allowing these routines to appear in *M-U-M*.
—Michael Close

SLY NAPKINS

My early days in magic had a strong influence on me. Soon after I became involved with magic, the local club presented a lecture featuring Tony Slydini. He was legendary at that time. Two things from his lecture stood out in my mind. One was untying a knot without untying it. He held up a piece of rope that had a knot in it. His fingers dug at it as if undoing the knot. Then he flipped the end of the rope as if pulling the end through a loose knot as if it were untied. Then he showed the knot still intact. I thought I could never do that in a million years. However, as time passed, I did master that maneuver. I do it in every stand-up show I do.

The other thing that stood out in my

mind was a single coin routine with a silver dollar. In this routine, the coin would jump from his hand to an elbow. It disappeared from here and suddenly appeared over there. As time passed I discovered how the routine worked. I believe I eventually acquired a book of his routines. I was even more amazed when I discovered he did it all with a single coin. I did not think I could ever master that routine. Well, I have not.

That, however, did not stop me from using his concepts. Some of them are incorporated into the trick presented here. This routine can be done almost anywhere. A small thin bar napkin is ideal for this trick. This is handy when sitting in a bar chatting with friends. I tend to reserve this trick for that environment.

Performance: Start with a thin paper table napkin. I prefer the small bar napkins because they make a smaller ball (Photo 1).

Open it and locate the long crease down the middle (Photo 2). Tear the paper along that crease (Photo 3). Roll each half into a ball. While rolling each half, I like to say that I am going to change the napkin into something else – a ball (Photos 4 and 5).

Pick up the ball on the right and perform the Schneider Ball Vanish as follows: Begin by displaying the ball on the palm-up right fingers (Photo 6). Turn the right hand palm down, holding the ball against the hand with the right thumb. The hand is placed palm down on the palm-up left hand (Photo 7).

The left hand closes as it rolls off the underside of the right hand. The right hand falls to the table, finger-palming the paper ball as it descends. The left hand is raised and you blow on it as if to cause some kind of magic to happen (Photo 8). This is illogical; however, this sequence attracts attention to the actions of blowing on the hand and takes attention away from the





false transfer. It just works.

The right hand then grabs the other ball with the fingertips and heel of the hand without opening the hand (Photo 9). You can turn the hand palm up as if to show the audience the ball (Photo 10). Pull the ball into the right hand as you turn both hands palm down (Photo 11).

Show the left hand empty (Photo 12). Open the right hand and let the balls roll from the hand (Photo 13).

The right hand moves a ball to the fingertips and thumb tip. The hand holds the ball up a bit as if displaying it to the audience. The hand could be raised as high as your shoulder (Photo 14). Raise the left hand to show it empty and drop the right hand to the edge of the table (Photo 15).

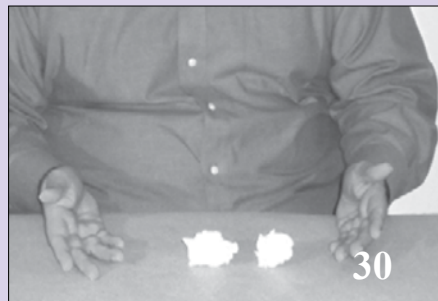
The right hand rises from the edge of the table. Just as the hand begins to rise, the ball is released to fall into the lap. The right hand continues to pretend it has a ball in the fingertips. That pretend ball is placed against the palm of the left hand. The left fingers close around the pretend ball (Photo 16). After the left hand closes, the right hand is opened to display an empty hand (Photo 17). The left hand then opens to show no ball (Photo 18).

The right hand reaches for and grasps the ball that remains on the table (Photo 19). The ball is displayed on the palm-up right hand and the Schneider Ball Vanish is performed again (Photos 20, 21, and 22). Some magic word is spoken and the left hand is shown empty (Photo 23).

The right hand reaches over the left arm to the elbow as if to touch the elbow. At the



same time, the left hand dives into the lap to fetch the lapped ball (Photo 24). The right hand brings the ball to the fingertips while near the elbow and moves to the center of the table to display the ball. At the same time, the left hand is raised out of the lap; during this action the ball that was fetched from the lap is finger palmed (Photo 25). The visible ball is dumped to



the table (Photo 26). The left hand reaches over to the right elbow (Photo 27). The left hand brings the finger-palmed ball into view (Photo 28). This ball is placed on the table (Photo 29) and the hands are opened as in an applause cue (Photo 30).

Conclusion: As I mentioned, I have used this little routine as an impromptu trick when hanging out at bars with friends.

It always went over very well. I decided to put it into my regular sit-down close-up show. It did not get as good a response as when done impromptu. Something about it appearing to be completely not planned makes it significant. People seem to know when there is no preparation and appreciate pure skill.

VANISHING SALTSHAKER

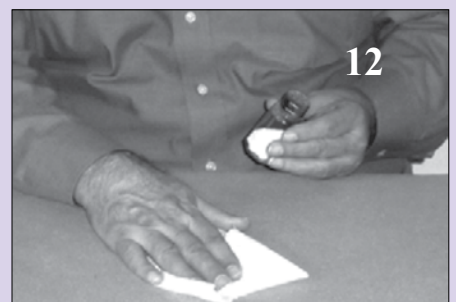
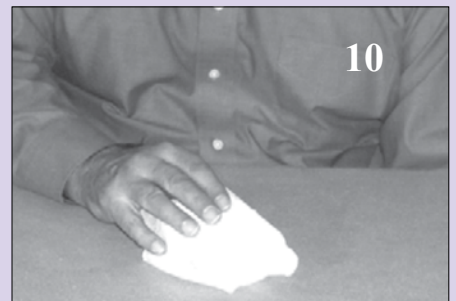
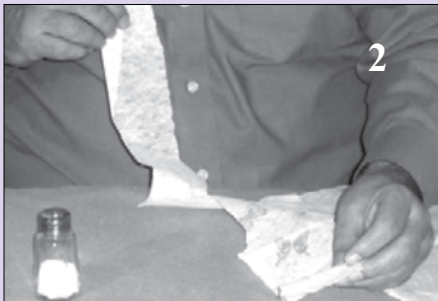
Around 1970 or 1971, I lived in Minneapolis. I went to the magic meetings and became a part of the scene there. I met a young man who eventually became a worthy magician. He moved out to Hollywood, California. During one of our get-togethers in Minneapolis, he said something that I always take notice of when I hear it. He said, "This is a trick I must do in every show." He was referring to the vanishing saltshaker trick.

His comment made me realize the power of the trick. However, I thought the standard presentation was lacking. In the standard version, the shaker is put on top of a coin and the shaker is covered with a napkin. The audience is told that the coin will disappear. The napkin-covered saltshaker is raised to see if the coin is still there. Then, the saltshaker is dropped into the lap while the napkin holds the form of the shaker. The coin is covered with the napkin shell. Then the shell is crushed. Apparently, the shaker disappears instead of the coin.

I have many problems with this. One is that the audience is told something is going to happen that is never going to happen. It just doesn't make sense. Therefore, I came up with a version of this trick that is more direct. At one time, I did it in every show. In this plot, the napkin is torn into strips. The strips are used to wrap the saltshaker. Then it disappears or penetrates the tabletop. A coin is not used in this sequence.

Performance: A regular saltshaker is used along with an ordinary paper napkin (Photo 1). Tear the napkin into four strips (Photo 2) and line up the strips on your left (Photo 3).

Pick up one strip and place it over the saltshaker. Hold that in place with one hand (Photo 4). Then get another strip and put it on the saltshaker in the other direction (Photo 5). Get a third strip and put it on the shaker at a different angle (Photo 6).



The left hand reaches for the fourth strip and slides it over to the middle of the table while the saltshaker is pulled out of the way (Photo 7). While the napkin-covered saltshaker is out of the way, the shaker is allowed to slip into the lap. The right hand holds the napkins as if there were still a saltshaker inside the napkin shell. The napkin shell is put on top of the fourth strip (Photo 8). Bring the ends of the strip over the napkin shell as if continuing to wrap the saltshaker (Photo 9).

While the right hand holds the form of the napkins, the left hand is put under the table (Photo 10). Note that the left arm moves forward enough so the upper arm presses against the edge of the table. Then the left hand comes back and grasps the saltshaker that fell into the lap. If you do

not do this, the audience can see that your hand is not in the middle of the table, but is back in your lap.

The right hand now presses on the napkin shell, flattening it against the table (Photo 11). The left hand comes out from under the table with the saltshaker (Photo 12). Apparently, it went through the table.

Conclusion: There are other ways to conclude this trick instead of having the saltshaker appear to penetrate the table. One is to just make the shaker disappear. Another take on having the saltshaker penetrate the table is to have someone hold her hand over the napkin shell. Then, the magician pushes his hand down so the spectator's hand apparently pushes the shaker through the table. I read this in Bert Allerton's book *The Close-up Magician*,

published by Magic, Inc.

Another subterfuge is to loosen the top of the saltshaker. When the shaker falls into the lap, only the body of the shaker falls. The metal top is kept in the napkin shell. Then, before apparently making the saltshaker disappear, the performer taps on the metal top to show the shaker is still there. Then the napkin is crushed around the top. This bit came from Roy Kissel, one of the owners of the Fox Fun-n-Magic Shop.

In my performance, I made the shaker disappear by simply crushing the napkin shell into a ball and letting it sit in the middle of the table. People talked about it later. ♦

INFORMED OPINION

LATEST PRODUCT REVIEWS Compiled and Edited by W. S. Duncan

This month there are two items from local (Seattle) magicians whom I've had the good fortune to know for many years: The Magic Bakery's *Totally Whacked* video of underground legend Steve Mayhew, and Louis Foxx's Evaporation gimmick.

Mayhew is an expert with a pack of cards, a smart thinker, and a performer whose performances are imbued with a comic timing that comes only from years of real world performance. If Juan Tamariz were a short bald guy from Seattle, he'd be Steve Mayhew. But he'd still need glasses.

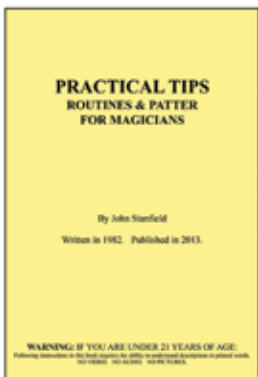
Louis Foxx is the guy who sold Reed McClintock his first video on coin magic. If that was all he'd done it would be a substantial contribution to magic, but his Evaporation gaff may have an even bigger impact. When he described this to me at the first Portland Magic Jam a few years ago, I thought it was a clever idea, but it wasn't until seeing it in action that I began to realize what a great idea it is: a self-contained device that allows you vanish a quantity of highly visible liquid, like a milk pitcher, but normal. Don't miss Payne's full review.

Until next month.

PRACTICAL TIPS, ROUTINES & PATTERN FOR MAGICIANS BOOK BY JOHN STANFIELD

Available from: www.johnstanfield.com
Price \$30.00

REVIEW BY DAN GARRETT



To me, Georgia (USA) magician John Stanfield is one of the living legends of magic. He has inspired me with his performances since I started taking magic seriously, back in my early twenties. So, if you are looking for my normally unbiased review in these pages, be aware that it may not be the case. I will try. I will save my only negative comments for the end. But for now, I'm simply excited about introducing John Stanfield to those newcomers who don't know him.

Just last year, John discovered manuscripts that he had written in the '80s but never published. This is tantamount to the discovery of buried treasure. Finally, we get to explore these routines of yesteryear. Most of them are viable with today's audiences. John throws in editorial comments in the book. He admits that sometimes the patter from thirty years ago doesn't necessarily play with the under-thirty "odd" audiences of today.

What's this book about? (It's about a hundred pages...as the old gag goes.) The title of the book fairly describes the contents. All of the routines in the book are the real thing, thoroughly audience tested in front of delighted, laughing crowds. Many a time I was one of those delighted spectators. On the cover of the book is printed a warning:

"If you are under 21 years of age: Following instructions in this book requires the ability to understand descriptions in printed words. NO VIDEO. NO AUDIO. NO PICTURES."

The routines run the gamut of platform and stage material, with a few close-up effects thrown in for good measure. Most of the routines come with complete scripts ("patter," if you insist), and include valuable advice on presentation and timing. The props used are all fairly standard, and most can still be easily found. For example: Pop-eyed Pips (there are many versions of this one still out there), Crystal Silk Cylinder, and the Linking Pins (the Jerry Andrus's close-up classic) for example. Routines presented in the Stanfield style include a burned bill routine, Silks to Fruit, Sucker Egg, the Ostrich Trick, and many more.

Additional gems in the book abound. You learn a bit of John's story, with his ninety-plus years of life experience. For me, as I read the descriptions and scripts, I could remember and picture a younger John standing on stage performing, amazing me, and making me laugh. There is a great story included in the book that is not a trick, but would be a wonderful presentation in the hands of a good storyteller or emcee. There is also a very clever original design for a suitcase table. This includes color photographs. Apparently the warning about "no pictures" was a prevarication.

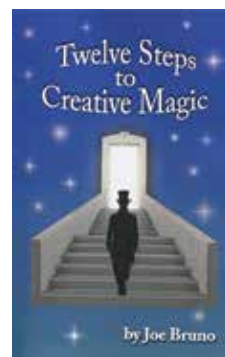
Stanfield has another book, *Nothing in My Hands*, which has long been out of print. It has now been reprinted, along with the original instructions for the Linking Coat Hangers, the Colorfusing Knives, and a few more things. If you want to complete your library, you can purchase these items from John's website.

Now I must point out something I don't like about the book. It is staple stitched. I wish it were hardbound, so that it would be easily seen on a bookshelf. This book deserves to be in everyone's magic library.

TWELVE STEPS TO CREATIVE MAGIC BOOK BY JOE BRUNO

Available from: www.Amazon.com
Price \$20.00

REVIEW BY PAYNE



Before delving into Joe Bruno's *Twelve Steps to Creative Magic* you need to ask yourself if you believe that creativity can be taught. It is, after all, an elusive muse, and one that scientists and psychologists alike have unsuccessfully been trying to pin down for decades. John Cleese (the one of Monty Python fame) once said, and rightly so, "Telling people how to be creative is easy. It's only being creative that is difficult."

But Mr. Bruno has attempted to give it the old college try by releasing a slim volume, titled *Twelve Steps to Creative Magic*. Whether he was successful in this endeavor is hard for me to say. Being a creative individual, it is difficult for me to assess whether Mr. Bruno's methods would work to propel someone who feels stifled in this area down the path to "a more creative you."

For me creativity is an organic and ingrained process that defies easy explanation or definition. I seem to possess an ability to look at things differently. I was never taught this skill, but seemingly developed it naturally

through a series of trials and errors. This is the reason I've always maintained that "creativity, while it can't be taught, can be learned." It's all very well and good to tell someone, as Mr. Bruno does on page five of his manuscript, to "approach the creative process earnestly and vigorously." It's quite another to explain exactly how one can go about doing such a thing. The process is different for each individual.

A few years ago Guy Hollingworth wrote a series of articles on his creative process. While I am sure it works for him, and possibly others of a similar mindset, it did nothing for me. In fact, had I followed Mr. Hollingworth's methodology, it would have stunted my own creative process. This in no way means that his process is wrong or fails to work. It obviously works quite well for Mr. Hollingworth. It's just not a universal all-encompassing method that can promise the same results for everyone. Creativity is a very personal thing. What works for one might be an anathema for someone else. You need to expose yourself to a wide variety of ideas and methodologies to spark and define your own creative process.

And that is why, if you are seeking to become more creative in your magic, you should give *Twelve Steps to Creative Magic* a look. It might work perfectly for you. For others it may only steer them in a better direction. For others it will do nothing at all. Such is the toll one has to pay on the road of creativity.

The book is divided into four sections. The first is devoted to characteristics and traits the author believes you need to develop in order to be more receptive to the creative processes that he outlines in section two. The third section shows the "Twelve Steps" in action as the author applies each one to a different magic effect. (I thought it would have been more interesting to have taken the same trick and made it into twelve different effects. But that's just me.)

Finally, the fourth chapter is devoted to winnowing the chaff from the grain. Just because you've created a new and original effect or presentation doesn't necessarily guarantee that it's any good. You still have to ask yourself if a Matrix routine is improved by replacing the coins with alien-head pencil erasers, or if doing so diminishes or muddles the effect.

So if any of the points I've touched on in this brief review sounds appealing to you, give this book a try. Just be warned: you aren't going to instantly be more creative by reading it. Learning to be creative can be a long and arduous process. Reading a single volume on the subject isn't going to instantly make you more creative. But it can set you on your way.

There are those who will find much of interest in this book, while others will not. Unfortunately, that is the nature of the beast. If you are just starting out in your quest to be a more creative performer, you might profitably take this book out for a spin. It certainly won't hurt you to try some of the information contained within its covers. But this sort of work doesn't come with any guarantees, except that it will be an interesting journey.

TOTALLY WHACKED! DVD

By STEVE MAYHEW

Available from your favorite dealer

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$35.00

REVIEW BY ANTONIO M. CABRAL

This DVD has been a long time coming, and I'm extremely pleased to say it's worth the wait. Steve Mayhew has been one of my favorite names in card magic for a decade or so, ever since I read his *Angels May Shuffle, But The Devil Still Deals* manuscript. That work alone, which includes the now-legendary Mayhew Poker Deal, cemented him as one of my favorite gambling-flavored card guys. Then, in 2006, I got the chance to see him lecture and perform at the Buffalo 52



convention, and he immediately became one of my favorite performers. That's when I learned that not only was he a terrific card man, but one of the funniest performers I've had the pleasure of watching. While his new book from Hermetic Press gives you insight to his card man's mind, *Totally Whacked!* shows you the Steve Mayhew I saw in Buffalo. It's a beautiful thing.

Something I didn't realize about Steve before viewing this DVD is that he started off as a street performer. He brings that sensibility to the performance and material featured here: a gloriously offbeat sense of humor, constant, non-stop entertainment, and a whole lot of magic. You get to see a full performance set in front of a live audience, which is the best and I'd say the only vehicle for his style – not just for Steve's timing and rhythm, but because he's probably the huggiest card worker I know. That kind of performance sense doesn't develop in a vacuum.

The material employs a variety of skill levels – mostly intermediate yet simple routines, like his Three By Three multiple card location (aka A Balloon, A Cartwheel, and A Pony Ride) and his handling of the classic Conus Aces. The most difficult routine is the aforementioned Mayhew Poker Deal (aka Freedom), which requires upwards of twenty-six second deals in a row – and it's absolutely worth the effort. Many top gambling card men have a version of this routine in their repertoires; this is the original. Most of the material is card-based, but he also performs a great bill switch routine that's magical and very, very funny. The bonus features include another great Mayhew creation: Delores in the Meadow, which is The Trick That Fooled Houdini taken to a surreal extreme. This is straight-up working material: direct, fast-paced, and really, really, fun for an audience of normal people.

The explanations are a treat as well, because Steve is very straightforward in his thinking and his theories behind each effect. He keeps his audience's interests foremost in mind at all times. Mayhew ranks up there with performers like Bill Malone. You also get an interview in which Steve explains how he got started and how he became the performer he is.

This DVD is everything I'd hoped it would be: short, sweet, and totally Mayhew. If you're interested in great card magic material for a bar setting or a comedy club, this one's a no-brainer. Get down with it.

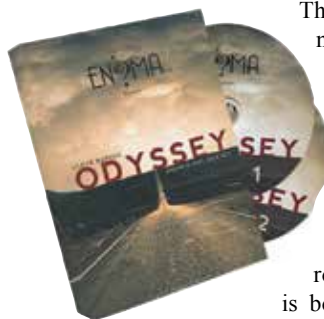
ODYSSEY TWO-DVD SET By LLOYD BARNES AND ENIGMA LTD.

Available from: www.enigmald.com

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$44.95

REVIEW BY CURTIS KAM



This DVD set, with a running time of nearly four hours, delivers a bunch of interesting ideas, some original, that are oversold by the production on the discs. There is a silly practice, not limited to video media, of hyping every subject of a magic project as if he is a technical master, a creative genius, and a master of psychology all rolled into one. Let's face it; none of us is born both talented and knowledgeable.

But that's the conceit in play here. Lloyd Barnes is a

young performer with some good ideas. And that's enough. But throughout *Odyssey*, each effect is presented in three sections. There's the performance and the explanation, as usual, but in between, the producers have forced in a segment called "Introduction" in which the performer is supposed to dispense some sort of greater insight, either into the inner workings of magic, or the artist's creative process. But Mr. Barnes fails to deliver either. Rather, he describes each effect as "one of my favorite things to do" and assures us that "it will fool and amaze everyone." The discs would be shorter, and nothing would be lost, if all of these sections were jettisoned. After suffering through them, all I was left with was about a half an hour that I'll never get back. Even Mr. Barnes's comments during the explanations are often banal or inexplicable. For instance, during Glimmer he explains, as he is sliding a coin into a glass, "This is silent, because the glass is smooth – and you get the sound, you need the sound." What?

All that said, I've tried to put aside what this project isn't, and focus on what it is. I'll warn you, though; I've read ahead and I don't quite manage it. This is a collection of close-up ideas and effects with cards, coins, and rubber bands. Most are interesting; some are original.

Among the coin effects, these are presented: Moonshine is a technique for vanishing a coin from your palm-up and open hand. Your other hand passes over the coin, and it's gone. The passing hand is empty, too. It looks pretty good, and resembles the Raven-gimmick vanish that inspired it. There are no clothing constraints; Barnes does this – and all of the effects in fact – in a floppy, short-sleeved tee shirt. This vanish has angle restrictions, and only works head-on. It's also not original. The basic concealment appears in *Bobo's Modern Coin Magic* (see Jimmy Buffaloe's New Era Coin Go) and the method for getting into that concealment has already been published by Garrett Thomas, among others. The idea that this vanish could also be used as a change is hardly a surprise. Almost all vanishes can be changes. There is a clean-up "taught" that conveys the coin from the hiding spot to one's pocket. It, also, is hardly revolutionary; I'd wager that many people who have played with the Buffaloe vanish have stumbled upon it themselves by accident. I know I did. None of this is mentioned by Mr. Barnes, whose references don't seem to go back any further than a Gregory Wilson lecture that he saw once. I placed "taught" in quotes; during the repeated demonstrations of the clean-up, the camera only manages to actually show us the move once.

Spare Change is an impromptu penetration of a borrowed coin through the bottom of a coffee mug. The method is good. But it's not anything that wouldn't occur to most of us. It uses the Bluff Vanish, also from *Bobo*, also uncredited, and for the other part of the method, Barnes cites someone on a Theory 11 video. The trick does work though, and has a nice audio illusion in which the coin is heard rattling about in the cup before it passes through the bottom. In both the explanation and the obligatory Introduction section Barnes takes several long minutes to explain nothing of interest or value.

The Sign Vanish is an interesting approach to the bare-handed vanish of a coin. It didn't exactly fool me, but it's worth exploring. The performer stands facing the audience and places a coin behind the fingers of his left hand. The right hand is shown cleanly front and back, and then drops out of view. The coin then disappears. The angles on this are a little better than in Moonshine, but this is still mostly a head-on technique.

Glimmer looks good. A large coin is visibly tossed through the bottom of a clear glass, leaving the coin inside the glass, and all examinable. The technique taught here, a sort of shuttle pass from a glass, is more thoughtfully covered by Miguel Gea in his *Essence* DVDs. In fact, I'd be surprised if this exact penetration doesn't appear there. The introduction section is, as they all are, vapid and unhelpful, featuring the baffling statement regarding "silence" mentioned earlier.

Steadfast is, as Mr. Barnes tells us, a ring and rubber band effect that arose, "from playing with some magic with a ring and a rubber band." Wow, who'd have thought? This three-phase routine features an interest-

ing ring-off-and-on rubber band first phase, a second penetration that was already taught by Philippe Bougard and Clement Kerstenne on their *Effing Coins* DVD, and a third phase that, we are told, is "possibly the most hard-hitting little thing on this DVD." That third phase is the sort of thing I like, a refinement of a familiar technique that adds impact by allowing the effect to happen in the spectator's hands. If you do the ring and rubber band effect, I suggest you try this. Loophole is also worth playing with; it's a slight re-fingering of Daniel Garcia's Slink, which in turn, is a one-band-at-a-time penetration of one rubber band through another.

The card material includes Slo-Mo Sandwich, a sandwich routine that provides an interesting visual effect – the selection appears between the sandwich cards a little at a time – at the cost of a slightly gaffed card. Covert is a no-palm signed card to ungaffed wallet that ends with you dumping the card in your wallet onto the deck to reveal it to be the selection. Sandwich is a really useful move for switching a card that's sandwiched between two others. The move, which looks very good, happens as the card is turned over by the other hand that's holding the deck. Pure is an angle-sensitive switch of position for Ross Bertram's TeBe change, and/or Polaroid change. The Barrel Change might look familiar to you, we are told, because Mr. Barnes invented it, then others published it. It's a slow-motion color change of a card on the deck that occurs as the other hand passes slowly over it. When you're head-on to the audience, it looks good, and you end clean.

Finally, Mr. Barnes explains two novel effects. One is the penetration of a straw through a bill that simulates the second phase of Tim Wenk's Mised, but without the gimmick. This looks pretty good, but instead of ditching the tiny gaff used in the original, here you have to switch the entire bill. Not an ideal trade off, but a good alternative if you like this effect but don't want to carry the gaff around. Finally, there is a trick in which you put a couple of spoonfuls of sugar into a coffee cup, and merely by swirling the cup, the sugar visually changes into powdered coffee. This was developed for a television show, which should give you an idea of the sort of performing conditions the method imposes.

Mr. Barnes considers himself more of a creator than a performer, and if you're looking for compelling or engaging presentations for your effects, you won't find them here. He's not much of a student of magic history or literature, so if you're interested in the creative process or the development of ideas, look elsewhere. There's not a lot of technical finesse on display here, either. But if you're looking for some new takes on familiar plots, something clever to play with, and/or a few novel or creative methods, I think you'll find this interesting.

RISK 4 DVD
BY RIZKI NANDA AND TITANAS
Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies
Price \$30.00

REVIEW BY DANNY ARCHER



Magic is a worldwide hobby (or occupation)

I was reminded, as I watched this new DVD from Titanas Magic that has an Indonesian magician named Takel presenting the magic of Rizki Nanda. The video production and sound quality are great. The performances are done silently, as are the explanations, with an English voice-over narration.

The DVD begins with Broken Wings, a torn and restored card effect. The card is ripped in half and then restored. There is a sequence

in which the two halves slowly creep towards each other that looks great, but overall I felt the handling was a little too cozy in some spots. Also in an age where cards are ripped into four pieces before being restored, a two-piece restoration may seem like a step backward. I recently reviewed Heinstein's Dream in these pages, and that is what a torn and restored card should look like.

In CIF, a card (Eight of Clubs) is selected and lost in the deck. A folded card is introduced and the performer writes the name of a card (Ace of Hearts) on it. On being informed that the Ace of Hearts was not the correct card, Takel rubs his fingers across the back of the card and the writing visibly changes into the Eight of Clubs. When the card is unfolded and opened, it is seen to be the Eight of Clubs. TK Car is a quickie effect in which you use the power of the mind to stop a toy car that is rolling. The performance went by so quickly I was not sure what happened (because no patter was used, I believe). Think Koornwinder Kar without the cards, or for mentalists. This is easy to make and the car can be examined after the effect.

The final effect is called TransVo and it begins with the performer showing a red and a blue card, each folded into quarters. The blue card is selected and marked with a Sharpie. The two cards are held in one hand while the other hand removes and tables the performer's wallet. The folded blue card vanishes; when the red card is opened there is a message printed on the face "Look inside the wallet." When the wallet is opened, inside is the signed blue card. This looks very good and I have not seen this type of gimmick used before.

Nothing is too hard to do or to make and everything is very clearly shown; the camera work is very good. There are better torn and restored card effects out there I believe, so if this is going to grab your fancy the other tricks will have to be what you are seeking. This DVD left me feeling stuck in the middle of the road. While pros might not find what they are looking for, hobbyists will have fun with this trio of folded card effects.

THE STREETS TRICK By JOHN ARCHER

Available from: www.VanishingIncMagic.com

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$120.00 two-book set (or \$80.00 for one volume)

REVIEW BY JIM KLEEFELD



From the devious mind of Brit John Archer comes a book test that is not quite a book test. There are two books included, but rather than novels, these are street guides or map books for London and Boston. You get both books for \$120. If

you like, you can choose to get The Streets with either single book for \$80. Archer justifies using map books as a way to get someone to think of a location or street name. It makes more logical sense than handing someone a novel and asking them to find a word inside. If you wanted them to be thinking of a word, why use a book? Why not just ask them to think of a word?

Each book is an original work, created from scratch just for this effect, but they both are very fair representations of real-world street guides. They will not pass a strong inspection, but in quick use in a stage show, they appear normal. Each book is divided into two sections. In the front is a page-by-page street guide to the city with a different map on every page. A spectator opens the book to any map, thinks of any street they see on that map, and you tell them what street they have in mind. The

back half of each book is a street index – page after page of all the street names listed in alphabetical order. You riffle through the index stopping wherever the spectator says. They remember the street at the top of the page and you tell them what street they have in mind. Although there is nothing groundbreaking in the way of methods, the combination of two different effects coupled with the use of street guides instead of "text" books makes The Streets novel. There is an additional effect built into the London book about divining the borough in which the spectator's street is situated. Boston does not have such boroughs, so that book cannot reproduce that effect. This third effect owes much to David Hoy.

I'd suggest you buy the two-book complete set so you can use either one or both. Have a spectator choose one or the other and go on with the presentation. If you live and work in Boston, you will probably want to use only the London book because, as I said, the books are gimmicked and not up to heavy inspection. Archer's tips on aging the books are strong and should be followed. Presenting spectators with a map book that looks brand new would arouse suspicion. Included is a download link to a half-hour video of Archer performing the full effect and four cue cards that would help make it easier for those who don't use the effect daily.

The instruction book is well written by Andi Gladwin and has forty-four pages of routines, ideas, tips, and suggestions. In addition, there are a couple of solid contributions by Luke Jermy. Credits are appropriately accorded to Larry Becker and Ted Karmilovich for the underlying principles of the two effects, although technically, Terri Rogers's Master Key was one of the real predecessors.

This is a very strong product and well worth the asking price. The props are excellently produced and the methods are simple and effective. The routine would work well for those who do mental magic as well as for the serious mentalist who wants to add something just a bit different to his arsenal. The Streets is not going onto my shelf; it's going into my show.

IGNITION TRICK By MECHANIC INDUSTRIES

Available from: www.mechanicindustries.com

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$35.00

REVIEW BY CURTIS KAM



The creative people who brought us the Mechanic's Deck and Grinder coins expand their line with this intriguing, seemingly impromptu effect with your key chain. If you're unfamiliar with these products, check out their website and

enjoy the ride. Here again, they have produced a product with a bunch of potential uses, one of which they teach purchasers via streaming video.

The specific effect is this: The performer shows the audience that he has a cool-looking pewter- or bronze-colored dollar-sized coin hanging on the end of a chain. At the other end of that short chain are the performer's keys, which are (let's assume) removed to show the coin. The performer then jerks hard on the chain and it detaches from the coin. Depending on the handling, one or both of these items are handed to the spectator for a moment, establishing the situation. Then the chain is magically reattached to the coin, and the key chain is once again examinable.

The precise look of the restoration varies with the handling one chooses, and that's part of the fun. Drawing on some of Jay Sankey's earlier work with keys coming on and off key rings, the restoration can be fast and visual, or it can be slow and mysterious. In fact, when I broke this set out at a session, everyone wanted to play with the pieces. If that session is

any indication, magicians will either want to toss one piece at the other, causing them to link in midair, or they will choose to rub and meld the metal parts back together. There are a whole lot of ways to go with this.

Whether this is for you depends on what sort of performing you do and whether you think you'd be carrying around a key chain that looks like this. It's not for everyone. And I think you're going to have to explain why you're taking your keys off the key chain for the effect, or have duplicates. The product comes with a link to the mechanic industries "Workshop," where they teach some of the basic handlings, all of which require you to be wearing a jacket. But as I said, you certainly don't need to use their handlings. And for those who don't have access to sleeving, know that the chain part readily attaches to a magnet, so there's that.

See? There I go again, playing with this stuff. If this is the sort of playing you enjoy, and you think a Grinder Coin key chain fits your look, I think you'll have a lot of fun with this. You get one intact key chain, and it's nicely made, as well as a separate coin, and a separate chain assembly, available in bronze or pewter-grey finish.

THE BOX TRICK By MARK SOUTHWORTH

*Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies
Price \$75.00*

REVIEW BY JIM KLEEFELD



Timing is everything. Had this come out a few years ago, I would have bought it and used it without reservation. It is a great trick, but as it happens, there are now a couple of alternatives. Once you examine these details, you might still decide that this is for you. The Box is

a simple plastic snap-lid case, two inches by one-and-a-half, of the kind many stores use to package and sell small delicate items like cloisonné pins or bracelet charms. The top is clear and the base is black. You bring it out and set it on the table so the audience can see a folded card inside. Do your favorite card effect up to the point where you are about to reveal the spectator's card. Then pick up the box, dump the card that is inside into your hand, and hand it to the spectator. She unfolds it and finds that it is indeed her chosen card with her signature.

Of course, it is a versatile prop, and this is but one of the many suggested uses. Like John Kennedy's and David Regal's boxes, this is basically a switching device. The card that the spectators see inside the box vanishes as you tip over the box, so that you can reveal a different folded card in your hand. If you can control a signed card and do a Mercury Card Fold, you know the drill on this type of routine.

Unlike Kennedy's Mystery Box, this one has a clear lid so you can use it as an open prediction. Unlike Regal's Clarity Box, this box is a small cheap plastic one, which has its advantages. It appears normal and common. It is easily replaceable if it should break. It fits inside your pocket very easily.

Southworth and friend sit and explain every aspect of the box, its many uses, and several full routines on the simple but effective DVD instructions. It takes them about an hour to go through everything. Plus, he has wisely included lots of extras with the final product. You get two duplicate boxes, several extra gimmicks, and a nice cloth bag with brass grommets. You can slip the box inside the bag and run a padlock through the grommets so that you can use this as a modified open prediction; the spectator can hold the bag from the beginning of your trick, unlock it herself, remove the box from inside, and see the internal folded card. Because the prediction is in play but locked away, this procedure would

work well if you encounter situations with familiar or grabby spectators.

Another nice touch is that the folded card gimmick inside the box is not only removable, it is replaceable. It takes a few minutes of arts and crafts, but you can easily exchange the folded red Bicycle card for a blue-backer, a ten-dollar bill, or a billet slip. This means that you can do a billet prediction in a mentalism act, or a card to impossible location. Southworth spends a bit of time explaining his routine for signed bill in orange, including how to show the spectator's folded bill ostensibly being put into the box, how to get the actual signed bill inside an orange, and how to switch out the one in the box for the one in the orange. Although he does not actually perform the effect on the DVD with an orange, his explanation is clear. He also explains separately how to do the Mercury Card Fold and a double-undercut. There are no real-world performances on the video, just two guys talking you through everything. Also, oddly, the disc was unlabeled, the packaging had no information about the effect, and the DVD showed no credits of any kind.

The crux of the effect, though, is that it is a solid product, versatile, very useable in strolling and table-hopping situations, and well made. Your decision to buy this might hinge on one of two things: the price and the look. For starters, it is \$5 cheaper than Regal's Clarity Box. But then, you are getting a small cheap plastic box, nowhere near the heavy quality of Regal's product. What may make a difference to you is that Regal's box looks large and heavy, while this one is very small and lightweight, so it is easier to slip in and out of a coat or vest pocket as you stroll. And it does not look like a specialty prop. The clever Emergency sign in Regal's box is cute, but it makes that prop stand out a bit as a special item only a magician might have. This looks like you just brought it along as an afterthought, so your spectators might easily dismiss the prop and credit you.

EVAPORATION PROP By LOUIS FOXX

*Available from: www.EvaporationTrick.com
Price \$34.99*

REVIEW BY PAYNE



I hate this trick. I really do. I'm sure that when you buy this, you'll hate it too.

You won't hate it because it's a perfect, long overdue update to the classic milk pitcher effect. And you certainly won't hate that you can keep it in your kit, ready to go at a moment's notice without fear of inundating the rest of your props in liquid.

You won't even hate it because the reset is quick, even though it literally sucks. No, you'll hate this trick because, like me, you didn't think of it. It's extremely clever and Mr. Foxx should receive no end of accolades for taking a very simple and well-known scientific principle and applying it in an extremely clever and innovative way to an innocent-looking bottle of SunnyD.

So here's what it does. At any time during your act you take a sixteen-ounce bottle of SunnyD out of your magic case (or pick it up from your side table where it has been in plain view). It can be handled freely and shown all around. In case you're asking, no, the audience can't examine it. But because you can handle it in such a nonchalant manner, they should have no reason or desire to do so. The bottle is then uncapped and a large portion of the contents poured into your fist, a paper cone, a mug, or whatever item or object you choose. The sticky orange liquid is then shown to have vanished, or transformed into whatever your heart

desires. It is literally a modern, updated milk pitcher, so its use is only limited by your own creativity.

At the conclusion of the trick the cap is put back on the bottle and it can be safely tossed into your kit without fear of spillage. Try that with your typical milk pitcher.

Evaporation comes with everything you need: the gimmicked bottle, an extra gimmick, and an instructional DVD chock full of tips and suggestions. If you've always loved the milk pitcher but hated the mess, fuss, and hassle of hauling around all that liquid, then you really should give Louis Foxx's Evaporation a try.

M-CASE DVD AND PROP **By MICKAEAL CHATELAIN**

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies
Price \$35.00

REVIEW BY DAN GARRETT



In the olden days of magic, close-up and parlor magicians used a locking card box as a secret switching device to perform an array of miracles. Older ones were made of wood; newer ones came in plastic. There now exist several versions of a switching box that use the innocent card case, that is, the cardboard box in which a pack of cards comes, as a switching box. Some of the latter items

include Legend by Justin Miller, Fasten by Jean-Pierre Vallarino, Boxing Match by Katsuya Masuda, and the Romero Box by Antonio Romero.

Mickael Chatalain has produced yet another variation – a gimmicked locking card box that looks perfectly innocent, and that may be left in the spectator's hands after the dirty work has been accomplished. This is the feature that sets it apart from most of the other versions.

Mssr. Chatelain is French, so English is not his first language. If you understand French, you may prefer to watch the DVD footage in that language. The French version is about two minutes shorter than the English version. The material appears to be more efficiently presented in his native tongue, as one would guess. I don't know if he keeps saying this in the French version, but the viewer may get tired of hearing "This is really, really easy. I will explain it now," after every new demonstration. The DVD is in dire need of a script.

About fifteen effects are performed and explained on the disc. I have personally used M-Case in front of real audiences, and it works very well. I have used it for a card force, and also for a bill switch. If you have ever had a card box, or any card switching device, you are probably aware of the type of tricks for which they are best suited. It's easy to think them up on your own. But here we are subjected to every possible effect with a switch that the author could imagine, with repetitive explanations for how each was accomplished. This is not needed. Three or four good effects would be enough to send us off in the right direction to come up with our own routines.

Good points: The box is innocent. It is common. It is not suspected if treated in a normal manner. It will withstand a cursory examination if a spectator is interested, but not an intense examination.

Things to consider: The preparation is better done prior to your performance. However, if you want to set everything up "on the fly," Mickael gives some excellent suggestions in that area. The items that can be switched are limited in size and thickness. Examples: up to four playing cards at a time, a bill folded into fourths, a coin or coins (if not too thick), etc.

I have used M-Case with success in my performances. If you don't

have a card-switching device, or you like the sound of this version, give it a try. If you are trying to decide which of the several available card-switching boxes is for you, M-Case wouldn't be a bad choice.

THE GALLOWS TRICK **By MARK SHORTLAND**

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies
Price \$200.00

REVIEW BY JIM KLEEFELD



The epitome of gallows humor for magicians now comes packaged in the form of a book test. Picture this: You offer to play a game of Hangman with a member of your audience. She chooses one of two books, opens to any page, and looks at any word. You open a pad, take a marker, and draw the standard lines for the well-known guessing game.

You start guessing letters to discern her word. Every time you get one correct, you write the letter on your pad. Every time you get one wrong, you bring out a section of a large wooden gallows to assemble. Miss a letter and drop a three-by-four-foot plywood platform base on the stage. Miss another letter and stick a six-foot support rod into the base. Miss again and add a top support bar. Another miss and you add a thick rope noose to the framework, stand on a chair, and put your neck in it. Will you read her mind and discover her word, or miss again and literally die on stage for your audience?

As you can gather, this is a stage piece, not close-up. The performer builds a ten-foot high wooden gallows frame with a noose as part of the act. Spoiler alert: Unless you totally mess up the easy instructions, you will always discover the spectator's word before you actually hang yourself.

To his credit, Shortland's books have a large set of words from which the spectator can choose. The list of sixty-four words ranges from five letters long up to thirteen letters long, so there is a lot of variety. If a skeptical spectator tries to foil you by choosing a word of only three or four letters, you will know immediately, so you can head him off and pass the book to someone more cooperative. And, in a bit of inspired thinking, the creator has fashioned a clever comedy ending into the act (and props). So you not only divine the correct word that the spectator has merely thought of, you also finish with a great laugh-provoking ending.

You get everything you need with the exception of the gallows. Inside the very handsome foil-stamped cardboard case are two copies of a gaffed book (with different covers), six thick black markers, vinyl labels to apply to the markers, a thick rope tied into a noose (gimmicked), the clear video on a DVD with explanations and performance examples, plus plans for constructing a full-sized, wooden, sectionalized gallows frame. *Yes, you have to buy lumber and make a large and heavy prop that is good for just this one routine.* You have to bring the heavy pieces to your show and have them nearby so you can assemble the gallows as a part of the routine. You have to stand on a chair and put your neck into a rope noose in front of the audience. Shortland's video of a live performance at a nightclub makes it clear that he takes all of this lightly and squeezes much comedy out of the prospect of an audience seeing a performer get hanged for failing a magic trick. It is not everybody's cup of tea, but the same could be said of a dead serious, mind-reading mentalism book test. If you regularly do adult shows, normally use comedy, and don't mind lugging the extra weight in props, you might really like this.

The Gallows is a very nice product, but I had two problems with it. Maybe it's just me. The rope, markers, and labels are all very good

quality, but the printed books are not as professional as they should be. To my eye they stood out as vanity press titles – the kind of amateur-looking, self-published product that anyone can have done at Lulu Press. In addition to the tepid layout and configuration, the writing does not hold up. At a glance, anyone could pick out a word without any mistrust. But in this routine, the spectator holds the book for several minutes. If he reads through more than a few sentences, he will see that the text is nonsensical, such as this verbatim quote: “He let him take the worshipping scenario away from him. Now the negotiator was portraying that there were parts of his occupation that he did nothing to answer.” In most cases it is unlikely that spectators at a show would read from a book that thoroughly, but in this routine, the spectator does keep his hands on the book for quite some time. I put the books in the hands of two laypeople, my wife and son, who were not bothered by the look of the books. They did not seem suspicious to them in a quick casual glance-through, so maybe I’m over-thinking this.

My second concern goes to the core of the routine. You are playing a game of Hangman with a spectator. Everyone knows how to play Hangman. One person thinks of a word and the other person guesses letters one at a time until he gets the word right. Hangman is not magic. It is a game, and a simple one at that. In this trick, you get several correct guesses, but you must also get four wrong guesses in order to build the gallows. The denouement is that you divine the word, or “win the game,” but isn’t that the basic premise of a normal, non-magical game of Hangman? Will your spectators remember that you magically divined their thought-of word, or will they remember that you played Hangman and won?

There is no question but that The Gallows is worth the money for what you get; the props are decent and the presentation clear. But you have to ask yourself whether this is your type of effect. It is funny, but a little dark. It is not truly mentalism, and not quite magic. Rather, it is a solid comedy presentation in the guise of mental magic.

AUTO-SPELL DECK TRICK BY DEVIN KNIGHT

Distributed by Murphy’s Magic Supplies
Price: \$25.00

REVIEW BY DAVID GOODSELL



The clever use of an old principle makes the Auto-Spell Deck an entertaining and deceptive card trick.

Here is what happens. Removing the deck from its case, the performer gives the cards a quick spread in his hands, showing them to be different and well mixed. He then discards the two Jokers and gives the deck several complete cuts, either in the hands or on the table. He then suggests a spectator cut the deck once or twice himself, as the performer has done. The spectator is instructed to look at the new top card he has cut to, remember it,

and slide it anywhere, deep in the middle of the deck. The performer can have his head turned while this is done. Turning back to the spectator, the performer gives the deck another cut or two and tells the spectator that with this simple action he has placed the spectator’s card in a special position that will allow the spectator to spell to his card. The spectator is instructed to remove cards one at a time, placing them face up onto the table, one for each letter of the full name of the card, for example “t-h-r-e-e-o-f-c-l-u-b-s.” The next card is the Three of Clubs!

Straightforward and easy to do, Auto-Spell Deck resets quickly, and is an entertaining bit of trickery. Since it is obviously a feat of skill

(remember, you have openly set the deck by simply cutting it, and have indicated that fact), it might be worth mastering one or two fancy false cuts to emphasize your skill, rather than use the simple, but effective, cut Devin Knight describes in the instructions. This is a good trick! You receive an eight-page instruction pamphlet and the special Auto-Spell Deck.

MODERN ESP TRICK BY SANSMINDS

Distributed by Murphy’s Magic Supplies
Price \$29.95

REVIEW BY DAVID GOODSELL



In this SansMinds effect, the performer holds ten cards in his hands; five are face up and five are face down. On each of the five face-up cards is a red symbol: a heart, a flower, a smiley face, a house, or wavy lines. As they are displayed, the performer patters about what each symbol might mean to the spectator. Those cards are placed face up in a row on the table. The other five cards

are given to the spectator to mix. They have blue backs, and the performer explains that on their faces are the same five symbols as the cards on the table, but in blue. The spectator is instructed to use his or her “sixth sense” to place one blue-backed card on top of each red symbol. If the spectator’s intuition is working, the symbols will now be matched pairs. The performer turns over each pair, showing that the symbols do, indeed, match.

Modern ESP is a classic ESP effect using symbols that will have much more meaning to the spectator than trying to resurrect the long-deceased Dr. Rhine and patter about the old ESP tests done with Zener cards ninety years ago. Yes, other ESP tricks have been devised using symbols other than the traditional square, circle, etc., often using a dozen or more symbols. However, there is something very clean about using just five symbols. The SansMinds symbols are modern and effective.

The method is not new, and has often been used for Monte routines in the past. The sleight of hand is not difficult, but requires practice to be clean. The young demonstrator on this instructional DVD is very skilled, and the presentation was fun to watch. His moves are likely undetectable to laymen, but probably not to anyone who has kicked around magic for a couple of years. The methods used to convince the spectators that the cards are what the performer says they are (blue-backed cards with blue symbols on their faces and red-backed cards with red symbols on their faces) are very effective. Also good is the way the demonstrator directs the spectator’s handling of the cards to reduce the chance of the method being discovered by accident. And, by the way, the demonstrator’s performance personality is very pleasing. As stated earlier, it is fun to watch.

The DVD cover shows cards with solid blue backs and white borders. What you receive are cards with blue and red Bicycle backs. That was a disappointment, for the whole point of Modern ESP is to get away from old-fashioned mental tricks. The faces accomplish that, but trading the old-fashioned ESP card backs for Bicycle backs falls short. Some of you might want to find a way to change the backs to solid colors.

If you are relatively new to mental magic, this might be a good effect for you. Master the move and there is very little that can go wrong; the denouement is startling. The use of identifiable symbols lends itself to a touch of cold reading, should you desire, but the routine as is, is very clean. The actual instruction is covered in just eight minutes. That is okay, for that is all it takes to explain the effect in detail.

POCKET CHANGE DVD

By SANSMINDS

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$18.95

REVIEW BY JAMIE SALINAS



Ever find yourself in a situation where an opportunity arises for you to perform some magic and you don't have any props with you? I have a couple of items I carry in my wallet so I am always prepared for this situation; I can also use common items that are readily available. Now, with this DVD, I am able to perform even more magic using the coins in my pocket or borrowed pocket change.

My first thought was that the material would not be that strong. What can you do without special coins or gimmicks? After watching the first effect (two coins, one larger and different in color than the other, visibly change places), I was ready to learn more! This is followed by another transposition of two coins, a coin vanish, a second vanish, and a transformation of a face drawn on a coin.

Are all of the effects taught on the DVD impromptu? No. The transformation of a face drawn on a coin is not and will require an extra item to set up. The setup is very fast and can be done at a moment's notice but is not impromptu like the others. The effects are performed and explained very well, and are fairly easy to master.

Two standouts on the DVD are the first transposition of coins and the first coin vanish. If you like performing sleight-of-hand magic with coins or you just want to learn, beginners and seasoned performers will each get something new from this DVD. I did feel like I wanted more after just the five effects taught here, but Pocket Change is priced at less than \$20 and that makes this a good value.

THE LAST PREDICTION DVD AND GIMMICK

By KNEILL X

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$25.00

REVIEW BY JOSHUA KANE



The Last Prediction is a usable take on the classic Open Prediction effect. As presented, you uncuse a deck of cards and invite a spectator to shuffle them. While that is going on, you openly write a prediction of a card and leave it on the table for all to see, face up and revealed. The spectator is invited to deal cards face up until he feels the impulse to stop. When he stops, the top card is handed to you face down; you then rubber band it

to the top of the card case and place it next to the prediction to prevent anyone from switching it. The remaining cards are dealt face up; it is seen that the card predicted is missing. You tilt the card case up, flex the rubber band, and the selected card slips off and falls face up; it is the predicted card.

The deck is indeed freely shuffled and the justification for the one-time touching of the card is strong. It looks above board and is very direct. The gaff is well made and the video instruction is ample and clear. You are also instructed on how to make your own gaffs. An impromptu version

is also taught that, while workable, will require strong skills in misdirection. The Last Prediction can be done by a beginner or a pro, and in the world of one-trick DVDs is a fair value.

VOID DVD AND GIMMICK

By SKULKOR

Distributed by Murphy's Magic Supplies

Price \$35.00

REVIEW BY JOSHUA KANE



We don't ordinarily quote ads in the reviews in *M-U-M*, but a couple of things need clarification. The ad copy for Void includes a claim that "you could plant an idea in someone's head, giving them memories and create reality" and then goes on to describe an effect in which you name a card taken from the pack. That description states that: "The moment you pull the information out of their mind, the card turns into a blank card...and so does the rest of the deck!"

It also implies the spectator's memory is altered in some way: "This is exactly what Void does. It alters the very fabric of reality that your spectator believes."

I find both the ad and the demo fall short of their promises on several accounts. First the ad (aside from being poorly written) is all sizzle with no steak. So what are you actually getting here? This is just a DVD that teaches you three card tricks with pretensions. I understand that mentalism and mind-game themes are all the rage these days, but the impact of the effects does not match the copy here. There are no performance demos, just instructions taught wordlessly (admittedly with clear visuals) that run less than ten minutes. The DVD is well produced and you have the option of buying it with a gimmick that matches either a red or a blue Bicycle deck.

The demo features an effect in which a card is selected from a deck. You have the spectator place it face down on the card box before lifting the edge closest to you for her to peek at and memorize the card. Does the handling sound contrived and a bit awkward to you as well? She then holds the card against her body and is asked to name it. When she does, you tell her it is not so; when she looks at the card it is blank, as is the rest of the deck.

You can do the same effect, with less awkwardness, with a couple of simple sleights. An un-signed selected card-to-your-pocket effect and the same theme to a spectator's pocket are also covered. Please note that the blank deck is not included and will have to be purchased separately. You can accomplish the effects described with the gaff, but there are better methods. Take your \$35, buy a book, and learn some sleights. Don't fall for the hype. ♦

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TREASURES FROM THE SALON DE MAGIE

BY KEN KLOSTERMAN



MARGERY BELL BOX



Houdini's crusade against spirit mediums is well known. Perhaps his most widely publicized work was as part of a committee formed by *Scientific American* magazine to investigate spirit mediums. The magazine offered a prize of \$5,000 to any medium who could produce spirit manifestations under test conditions.

Five mediums applied for the award. Elizabeth Allen Thomson refused to produce her materializations of the dead under rigid control. George Valiantine had not known his chair was wired; an indicator showed he was not in the chair when a trumpet floated at a distance in the dark. The Reverend Josie K. Stewart produced handwritten messages in lavender ink on cards that had been blank; this was accomplished by switching prepared cards for the blanks. Nino Pecoraro, bound to a chair by Hereward Carrington, had impressed Sir Arthur Conan Doyle by making a handbell ring, a tambourine spin in the air, and a child's toy piano play. When Houdini tied Pecoraro with several short pieces of rope, there were no manifestations.

The medium known to the public as Margery was by far the strongest contender. Mina Crandon, the blonde, personable, much younger wife of a wealthy Boston surgeon, had discovered her psychic talent in the spring of 1923. To please her husband, she sat with him and some friends around a table in the dark. The table tilted and banged back to the floor. Her psychical progress was rapid. Soon the voice of her dead brother, Walter Stinson, spoke through her vocal chords. Spirit raps answered the questions of friends.

Houdini, of course, was skeptical from the start; he wrote reports and articles, gave lectures, and demonstrated in his show what he claimed were the methods used by Margery as well as other mediums to create apparent spirit phenomena.

The box shown here is a Houdini replica of Margery's "bell box," which he used in his exposés. It was one of the most convincing props Margery used to "prove" that spirits were present in the séance and were able to perform physical actions. The box is solid on all sides except the top, which is hinged and contains a pressure switch. Inside the box were dry batteries and an electric bell that rang whenever pressure at the top of the box completed the circuit.

In séances, the box was placed in front of Margery. In total darkness the sitters held her hands and pressed their lower legs against hers to detect any foot movement. Supposedly they had her perfectly controlled. Nevertheless, the bell would ring repeatedly and answered questions with a simple yes/no code. The explanation given was that "Walter," the medium's dead brother, had closed the circuit. Of course, it was Margery who did it all. The pamphlet *Houdini Exposes the Tricks Used by Boston Medium "Margery"* explained with illustrated drawings how she accomplished this.



When Houdini was invited to attend one of these séances, and aware that either a friend, or Dr. Crandon sat on Margery's right, he prepared by placing a tight elastic band on his right leg below the knee. He removed it shortly before he went to the séance. He knew from experience that this would make his skin very sensitive. Once in the darkened séance circle, he pulled up his trouser leg. If Margery's leg touched his sensitized skin, he would be able to detect its slightest movement. Slowly she inched her foot toward the bell box until she reached it and pressed down on the top. Also during the séance a megaphone flew through the air; later, an open-front cabinet in back of Margery toppled over in the dark.

The bell box was acquired by John J. McManus in direct line from the Houdini estate.

[Details taken from *Houdini: A Pictorial Life*, by Milbourne Christopher.] ♦

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INSIDE STRAIGHT

BY NORMAN BECK

BEFORE YOU HIT SEND

I spent five years of my life carrying a gun; most of the time I carried two guns and a knife. I was a police officer in Tulsa, Oklahoma. What I learned during that time I wouldn't sell you for a million dollars; I wouldn't go back and do it again for the same amount. Being a police officer is no life; the stories aren't worth the living it takes to get them.

I learned many lessons; most came from a gray-haired homicide sergeant. I still take lessons from him twice a week; many of the lessons I would share with no one. I will however share with you one of the most valuable lessons ever; it has served me well. It is a lesson that many people never seem to learn. "It does not matter what you say, how you think, or what you did; the only thing that matters is what you put to paper."

That one line is so important. I see it every day; someone posts something on Facebook or Twitter and the next day they are looking for a job. I do not have a website; I have never Tweeted and I wouldn't even know how to even if I wanted to. Last week I received three emails from a petulant, obtuse man who is saddled with the brain of a fourteen-year-old. A sane human with the least amount of social graces would not have thought to send me the emails he sent. The subject or details do not matter. I will tell you that in the course of the emails he let me know that I was an idiot and a liar. I don't mind if you want to call me an idiot, a redneck, a fool, or anything else that comes to mind. I do however take offense at being called a liar, a cheat, or a thief. (When I play bridge and someone cheats, I will often meet them in the coffee shop and ask them how often they have played bridge. That is nicer than calling them a cheater.)

The problem with putting these insults to paper is that they are there forever. I will always have those emails calling me a liar and an idiot. I saw red when they came across my desk along with a demand to apologize for my indiscretions. I reflected for four days before I crafted an email to respond to this correspondence. In reply, I received the single most hateful email of my life. It was so bad that it was funny. I actually thought it was a joke, but I have come to realize the person was serious.

The worst thing you can do is to respond in anger and haste. Once your reply is sent, it is in the world and it will never go away. Every day you read or hear about a person getting in trouble for posting something that comes back to bite them. A friend of mine once posted (on a forum) about playing cards and winning by nefarious methods. My heart sank. On a good day this post won't affect him, but on a bad day it could bite him really hard.

My advice is this: If you would be willing to show what you have written to anyone in any context, then you will be fine sending out your comments. If what you need to express could cause you problems, then just say it very softly to one person with no witnesses.

I would like to end on a happy grammatical note. When writing, the comma can be very important. Take the following: "Let's eat grandpa," as compared to "Let's eat, grandpa." One is much creepier. ♦



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THE DEAN'S DIARY

BY GEORGE SCHINDLER

LECTURE VENUES

One of the things I always liked to do was to travel to magic clubs in order to present my “Entertainment First” lecture. Aside from the obvious fun of visiting many cities, I get to meet the real magic lovers, the amateurs, the part-timers, and the full-time performers who make up our vast fraternity. In 1960 a man named Willie Schneider became the father of the lecture concept in New York. He had been tutored by many well-known performers and he invited them to “teach” their specialties to local magicians. The venue was his office; as the evenings became more popular he moved the lectures to a hotel in the city. The \$3.00 admission fee went to the lecturer. Willie paid the room rentals out of his own pocket. When he asked me to lecture in 1968, I was honored and also frightened, for I had no specialty. John Ramsey taught me his Triple Restoration (torn and restored napkins). Willie wanted to learn it, so he set me up as a lecturer and I performed and explained it.

Lecture venues vary from meeting rooms in churches, to hotel rooms, rehearsal halls, and a few surprises. How about an underground lecture for an I.B.M. ring in South Australia? It was in an old World War II bomb shelter. (I believe they still meet there.)

My host in Dallas was a judge and my lecture took place in front of the bench in his courtroom. In Midland, Texas, I was picked up by one of the club officers who suddenly recognized me while he was driving and announced, “You’re George Schindler!” The car spun around and he drove me to his home so that I could autograph some of my books. He was a pilot, and we then drove to a private airport where I lectured while standing next to a small jet in the hangar.

In Sacramento, California, I was picked up at the airport and driven to an office, where I had to watch a film of my host’s act before he took me to his home, where I was to stay. The lecture was in his living room; four of his friends showed up. The same thing occurred in a living room in Oklahoma, where three friends



I.B.M. Ring Venue – Thebarton, South Australia

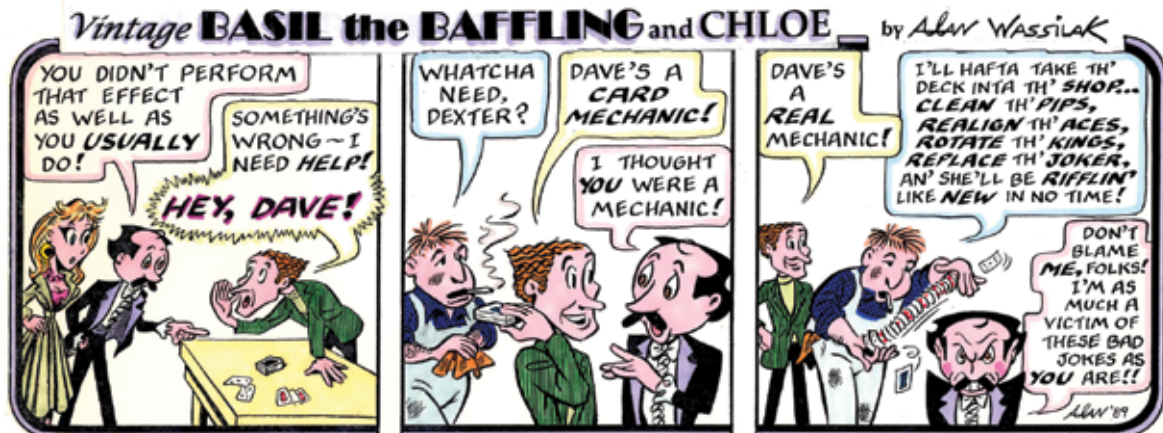
arrived. However, they bought all of all of my wares and I did quite well. In Wellington, New Zealand, we had a living room dinner party and it was very informal and loads of fun.

Phoenix was strange. Some members of the magic club sat at tables up front in the back room of a restaurant. At the rear of the room sat some teenaged members who were uninterested and were rudely busy doing their card moves. Aside from that distraction, and while I was in the middle of a routine, a waitress burst into the center of the room bearing a birthday cake with candles aglow and singing “Happy Birthday.” She walked to the back and presented it to one of the kids.

Occasionally there are a few surprises. At the back room of another Denny’s restaurant in Arizona, longtime friend George Sands showed up just to say “hello.”

The year I was president of the S.A.M. (1992) I lectured for a California assembly that shall be nameless. The president of the club picked me up at my motel. As we drove to the venue he asked “What was your name again? You look familiar.” I told him, “You probably saw my picture in *M-U-M*.” His reply: “No, I don’t get that anymore. I haven’t paid my dues!”

Where will I be next? Book me and I’ll show up most anywhere! ♦



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of this, the second of three magical mechanisms created by Steve Dobson, the "Dai Vernon of the Pacific Northwest." Take a peek:



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And for those times when nothing else but raw deceptive power will do, Dobson designed **THE KING THING**, a simple, elegant mystery (two selections vanish from the table and appear in the deck) that leaves everyone in your rear view.

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Performers will appreciate **DALEY REVISITED**, featuring new dual enhanced convincing displays, and a solid psychological sell. As a bonus, Steve adds his Triumph-based lead-in, with an insane cutting sequence in the middle.

We've included a vintage TV documentary piece called *Magic is my Business* in which Steve does magic and talks magic. Also incorporated are more interviews, in which Steve discusses the lessons he learned from Dai Vernon and Larry Jennings. And since this wouldn't be the Works without an abundance of extra features, we've included Steve's refinements on the *Erdnase color change*, the *Zarrow shuffle* and additional surprises.

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