

December 2013 / January 2014

# VANISH

International Magic Magazine



**WORLD EXCLUSIVE  
AURÉLIA THIERRÉE  
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STUNNING THEATRE SHOWS**

this edition

AURÉLIA  
THIERRÉE  
Interview

**1** BACHSTAGE - ILLUSIONS  
CHARLES BACH SHARES THE  
IMPORTANCE OF PRE-SHOW

**2** MAGIC TRICKS  
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CLOSE-UP TO STAND-UP ROUTINES

**3** NICK LEWIN  
THE SECRET OF BEING A  
MODERN MAGICIAN

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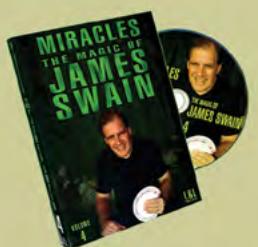
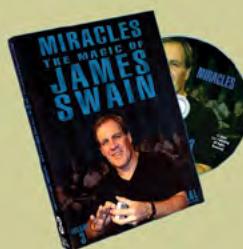
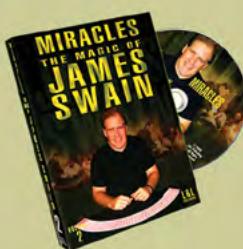
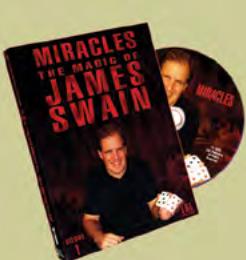
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Released in January of 2013, CARNEY 2013 - Exclusive Secrets is a 12 part video instruction series. Customers receive an eBook that is magical itself - a new video appears in it's pages each month. – Twelve lessons covering everything from close up to stage magic. Along the way, you also learn indispensable lessons in technique, presentation, and creativity. Each video is a trove of insight and commentary, with a rich, documentary style approach. The book remains available to the customer forever, and is safely stored in the cloud so it can never be accidentally lost or deleted.

John self-produces each episode in his own home with a simple setup, and edits the videos on his computer using iMovie. Publishing this video series on Revizzit provided John with many benefits. Unlike his previous DVD productions, there was no overhead from printing and storing DVD media. He also had no shipping expenses, no

time spent fulfilling orders, and international customers were pleased to pay the same price as the USA customers. In addition, Revizzit's unparalleled protection of content, including screen-capture identification, meant that John could focus his energy on producing great videos rather than worry about unauthorized sharing.

When asked if he would recommend the Revizzit platform to other creative magicians, he said, "Revizzit is a game changer. I have controllable, one time costs to produce my videos, but none of the hassle and expenses of postage, addressing, customs, and physical delivery of products. I produce it, and money just shows up in my bank account!"

Congratulations, John, both on your successful product and your commitment to quality! We're proud to call you a Revizzionary!

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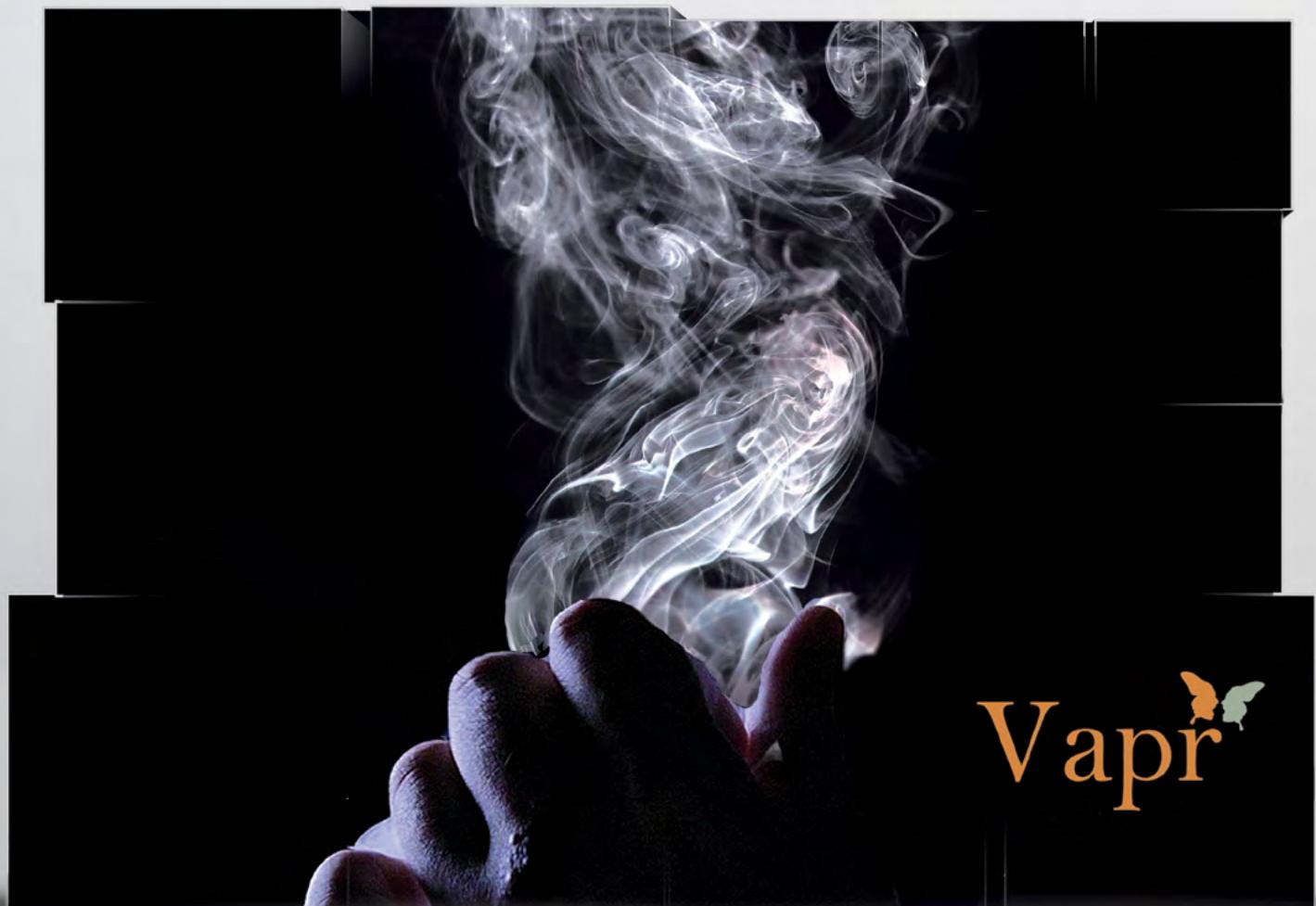
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December 13/January 2014

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International Magic Magazine



## EDITOR

Paul Romhany

## PRODUCT REVIEWERS

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## COVER PHOTO SUPPLIED BY

AURÉLIA THIERRÉE

## ADVERTISING COORDINATOR,

Paul Romhany

## SENIOR MARKETING SPECIALIST,

Harry Monk

## EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

Paul Romhany / Harry Monk

## ART DIRECTOR

Paul Romhany

## PROJECTS MANAGER

Josh Miles

## PROOF READERS

Richard Webster, Mick Peck

## E-READER VERSION

[www.revizzit.com](http://www.revizzit.com)

## CONTRIBUTORS

Chipper Lowell, Diamond Jim Tyler, Tony Chris, Paul Romhany, Nick Lewin, Wayne Rogers, Cris Johnson, Keith Fields, Richard Webster, Bizzaro, TC Tahoe, Danny Archer, Charles Bach, Steve Spill, Ben Robinson, Gwyn Auger, Leif David, Joe Pipia, Peter Mennie, Craig Browning, Wolfgang Riebe, Carl Andrews, Eugene Burger, Nickle Van Wormer, Quique Marduk, Rey Ben, John Carey, Full Circle Magic, Fred Hann,

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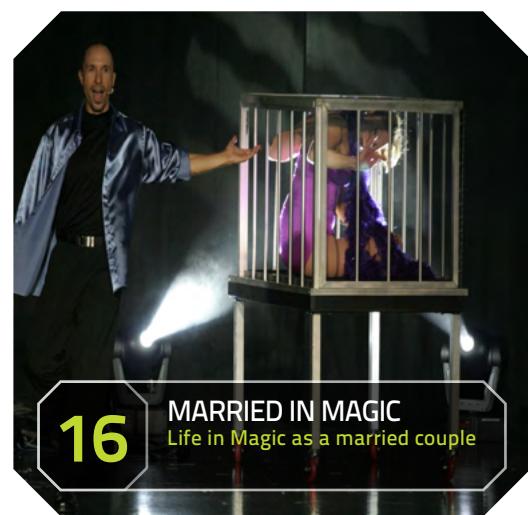
Contact Paul Romhany for more information at:  
[editor@vanishmagazine.com](mailto:editor@vanishmagazine.com)

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# FROM THE EDITOR

## VANISH scores another exclusive feature story

VANISH magazine is honored to have an artist of the caliber of Ms. Thierree on the cover; and the opportunity to look into her amazing work. We believe having the chance to feature her will encourage the magicians and the variety community to aim higher and achieve more. When you see her show, you are transported into another world — isn't that the goal? After countless hours, and emails back and forth, Ben has presented me with one of the most amazing pieces VANISH has ever published. It is artists like Ms. Thierree that elevate magic to an art form, by combining elements of magic and illusion to produce her theatre shows. I fervently urge everybody to catch her show *Murmurs* as soon as you can. We have included a bonus video link so you can get a taste of her transporting performance. Thank you, Ben, for all the hard work, and thank you for introducing Aurélia Thierree to magicians around the world.

As you may know I have added yet another way for readers to view VANISH. My intention was to always have it as a double spread magazine. This gives me more scope when doing the layout and design. I have achieved that goal and you can now enjoy the new format on any device by clicking the link from our website. You can still download it as a PDF, and use the Revizit e-reader, but with this new version the entire magazine appears in Google Search Engine, giving more people

the opportunity to discover the world of VANISH. I estimate in five years we'll have over half-a-million followers, thanks to this new way of reading the magazine.

The Christmas season is upon us and we are enjoying living in Vancouver. I recently had the pleasure of performing and lecturing at a convention held here and got to meet and thank some of the contributors to the magazine in person. When I look at the quality of writers I feel truly honored that they take time out from their busy schedules to share their experiences and advice with us all. Without the contributors there would be no VANISH, so thank you to you ALL.

I would like to also thank YOU the readers for the emails, and for sup-



**Paul Romhany**

editor@vanishmagazine.com  
[www.vanishmagazine.com](http://www.vanishmagazine.com)

porting VANISH. Continue to help spread the word about the magazine to your friends and colleagues in magic, and be sure to stop by the advertisers and support them.

Don't forget to also check the daily news site [www.vanishlive.com](http://www.vanishlive.com) - Mick Peck does a wonderful job keeping this website up to date.

From my family to all the readers of VANISH and your families, we wish everybody a Happy Christmas and a very prosperous 2014.

**Paul Romhany**





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# news

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## Magic show wins BAFTA in UK

A magic series featuring magicians John Archer, Fergus Flanagan, Katherine Mills and James Went.

If you have a story or a news related item please e-mail the editor at [editor@vanishmagazine.com](mailto:editor@vanishmagazine.com)  
We try to keep the news as current as possible and generally this is the last piece we work on prior to the magazine going live.

**Congratulations to an incredibly talented team of UK magicians.** BBC's 'Help! My Supply Teacher is Still Magic' wins BAFTA for Best Children's Entertainment

Programme, London, November 2013. Photo below shows the creative team. Left to Right: Magician Fergus Flanagan, Magician and Co-writer John Archer,

Magician James Went, Show Creator and Executive Producer Anthony Owen and Series Producer and Co-Writer Nick Hutchings.

**Australian magician Costantino has pulled a rabbit out of a hat and grabbed a surprise win in Dancing with the Stars.**

The Aussie magician, who was long odds for victory, triumphed over Home and Away actress Rhiannon Fish. The night's biggest surprise came when Tina Arena was eliminated after the earlier Cha Cha round. Not only is this the first time a magician has appeared on this franchised television show, but the first time a magician has won! Costantino shot to fame in Australia with his incredible performances on Australia's Got Talent - see VANISH Edition 2. The photo on the next page shows a very happy Costantino.





### AND THE WINNER IS ...

Winner of last editions competition is Francis Jauniau from Belgium who won the prize from MagicLatex.com

### VANISH contributors meet up at the 3 of Clubs convention held in Vancouver in November.

In the photo bottom right from left to right are Tony Cris, Nick Lewin, Leif David and front row are Gwyn Auger and Editor Paul Romhany. It was a great chance for VANISH writers to meet up with each other and share their passion for magic. If you have any photos of contributors at magic gatherings around the world we'd love to see them.

**Desperate Acts of Magic is finally on iTunes.** You can watch it now at <http://bit.ly/1hdj3PU>. There's also a much cheaper rental option if you open it up in iTunes.

Or if you'd prefer to have the dvd with lots of extra features including director's commentary, you can use the discount code "noship" and we'll pay the shipping. You can get your copy today at <http://store.desperateactsofmagic.com/>

This comedy features professional magicians performing real magic without camera tricks or special effects.

You've probably already seen the trailer, but here's a look at the opening credits performed by magician, Farrell Dillon:



### "HARRY HANDCUFF HOUDINI" A Magical Auction of Ephemera at Dreweatts & Bloomsbury Auctions

Handcuffs and other props belonging to one of the world's most famous illusionists and escape artists, Harry Houdini, are among a selection of 260 lots of conjuring books, prints, memorabilia, decorative objects and apparatus in

Dreweatts & Bloomsbury Auctions Bibliophile sale on Thursday 12th December.

Known at the beginning of his career as "Harry Handcuff Houdini", the Hungarian-American escape artist prepared the pictured handcuffs specially to ensure a fool-proof escape. Houdini would normally use unprepared apparatus, so the rare pair was probably for use in his particularly risky Chinese Water Torture, or other underwater acts. They are accompanied by a typed letter from magician Billy McComb, detailing how he acquired them.

McComb explains how he found them amongst a large collection of rusty props purchased from the widow of Houdini's brother, Theo Hardeen. Better known as 'Dash' Houdini's brother was his stage partner before his wife, Wilhelmina Beatrice 'Bess' Rahner, replaced him in the 1890s. Whilst restoring the cuffs, McComb discovered they had been modified by Houdini. Such examples are rare survivors from the escape artist's acts. This pair and letter are together estimated at

£2,000-3,000 [Lot 47].

Other props used by Houdini include a pair of Lilly Leg Irons estimated at £2,000-3,000 [Lot 45] and a round barrel screw key padlock, estimated at £1,000-1,500 [Lot 46].

Both were left by Houdini to his friend, and one of the world's most talented mentalists, Joseph Dunninger. Previous owners include mentalist and escapist Richard John Silsmer; handcuff collector Joseph Tanner of Wheeler-Tanner and John Fisher, gold star member of the Inner Magic Circle. Included with the irons are signed letters by Silsmer and Tanner along with a photocopy of an autograph letter signed by the widow of Dunninger, providing identifying features and provenance.

Houdini's personal copy of Hudson Tuttle's Arcana of Spiritualism is among the rare magic-related books in the auction. With engraved portrait bookplate and a few pencil underlinings and markings, it is estimated at £250-350 [Lot 20].





Houdini developed his stage name and was heavily influenced by his idol, the French magician Jean Eugène Robert-Houdin. In his book *Confidences et Révélations*, Robert Houdin identifies Recueil des Planches du Dictionnaire Encyclopédique des Amusements des Sciences Mathématique et Physique by Jacques Lacombe as his inspiration to take up conjuring.

Made up of 86 engraved plates and divided into various sections, including physical, mechanical and optical amusements; fireworks; magic numbers, and conjuring, a rare example of Houdin's muse is estimated at £2,000-3,000 [Lot 209].

Tricks and props from the collection of the actor and stage magician, John "Klox" Forrest, include several early pieces produced by Bland's and Hamley's. Forrest first worked as a child actor, appearing in the films *Great Expectations* in 1946 and *Tom Brown's School days* in 1951. He also had a lead role on stage in *A Streetcar Named Desire* opposite Vivien Leigh in 1949. As a child, while living in Cookham, Berkshire, he was taught conjuring by Horace the brother of Stanley Spencer, eventually turning to magic as a profession and appearing as a cabaret performer in Paris and Monte

Carlo as John Klox.

Illusionist Ralph Chart's Artist's Palette [pictured left] was invented, and probably constructed by Chart, who performed under the name Raoul. It is not clear whether the stand was made for this or another illusion, but obviously formed part of Ralph Chart's act. With Raoul labels attached and in its original wooden travelling case it is estimated at £350-500. [Lot 77]

Another highlight is a nineteenth century conjurer's table made from ebonised wood with carved and partly gilt detachable cabriole legs. The table has four traps, similar to those described by Professor Hoffmann in *Modern Magic*. [Lot 89].

The auction will be held by Dreweatts and Bloomsbury Auctions at the Godalming saleroom in Surrey on Thursday 12th December with viewing from Tuesday 10th December 2013. The catalogue and details of online bidding with no additional fee can be found at [www.dnfa.com](http://www.dnfa.com).

#### **Hong Kong Magician Named #1 Santa**

A Hong Kong magician has been crowned the world's best Father Christmas at the annual Santa Winter Games in Lapland.

Santa Banana, whose real name is Plato Chan, beat 13 other santas from 11 regions at the 10th edition of the Santa Olympics, held in Gällivare, northern Sweden, on Saturday. Holland and Norway tied for second place ahead of Canada, Brazil and a female model from Japan.

Santa Banana competed in five Christmas-themed games in front of 1,000 spectators in the town square, wowing the audience with his magic tricks and balloon-twisting. He won the porridge-eating game and came first runner-up in the reindeer ride and gift-stacking.

He also had a good showing in the dance-off and the Christmas race.

"This year's race was very tight," said Santa Banana. "I wasn't sure I would win until the very last moment."

He also won the first People's Favourite Award, which was decided by online votes.

The 27-year-old said he chose the name Banana because of the fruit's "exciting" colour. "I love yellow and I love bananas," he added. "Bananas give you energy, so Santa Banana means energy and happiness."

Subtropical Hong Kong may not have snow, chimneys or reindeer, but the city's santas

always perform remarkably well at the games. In the five years the city has competed, Hong Kong has won two gold medals, one silver and two bronze.

Santa Mario Ko Tim-yue, second runner-up in 2011, said previous winners mentored new competitors and he helped train this year's winner for three months before the games.

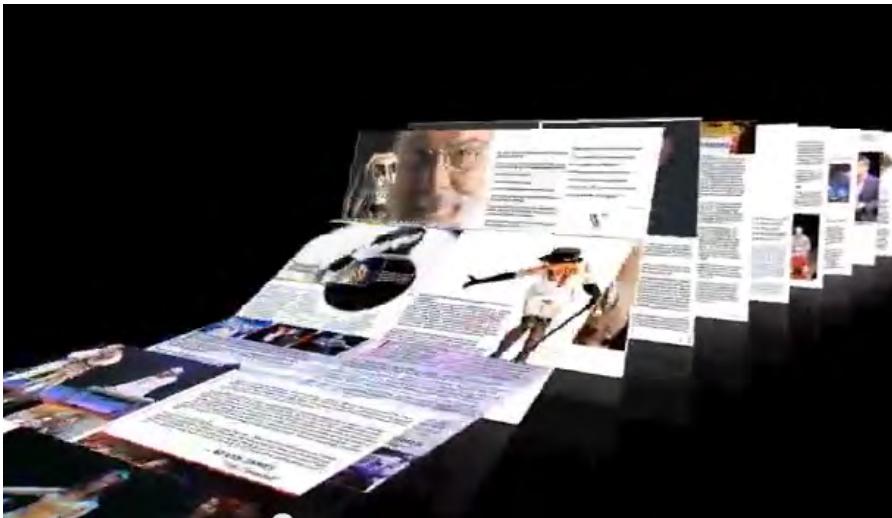
Santa Banana described his daily training routine: eating congee, running round a basketball court 50 times and doing 200 press-ups.

**Vegas headliner Mac King has donated \$13,000 to Susan G. Komen of Southern Nevada through the "Mac King & Susan G. Komen – Magic for a Cure" fundraiser.**

Mac has been an avid supporter and fundraiser since Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October 2011. He has sold more than five thousand fundraising bracelets, raising \$13,000 for Susan G. Komen of Southern Nevada.

"The 'Mac King & Susan G. Komen – Magic for a Cure' fundraiser started as a one-month campaign during Breast Cancer Awareness Month. There was fantastic support from my pals in the audience and I decided to keep it going," says Mac. "Two years later, together we have raised more than \$13,000; proving that you can do little things everyday that will add up to one tremendous impact in the community. The fight against breast cancer is ongoing and I will continue supporting the cause with this fundraiser as long as the show exists."

**In a strong resolution the National Council of The Society of American Magicians officially**



## condemned "Cyber Bullying."

The National Council of the Society of American Magicians has determined that various chat rooms and social media have been improperly utilized as outlets for cyber bullying which targets magic, magicians and youngsters who are interested in magic.

Various magic forums serve a good purpose in sharing ideas and thoughts which help to improve the skills of the performer, some web sites either allow, tolerate or permit performers to be the victims of absurd, hateful and hurtful attacks against a fellow performer.

The National Council of the Society of American Magicians hereby adopted the following resolution condemning Cyber Bullying:

The Society of American magicians opposes and condemns Cyber Bullying in any and all forms including but not limited to all forms of hate speech, the use of words which attack physical appearance, gender, religious belief, sexual orientation or nationality and opposes all kinds of needless and hateful cyber bullying resulting from the publishing of private information on magic related web sites.

**In December 2013, Edinburgh magicians John Henry Blackwood and Paul Novak will launch the Auld Reekie Magic Cabaret, an evening of illusion and entertainment showcasing 5 magicians from across Scotland and the rest of the UK every month.**

The launch show will take place at 7.30pm on the 9th December at the Bongo Club on Edinburgh's Cowgate (EH1 1JX), and will feature gambling swindles, card magic, mentalism and a few little oddities that will surprise even the biggest magic aficionado. And on top of that, there are even a couple of close up magicians to keep everyone entertained during the interval.

Both Paul and John want to bring magic to as many people as possible, further developing Edinburgh's personality for awe and inspiration. Because this is about sharing magic the tickets are merely to cover costs at £5 each. That's only £1 per magician.

Following their individual successes at the Fringe 2013 Paul and John feel that although television magic can be entertaining, nothing is as awe-inspiring or as powerful as being fooled up close and in person.

The Auld Reekie Magic Cabaret was created to provide a regular stage for classic vaudeville entertainment, giving homegrown talent the opportunity to perform in front of live audiences in the heart of one of the most magical cities on earth.

What: Auld Reekie Magic Cabaret – A monthly magic showcase.

Where: The Bongo Club – 66 Cowgate, EH1 1JX.

When: 9th December 2013 @ 7.30pm (Show starts at 8pm).

Why: To bring live magic to a magical city.

Who: Launched by Paul Novak (one half of the Grumpy Magicians) and John Henry Blackwood (A Gentlemen card magician)

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## **LaGrange Magician: 'I'm So Happy To Be Alive'**

He was jolted awake as the train maneuvered a curve.

His car tipped right, then left and then flew off the tracks and began to roll and violently throw him and his fellow passengers from one

side to another.

Dr. Joel Zaritsky, a magician, dentist and LaGrange resident, was on the Metro-North train that derailed Sunday morning 86 minutes after he boarded it in the City of Poughkeepsie.

The crash killed four passengers and left dozens bruised, bloody and thankful they survived.

The 50-year-old father of two teenagers and a dentist at LaGrange Dental was on his way to a dental convention.

He had expected to arrive in Grand Central Terminal at 7:43 a.m. — just 23 minutes after the train began its horrific spiral toward the icy water, stopping just feet away on a curve where the Hudson and Harlem rivers meet in the Bronx.

This was Metro-North's second train derailment in six months and the deadly incident triggered a massive emergency response.

"It was absolutely horrific. I'm so happy to be alive," Zaritsky said.

No one expects a train to derail, but if it does, you don't expect it to roll over, he said.

Read more and watch the video at :

**[WATCH BONUS VIDEO](#)**

**[WATCH BONUS VIDEO](#)**

# COMPETITION

Each issue we will be offering a chance for readers to win prizes. Each correct answer we receive will be in the draw to win one of the prizes below. This competition will finish on NOVEMBER 5th 2013 and winners will be notified by e-mail and via our FACEBOOK page -[www.facebook.com/VanishMagazine](http://www.facebook.com/VanishMagazine)

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"Being able to tell a person's personality by the way they laugh and speak opens up new doors for mentalism presentations as well as an amazing new way to give cold-readings." TC Tahoe

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Over the years Paul has themed his mentalism show, and humor workshops around this presentation. By adding humor in his mentalism show he is able to give personality readings, as well as adapt it to mentalism routines. The original book not only teaches you the techniques of giving readings, it also has some special features that will allow you to do a full twelve minute book test routine. You receive THREE books that will allow you to do a COMPLETE routine with many different presentations for a book test.

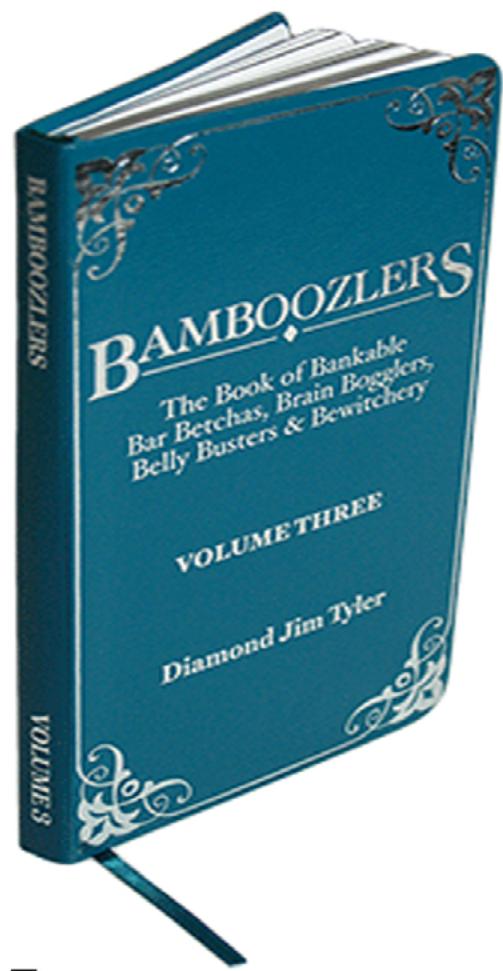
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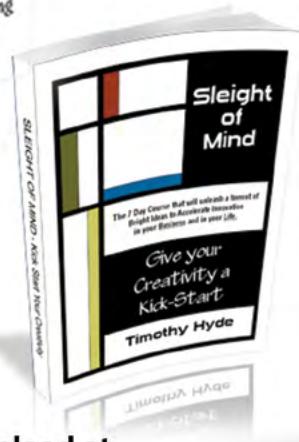
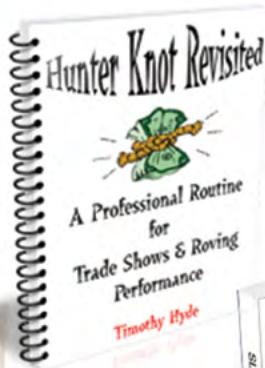
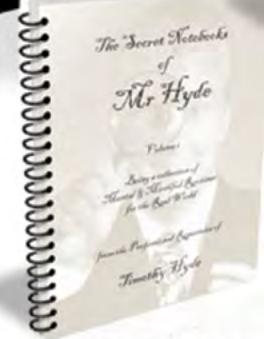
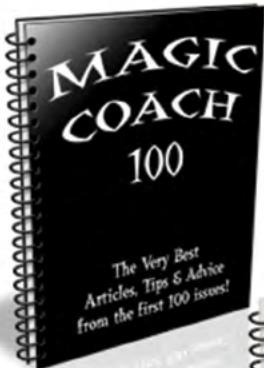
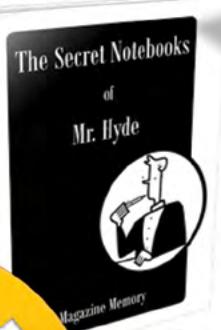
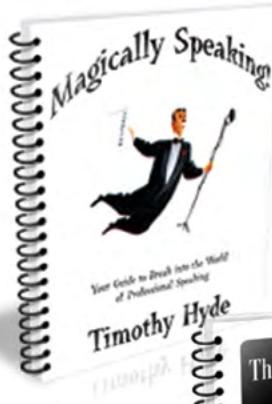


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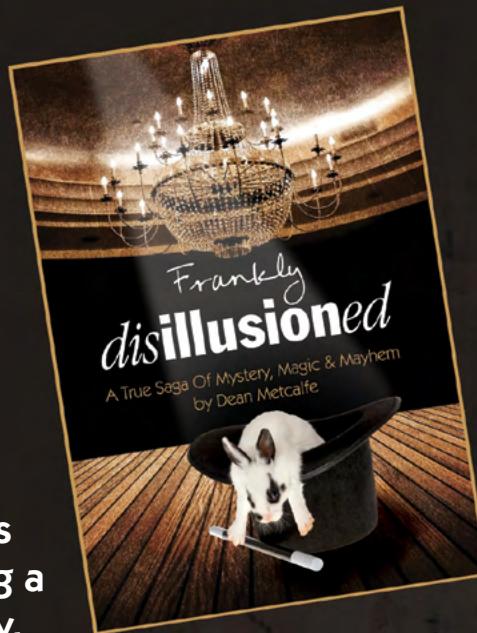
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# MARRIED IN MAGIC

## MATTHEW FALLON

I won the lottery. I was of a minority. I achieved the seemingly impossible. You see, I had met an amazing girl in college also pursuing her degree in theater. We dated and fell in love. She loved the stage, she loved my magic. "I'm going to be a magician, an entertainer, full-time," I said. She didn't blink. "I've got a big show, a New Year's Eve gig I need to start prepping for," I said. "Let's start rehearsing," she said.

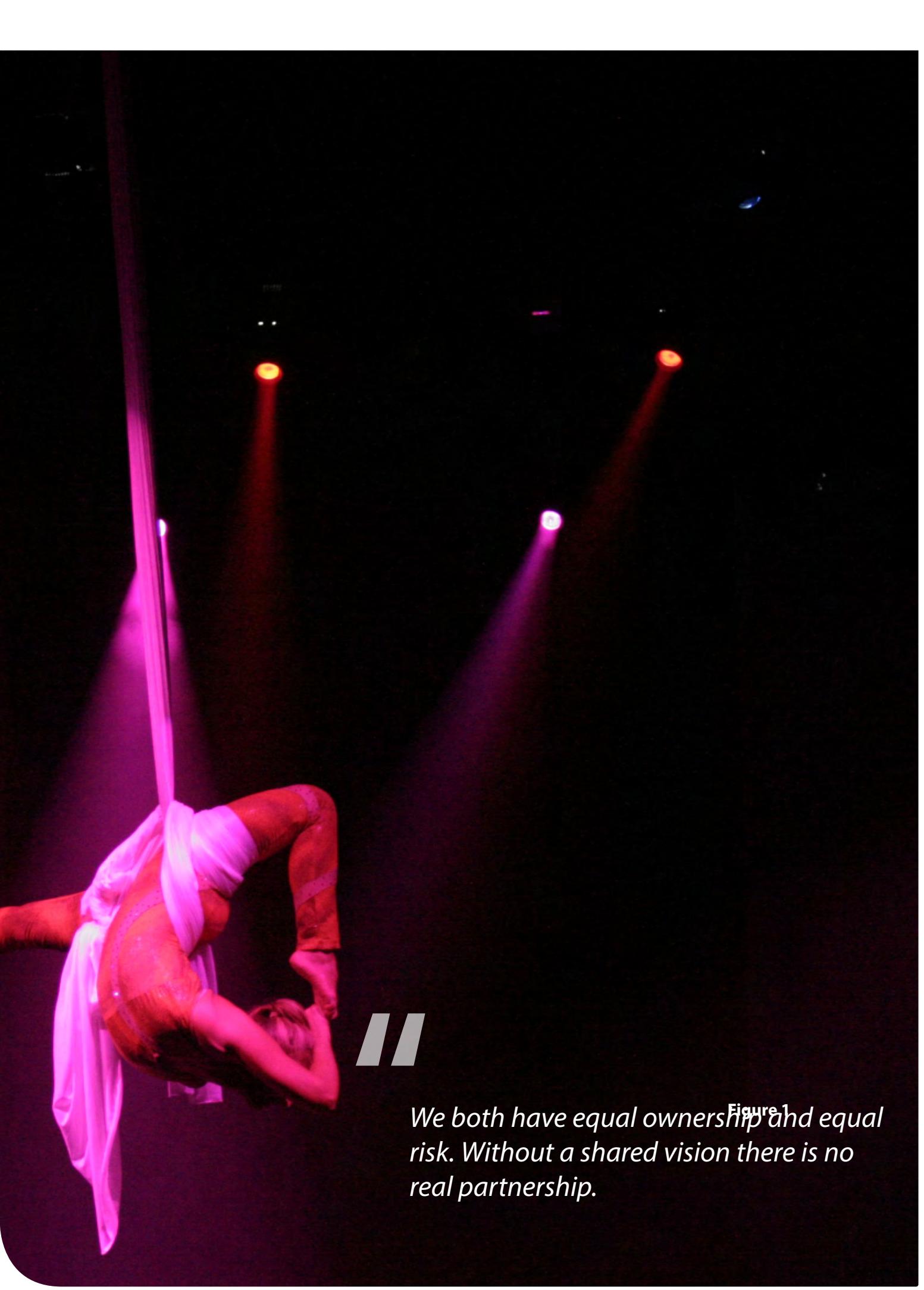
That was in 1998. We married in 1999. She became my partner, my bride and straight through into 2010, we were partners on and offstage, as well. For twelve years, we traveled the world together, ran a business, argued and made-up, created, rehearsed and performed shows, shared 12'x 12' living quarters, climbed peaks and plunged into valleys, built props, sewed costumes, hit walls, overcame challenges. We fervently held our marriage and our business strong. All along, I was aware that I had the quintessential relationship with this girl. Countless times, we were asked curious questions by those that knew us and what we were up to; questions like, "How do you guys hold it all together?" "Don't you want to mistakenly lose the key to his handcuffs, sometimes?!" and "Ever want to make her disappear, for real?!"

Such is the inspiration for this series and soon-to-be-book titled, *Married in Magic*. My wife, Mistia (indeed, her real birth name - I

know, lucky, right?), and I fully know and acknowledge we are the minority. Therefore, this series is not intended as a course in marital and business ethics. Our intention is solely and simply to discuss challenges and share secrets of overcoming these obstacles in order to find success in both worlds - marriage and business. Hence, the title, *Married in Magic*.

According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, about half of all new small businesses "survive five years or more and about one-third survive 10 years or more". According to popular myth, 50% of all marriages end in divorce. Although this rate is greatly exaggerated for media purposes, the fact of the matter is married couples will unanimously agree that a marriage takes "work." Compromise, communication, a common vision, maturity and respect are a tip of the iceberg to making a successful marriage. If you are married and if your spouse is your business partner....in the entertainment industry...as a variety artist...what are your odds for success?

I believe there are many elements to a successful partnership in marriage and business, but which of those elements are most necessary to increase your odds of success? A shared vision and respect, in my opinion, are the most important. Shared vision and respect are symbiotic and although I intend to address several elements in this series, I believe a shared vision and respect deserve to serve as the very foundation of *Married in Magic*.



//

*We both have equal ownership and equal risk. Without a shared vision there is no real partnership.*

Figure 1

# Fallon MAGIC



MATTHEW  
& MISTIA

Inspired by Marvyn  
and Carol Roy

*"Mastering the Mystery"*

When I was a young teenager, I was super fortunate to be present at a lecture at my local S.A.M. 112 given by Marvyn and Carol Roy - in my opinion, the consummate and definitive couple in magic. I listened, and watched, in fascination. His stories of touring, life on the road, injuries, business contracts, successes, et al, and her entertaining and diverting interruptions, most of which went something like, '...well, actually, Marvyn, it went like this...' Their energy and chemistry paired with their professionalism and respect for each other were clearly their secret ingredients for making both their marriage and business tick. Although their relationship was a model for me and Mistia, by the time we began working together, we wanted, actually needed, more.

The chemistry and relationship between a married couple on stage is profoundly contrasting to that of magician and assistant. For that reason, in our early years of working together, we had sought out to find other couples in magic to model, befriend, and learn from. We yearned for something like this series - an arena that aims to provide a framework, guidance and examples for couples in magic. If we had known what other couples were doing (or not) to sustain their relationship and business when Mistia and I were embarking on our journey together...wow. Come to find out, if there's one topic in the magic industry that is equally hush-hush as its secrets, it's this topic - couples in magic sharing about being couples in magic.

Currently, I travel and perform solo as we have two young children at home now. However, for twelve years Mistia and I toured our show together, not solely but primarily, on board cruise ships. Interestingly, we were told by production crews, on countless occasions, that we were refreshing to work with, especially while installing and rehearsing our shows. The stage staff on board cruise ships, not unlike on land, generally work long days. To have their time abused by entertainers who spent more time with arguing and sarcasm than installing and teaching their show were definitely not appreciated or respected. Sadly, the stories of fellow entertainers' dramatic show installations and rehearsals rivaled the sticky plots of soap operas and made for longrunning, and frequently shared, entertaining anecdotes backstage amongst the stage staff. Truth be told, Mistia and I could bump heads like the best of them. However, there is a time and a place and when we work together, we respect each other, as any other professional peer - even more, for that matter.

A major success tool we adopted was that of establishing designated roles. I handled sound and light cues and front-of-curtain. Mistia managed the stage staff and backstage details. We shared curtain and stage automation. We stuck to our own designated jobs and, therefore, we rarely experienced issues. Even though we were billed as a partnership versus a 'magician and assistant', I was the primary 'face' of the show if

something were to go wrong. For this reason, we pre-established that I would have the final say when we did not agree on something. Having this agreement meant there were never any arguments on someone else's clock. That being said, I sincerely considered and respected Mistia's position in a disagreement. Show installations and rehearsals ran smoothly, we respected the time of the stage staff and of each other.

Passionate entertainers wear their egos on their sleeves and unless we are willing to put the ego aside, a successful partnership is incredibly challenging to obtain. The attempted partnership simply becomes either a dictatorship or a continuous power play.

Mutual respect is necessary for both a smooth running marriage and a business partnership. Yet, at the end of the day, we would still fall short without a shared vision.

In the infant stage of our relationship, Mistia and I would burn the midnight oil dreaming, plotting and planning the path of our business. We had a shared vision of where we wanted to be and what we were willing to sacrifice to get there. Our refrigerator was decorated with filled-out goal sheets. We understood that to be "married in magic," we would be confronted with issues in a skewed fashion than how many 'traditional' couples faced them; whether financial investments or in family planning. Mistia is a spontaneous risk taker and I am more a conservative planner. Our

differences compliment each other, but if we had no shared vision, common ground would be impalpable. Although the 'magic' was always my thing, the business is always our thing.

We both have equal ownership and equal risk. Without a shared vision there is no real partnership.

And now, a standing invitation to you, our dear readers, specifically, fellow couples in legerdemain: An invitation to contribute to, and be included in, a meaningful and lasting work meant to inspire and guide other couples in our field - today and in years to come. Contributions to consider can include stories, anecdotes, learned lessons, challenges, success tales, the good, the bad, the ...!, finances, travel, family, children, et al. We understand that many of these matters are extremely personal, therefore, you're invited to be as private or open as you desire. Your honesty is the essential element. Send your contributions to: matthew@fallonmagic.com.

**Matthew currently travels twenty-six weeks per year, equally dividing his time performing shows and consulting in his clinical hypnosis practice. He makes home in Colorado with his partner and bride, Mistia, and their two young children.**





# THE BIDDING WAR

*Rantings of a  
Comedy Magician*

The phone rings...

"Hi. We're interested in having a magician perform for our banquet dinner."

Now that might seem like a wonderful, golden opportunity to you, but the truth is, this very sentence can suggest something negative that you probably didn't realize. What I'm getting at is, that if you are constantly hearing this type of opening statement from someone calling to inquire about your show and pricing, you are, quite frankly, already behind the 8-ball. Huh? What, you say? Well, let's try this other phone call scenario...

**CHIPPER LOWELL**

"Hello! We're interested in hiring Chipper for our event on Dec. 15th. Is he available?"

Now some of you may be starting to click into what I'm referring to while others may still be saying to themselves, "But both phone calls are asking for entertainment, so what's the big deal?"

The "Big Deal" is that the first caller has already 'grouped' you into the herd of magicians performing out there. You are simply one of many fish in the sea. You are being called much in the same way that someone calls up a dozen or so plumbers in a row, from a phonebook or online directory, hunting for the lowest quote. There is no real intent in finding 'the best' or searching for a high standard of quality in that opening statement. They will start their search based on the misguided assumption that we're all pretty much the same old thing, and the goal is to find the cheapest quote from a magician willing to do the time required of them.

It's actually pretty insulting in a way, if you think about it. It's like hiring a gardener to cut the grass a few times each month. The 'art' of landscaping is out the window, because all they require is someone to push the damn lawnmower and hold the edge trimmer steady, so why not look for the lowball number?

The problem then rests upon the entertainer on the other end of that phone conversation to either agree to disagree into entering a 'bidding war' even if it's not stated by the potential client. You can quote a fee and do the required 45-minute show that they were wanting, but it will still be compared to all the other quotes and the cheapest will win out, generally speaking.

I often find so many posts from Facebook friends complaining about the bidding game and how someone in their area is throwing out such an incredibly low price that they're "stealing" all the work from others. Sorry to say, but I have to call a bit of bullshit on that perspective. The market will always ebb and flow and it will ALWAYS be one of the standard, business model of "Supply & Demand." No one is truly 'stealing' from anyone else when it comes to providing the same service for a much lower price.

By the way, did you notice the key word in that last sentence? If not, read it again. The all-important word was "same". See, the potential clients just assumes we're all the "same", and if you buy into that assumption then guess what...they are 100% percent, absolutely right. And then, yes, you definitely have a problem.

Now let's go back to the second phone call. Here's their opening sentence once again:

"Hello! We're interested in hiring Chipper for our event

on Dec. 15th. Is he available?"

Now, I'm only using my own name as an example, so for the case of study here, please feel free to insert your own name into that sentence. As a matter of fact, you should. I demand it.

This particular statement is coming from an inquiring person who is already convinced that they want not just any magician in general, but a very specific entertainer. They are also worried that he might be already booked, so they offer up the date of their event as well. Think about that. They are more concerned about whether the performer has that particular date open than what the show price will be. Wow.

In this case, there is no horrible bidding war. There is no choosing a lobster from a tank full of lobsters in a seafood restaurant. What is being acknowledged, by the buyer, is the understanding that this performer will provide them with a unique experience that only that performer can provide, and no one else.

This is an excellent position for you, the performer, to be in. You are basically only competing against yourself and the generic term of 'magician' has now magically transformed into a very specific 'name.'

I understand that there will be those out there who might say, "Oh sure, easy for you because you've been around and people know who you are, etc....blah, blah, blah..." But we should remind ourselves that we are in the business of "personality driven entertainment." I can ONLY be the best 'me.' And what's wonderful about that statement is that you can also ONLY be the best 'you.' In other words, through creating original magic routines, or tweaking standard effects that truly (TRULY) make them your own, and combining that with your own unique sense of style, wit, and maybe a quirky, interesting personality, you have created a 'one of a kind' business. It is not the business model of "EVERY MAGICIAN, Inc.", but the business model of "YOU & ONLY YOU, Inc."

Imagine how hard it must be for someone selling, let's say, paper. As a matter of fact, let's go with Dundler Mifflin Paper Company, the fake business from "The Office" TV series. The creators, Ricky Gervais and Stephen Merchant, thought it would be the perfect background because in the eyes of the world, paper is paper is paper. And in the age of office supply chains like Office Depot and Staples, why in the world would there still be this small, independent paper company offering up the very same product like everyone else? See? They got the joke. And as entertainers, we also have to 'get the joke' in order to survive on our own highly competitive battlefield.

So, let's brainstorm a bit about this paper company. If they were to be wildly successful, what would they have to do? One solution is to create a niche that makes them unique in a world full of mediocrity. After all, every company that uses paper is ONLY looking for the cheapest and that's about it. And the same could be said for other mundane office items like paperclips, folders, pens, etc.

What would that niche be? How about paper that doesn't yellow? Or paper that is guaranteed not to 'bleed' when making photocopies? Or maybe someone in research and development has hit upon a way to manufacture a 'soft edge', which combats the universal problem of paper cuts? Bam! Yes! Now suddenly, with these new ideas and advances, they might stand a chance at having their own unique corporate identity and branding. They might even become THE choice for quality paper around the world! Now the bidding war that has plagued them for years starts to disappear because customers are clamoring for the product that is considered the best and the safest! (After all, who loves paper cuts? Yuck!)

What we, as entertainers create for our shows has to be memorable. It has to be something that people will want to tell others about. It has to change people in such away that they are truly either awed in full amazement or laugh to the point that it hurts. That is what people are willing to pay for...a mesmerizing and memorable performance.

If we can't provide that, then we need to slowly step away from the creative arts. We need to acknowledge where we are within the market, and if we truly present a real (or perceived) niche that buyers will gravitate to. And that 'pull' and interest from the buyers out there comes from continuous word of mouth, testimonials, reviews, experience, and most importantly....Number #1 Answer: Your actual performance.

So, there is a trade off. An exchange. An entertainer can decide to do the standard effects and patter and routines that everyone else does out there, and know they will have to be part of the constant 'bidding war' with every inquiry that comes in. Or they can do the work, which I admit isn't easy, to make themselves unique enough that potential buyers can easily 'see' the difference, and how you are separate, apart from the standard gaggle of conjurors. Because once you do the work, the heavy lifting if you will, in making yourself truly a "one-of-a-kind" entertainer, the incoming phone calls will start to become so much easier for you to stick to a price that you're actually worth.

The goal you want to achieve is to have potential customers and bookers look at you versus others out there in the same way as one compares apples to oranges. No comparison equals less of a chance of them also comparing prices.

I sincerely hope this column helps you out there in the real world. Please send me an email or two should you have other questions, thoughts, or even in regards to other topics you'd like to read about here in upcoming issues of VANISH. Would love to hear from you! All the very best, and I wish you much success and happiness in your performing career! Cheers!



# SENSES

*christopher wiehl*

Your

senses

will

deceive

you.



# LOOKING BACK FROM THE DESK OF KEITH FIELDS

The world is changing at a pace that seems to be accelerating and the magic world is doing the same thing. New products. New methods. New styles of magic. We can do things today that were really impossible 50 years ago. What I am doing now (typing on a laptop) would have been a scene in a science fiction film half a century ago. If I was watching that film on television it would have been in a very grainy, and slightly blurry black and white picture, and it would have been about 24 inches wide, but only if I could afford the latest, best and biggest TV's... Happy days!

It was actually on one of those TV's in the early 1960's that a very young Keith Fields watched a program called 'Sunday Night at the London Palladium' and saw Robert Harbin perform his brand new Zig Zag Lady illusion.

If you have never seen the original performed by the originator then you can do so here <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oMN9h4pplbl>.

I can still remember being a spellbound 6 year old watching a woman literally cut into 3 pieces in the most unexplainable way. I looked at my parents for some sort of explanation to what I had just witnessed. They did not have one. My father was reading the newspaper and my mother was cooking dinner. I sat and watched the TV in awe and went to bed dreaming of magic. I did not dream of the possibility that one day I would be a professional magician and I would end up performing on that very same stage!

Can you remember the first time you saw a piece of magic? More importantly can you remember how it made you feel?

I have several other early magic memories. The first was of an uncle doing the old favorite 'which hand is the coin in', I was stunned at his amazing powers. A few years later when he was pulling



the same stunt on my younger sister I was not so impressed.

The second was of a local children's entertainer doing a park show in the early 70's. I was about 14. I cannot remember how I learned of the performance but I was so excited as I had never seen a real magician perform live. I can remember how upset I felt. The tricks may have been entertaining for the younger kids but I left after about 5 minutes as this was not what I expected a magician to be.

I think we can learn a lot by simply asking the right questions. Go back into your memories and seek out some of your early magical moments. What age were you? What trick did you see? What happened? And most importantly, how did it make you feel?

The world is changing and that is as it should be. At times we will turn left when we should be turning right and the change will not benefit us all. We might even be the ones fighting the change, or trying to change the direction. At other times we will be carried along on the wave. This is true of politics, religion, entertainment and virtually everything else, including our art of magic.

I wonder how today's kids will look at their first magical moments. How will they feel when they look back and remember seeing David Copperfield making an airplane vanish? What did they think when they saw David Blaine levitate? Will they experience awe and wonder?

Or will they be children of the Youtube generation. One moment witnessing a magician perform a piece of micro magic that has taken many weeks of practice to perfect. Then looking down at the comments and seeing a link to someone who can't do it but will tell you how it is done.

And you my friends, you will be the people who are making first magical moments for people. If you are performing close-up or kids magic you are probably creating first magical moments for people every day you perform. Think about how you make them feel. Before you start to perform, whether it is in close-up, stage, at a kids show, or sitting with a friend, remember that you have the power to make someone love magic or make someone hate magic. Go out and create moments of awe and wonder.



An advertisement for Vanish Magazine. It features a stack of six magazine covers from the 'Year One Collection'. The covers are blue with the word 'VANISH' in large white letters. The top cover shows a man in a suit performing a magic trick. Below the stack, the text 'YEAR ONE COLLECTION' is written in large, bold, red capital letters. The entire advertisement is enclosed in a red border.

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**Bill Herz**

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# Sweeping Gestures **BIZZARO**

"Do you feel like  
you are going  
through the  
motions?"

When was the last time you changed your act? I don't mean the whole thing. I mean ANYTHING! Have you been doing the same ten minutes for the last 5 years? Do you feel like you are going through the motions? Regardless of the way you answered the above question, allow me to lay some theory upon you my man (or woman).

Many a yarn ago, my friend Mica Calfee from Texas told me about some-

thing he subscribed to called the "Broom in the Corner Theory". For those of you who never saw my old lecture allow me to explain...

Imagine this if you will – You are sweeping your kitchen. You are halfway done. Suddenly the phone rings! You put the broom down to find your cellphone because you don't put it in the same place every time for some reason. After the phone call you get distracted and forget about cleaning the floor. The

problem is you put that broom in some random corner where it is out of your way. Now you walk past it every day and see it there and don't think about it until the next time you have to sweep the floor. When you are done you put it back in that same corner.

The problem is that is NOT where the broom goes. There is a reason you have a broom closet and you are totally neglecting its intended use. (kind of like how glove compartments in the south don't actually have gloves in them) However that broom has been in that corner for so long that's where you think it lives and you don't question it.... And that's the problem.

Applying this to magic is simple: We perform something the same way for so long and never question it that we get stuck in a routine (take that as you will) This applies to stage AND close-up. Sometimes you do three sleights in a card trick but, since you started doing the effect, you have learned one new move that would take the place of

those three and clean up the whole mess. Since you have been performing it with three extra moves and "always" have, you never question it and just keep putting along in mediocrity.

How does one fix this strange affliction you ask? Do I need a pill or some sort of therapy? Nothing that extreme my curious friends. Just take a step back away from your magic and take a good hard look at it and ask yourself "Why am I doing this that way?" Believe it or not, it's that simple. The downside is that sometimes you have to remove something that you REALLY love to perform or gets a good reaction to fix the flow of an act. It's gonna be hard. It sucks. However it can be for the best. You might find a better place for that bit to go or even replace it with something far stronger. Eventually you won't even know why you did that one thing that way for so long.

You'd be surprised what glaring things you will see when you step outside of your act and take a long hard look at it... sitting there... in that corner.

“  
... you will  
be surprised  
what glaring  
things you  
will see when  
you step  
outside your  
act ...



REVIEW OF LIVE SHOW



# DANCING ON AIR

AURÉLIA THIERRÉE  
IMAGINES MADNESS

BY BEN ROBINSON

*Lincoln Center Festival  
July 6-28, 2013  
Gerald W. Lynch Theater at  
John Jay College  
North American Premiere*

PHOTO: Aurélia Thierrée

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**W**hen the house lights go down in the theatre, a sense of quiet awe normally inhabits the expectant viewer. However, most theatre fails to maintain or accelerate this feeling. Not so in the case of *Murmurs*, a fantastical, hyper-kinetic, wordless dreamscape executed brilliantly by Ms. Thierrée and her six acrobatic troupers.

Where most theatre stumbles and falls *Murmurs* delivers from the very first minute. Whether it is an imaginative puppetscape, or making the invisible visible (such as laying on a mattress that is not there – thereby leaving the sleeping body floating in space), or detailing the poetically penetrating writer's quill to the heart, which produces a blood trail of dainty red feathers, Ms. Thierrée is a commanding sylph. As a dancer cum quick-change artist she excels whether a stage is beneath her or not. Her attendant lovers dancing blazing tangos, also evade miraculous sea serpents that foil their amorous intentions.

Like her parents' shows, *Le Cirque Imaginaire* and *Le Cirque Invisible*, this show is densely filled with single bar trapeze gyrations (atop a clothing line) and miraculous physical notions such as an unscrewed light bulb that brilliantly displays its continuing effervescence.

The through-story seems to have us a follow a woman

being evicted from her roof-leaking flat. Surely, the anxiety of moving is an ideal stimulus to render the evicted slightly insane. The resulting 90-minutes of dazzling invention and a multitude of sets that can enter and exit quicker than a Rockette chorus line are almost as functional as human players.

Taking and evolving images from Picasso's *Dancing Women* and Magritte's famous painting *The Lovers*, which shows two shrouded figures nearing an embrace, this troupe succeeds in delivering the definition of phantasmagoria. Ms. Thierrée quite literally ballroom dances in the air seemingly unaided by physical support except that of the romantic commanding arm of Jamie D. Martinez. Such subtlety has the counterpoint of the red-lipped damsel in distress, comically drowning in the ocean.

However, leave it up to this inventive troupe to garner belly laughs when all of the comedians display their best intentions to save the drowning lass. Whether it is a knockabout hat tip to her DNA line or her grandfathers' contemporaries, this show does not trade on nepotism. Instead a new mistress of mystery with her surreal circus delightfully engages us. Magic inhabits the landscape of a non-trick variety, as you would deeply inhale on a clear summer day. The difference being, when any member of this troupe gesticulates, tumbles or sneezes, smoke may emit from the most unlikely part of their body. Bubble wrap also engages, twists and circumambulates through the fantastical dance-theatre small extravaganza. One Escher-like illusion of Ms. Thierrée literally becoming one with a chair not only wrought generous applause for the creative wizardry, but contributed delicately to the overall now-you-see-it, now-you-don't of the entire program.

The *Independent of London* referred to Ms. Thierrée and this show as providing images that are unassailably interesting. New Yorkers heartily agreed but perhaps with a little more Big Apple bravado. When the only non-human member of

the cast slinks from underneath the ruins of a befallen building there is a wisp, a shriek, silence, and then stentorian cheers of "Brava Aurélia!" The audience at the third of this five-show run gave the troupe five curtain calls.

The intricacy of this performance includes gripping attention to detail, and a visual example that to become a master of art, you must become a slave. The bruises and exhaustion this troupe must endure may only be thanked by the tears of joy the audience felt. This show speaks the international wordless language of wonder.

*Murmurs* was directed, choreographed and costumed by Ms. Thierrée's mother, Victoria Thierrée Chaplin. Aurélia Thierrée is also the daughter of Jean Baptiste Thierrée, a world-renowned surrealist clown-illusionist. The compelling nature of this show proves that the definition of "eminence grise" is truly an invisible magic that pervades behind and most profoundly on this stage.

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***Murmurs runs 90-minutes without intermission and features Magnus Jakobsson and Jamie D. Martinez.***





# Secret Powers: A Principle for Better Magic

By Aaron Smith



**T**hink about the last time a friend entrusted you with a secret. Remember how it felt? You possessed exclusive information. Knowledge given to only a select few. And good or bad, a secret is a powerful thing.

If the secret concerned another person, when talking to that person you probably felt like you had the upper hand. You might even have the overwhelming urge to spill the beans and share your secret with that person or with other people.

When secrets are exposed, they are often preceded by, "You're never

going to guess..." or "You're not going to believe this..." That's because we feel the secret is so surprising no one could possibly assume the details, or we have hidden the secret so deeply within our mental vault, there is little risk of it being revealed.

But not when it comes to magic secrets.

When a magician—especially a beginner—knows a secret, they automatically assume everyone else knows the secret too. I mean, how could they not? We convince ourselves the secret is right there

“

Guilt will  
ruin a good  
magic  
trick more  
efficiently  
than bad  
technique  
ever could.

in the open for everybody to see. We think magic feels like common sense once the puzzle is solved; even complex magic tricks rarely require rocket science to perform them.

This is part of “the loss of innocence” felt by every magician. Sometimes referred to as “thinking like a magician.” It is a feeling you must learn to control and eventually overcome.

Magicians feel guilty of their secrets. It’s like we think our hands are the local gossip blabbing on the phone to anyone who will listen. In fact, the secret—the method—is tucked away out of view, and it is our guilt that’s obvious.

If you never take anything else away from my blog, remember [and live by] this fundamental creed:

**Magicians are NOT guilty of a secret, but rather empowered by it.**

A magic trick is not a game of charades wherein you gradually expose the method.

Relax. Entertain. Picture your act like a good movie: the audience is so caught up in the story they forget to yell out, “That dinosaur is CGI!” or “They would have called the match as soon as Rocky had the first cut.”

Guilt will ruin a good magic trick more efficiently than bad technique ever could. Magicians are not judged by the sum of their secrets, but rather the quality of their entertainment.

**About the Author:** Aaron Smith is a magic creator, writer, illustrator, and owner of The Magic Depot, located at [www.themagicdepot.com](http://www.themagicdepot.com) and [facebook.com/themagicdepot](https://facebook.com/themagicdepot)



# GROW YOUR BIZ



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# TEN LITTLE SECRETS

John Carney wrote "There's not one great secret ... there's a great many little ones" in his fabulous book *Carneyco-pia*, while talking about the many people who approached Dai Vernon hoping for the "One Great Secret" to help their magic. And it's just as true in creating success in your magic career as it is in creating success in your magic performance. Here are ten little secrets...

## Part 4 - LinkedIn Strategies

While most magicians adore Facebook, spending inordinate amounts of time building "Fan Pages," posting "selfies" with assorted big name magicians and the inevitable "here's my gig tonight" shot of an empty auditorium (and yes I've done all these things,) a growing number of magicians, especially those pursuing corporate engagements, are finding LinkedIn a much better use of their time.

While the platform is much smaller, it is made up of the people who make the decisions and write the cheques for corporate engagements. I've had great success with it over the last few years and the majority of my work comes from there. Here are ten secrets extracted from an upcoming MasterClass on the subject.



- [Take the time to set up your profile completely](#)
- [Spend a little time there everyday](#)
- [A simple strategy to follow every session](#)
- [Recommend rather than endorse](#)
- [Your contact LINKS](#)

**"Take the time to set up your Profile completely"**

LinkedIn will guide you through the steps needed to have a complete Profile and it shows your progress to achieving that goal. The great thing is that this is not set in stone and you don't need to do it all at once. You are able to change and edit everything later, so my advice is get on with it. The more information you get in your profile the more times your listing will show up in the search results.

The sooner you get started the better.

**"If you ask someone to connect with you, write a short note with the request"**

This is a big one. LinkedIn provides a lot of ready made templates to make it easy for you. Don't use them! If you are asking to connect with someone, immediately delete the line that reads -

" I use LinkedIn to keep track of my professional network, and would like to add you."

Write your own words or at the very least add your own words before that line. There are many people on LinkedIn who will never connect with a person who didn't bother to take a few moments to write a personal note.

A good idea is to mention when or where you met or corresponded with the person.

"Nice to meet you at the conference yesterday."

"Did you enjoy the lecture last month?"

### **"Spend a little time there every day"**

LinkedIn is not "set and forget." You need to be there and be active. You need to tweak your listing, be involved in Groups, be inviting people, making recommendations etc. All these things will be explored in more detail, but for now commit to a certain amount of time every day or at very least once a week. It could be just 5 minutes, it could be longer. I have a daily task sheet that I print out every morning when I'm working in my office. One of the Tasks is ... LinkedIn.

### **"A simple strategy to follow every session"**

Add someone, Contact someone, Comment in a group. Every session I try and get at least one new connection, via direct connection, InMail or Introduction. I also contact someone I already have as a connection and either share something with them or interact with them in hopefully a beneficial way. Lastly I make sure I make a comment in one of the groups I am involved in.

By keeping all three areas moving ahead your connections to the community will grow.

I use a mnemonic ABC to remind me -  
Add  
Brief or Benefit  
Comment

### **"Recommend rather than endorse"**

One of the new features they added in the last year was the ability to "endorse" someone's work in a field of expertise. You'll get a few of these everyday and will probably send a few yourself. It's just an easy click. But a much better strategy is to take the time to actually write a short recommendation of someone's work. Not only does it strengthen the connection between you, but the recommendation will also appear on their page generating another link back to your own page.

in your own site SEO.

### **"Export to PDF"**

This is a very useful tool which can be found on your profile page. Not only can you turn your own page into a PDF and send it to someone else, you can grab other profile pages to build up a prospects list.

### **"Upgrade to paid"**

Consider upgrading to a paid account!

The Profile Folders, Open Link and other features may well be worth the small monthly cost. But, I would wait until you have a Profile you like and are comfortable using the Platform on a regular basis. To get benefit from the additional features you have to use them, they don't just automatically help you..

### **"Let people know they can find you on Linked In"**

Once you are set up - website, printed material, mention it during conversations and presentation

### **"Learn More"**

We have barely scratched the surface of tools, techniques and strategies with LinkedIn and it is constantly evolving and growing. I have a new resource page on the MagicCoach site where you can read 10 more secrets about LinkedIn and a get a list of other resources.

## **Who is Timothy Hyde**

Timothy Hyde has been a full time performer since 1977 and is widely acknowledged as one of Australia's busiest and most successful magicians. A wide ranging career has taken him through street performance, comedy clubs, theme parks, trade shows and casino seasons. He now works almost exclusively in the corporate sector, both speaking and entertaining, with an occasional cruise ship assignment.

His online MagicCoach project, running since 1999, including a free newsletter, manuscripts and unique products can be found here: <http://www.MagicCoach.com>



### **Your contact LINKS**

On your Profile page by following the Contact Info tab you can place links to your own Websites. Take a few minutes to change the default "Company Website" text link to something a bit more compelling. It's a good place to use your Keyword again and I believe this will also help

# Escape for Life

An interview with CEO Antony Britton by Laura Eisele

What started out as the idea of one man has grown in to a fundraising powerhouse.

Antony Britton started it all in 2011 and was soon joined by Martin Hunt and Kolf who shared his vision to create an event.

Through the power of social media 2012 saw Stephen Leathwaite and Roslyn Walker join the team and between the five of them they managed to stage and successfully complete the very first EFL event in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support.

This year EFL plans to run more events showcasing more escapologists in more regions around the country. Escape for Life was set up with two main purposes; to entertain and to

raise money for charity.

High quality entertainment is the driving force behind EFL. Without it they say they wouldn't be able to raise a penny. Their events are free to attend, and they always will be.

All of their profits go to the chosen charity.

They raise funds in a number of ways including:

- By asking those who attend our events to donate what ever they can afford.
- Collecting donations via the Just Giving page.
- From corporate sponsorship.

“

EFL is bigger than just me; it's designed for all performing arts and world issue.



*One of the many public performances*



CEO Antony Britton  
started EFL  
in 2011 in the UK

## THE INTERVIEW

### **Is there a message you try to convey to your audiences through your performance?**

I consider my escapes as a visual interpretation of the day to day struggles we are all going through, allowing audiences to put their own spin on it. I try to portray that it doesn't matter what you're going through, you just have to look at it and figure a way out. I strive to create escapes that hit the audience harder and leave them with hope.

### **Have any of your escapes been influenced by world events?**

My straitjacket escape symbolized the fight against cancer, the initial diagnosis, the treatments, and the fear. With Lucifer's Chamber I tried to portray the daily struggle of the armed forces, with gunfire and bombs around them in difficult situations, having to keep their cool in the

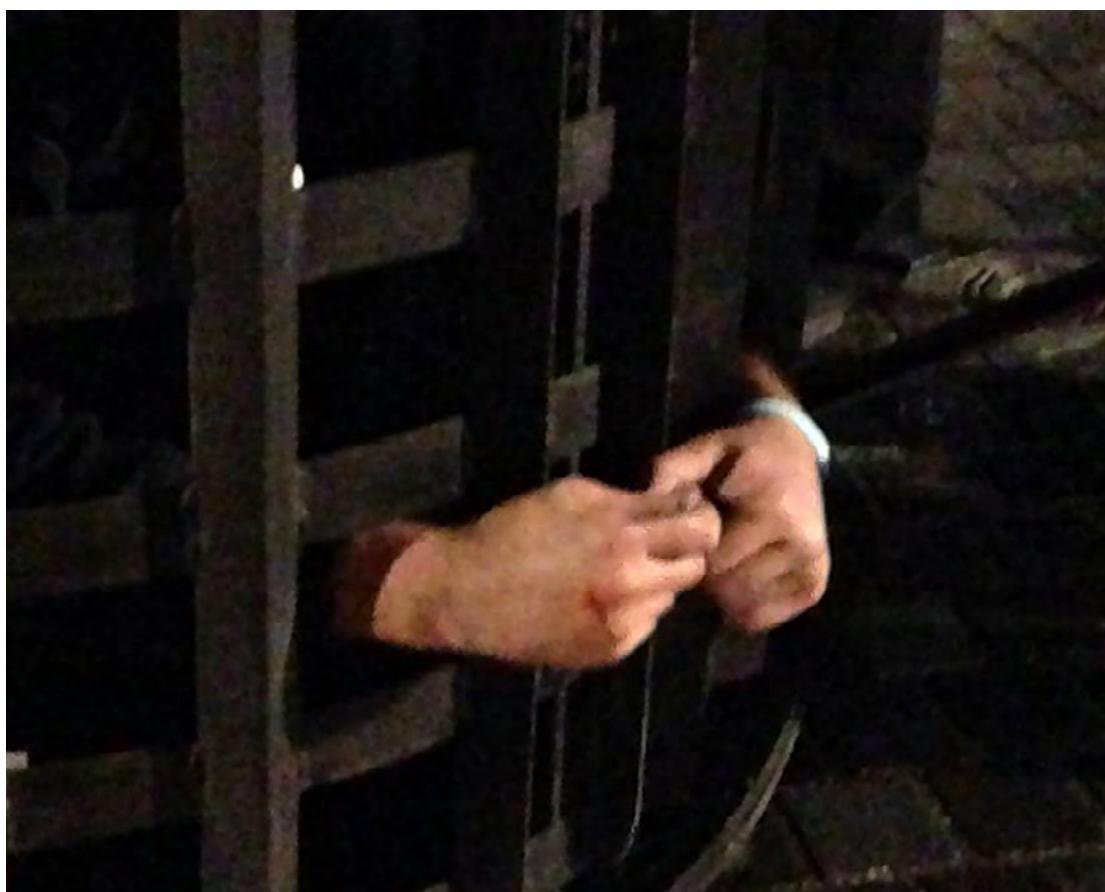
midst of the destruction and mental exhaustion, and their struggle just to stay alive.

### **Did you have a mentor when introduced to escapology?**

I looked up to and respected a lot of people in the field, but never had a mentor. I started as a kid with my Beta watching David Copperfield and others over and over, pausing and rewinding, watching what they were doing and trying it myself. I took the concepts I saw performed and developed my own style, adding my own twists, and trying to make the acts more visual. People around me gave a lot of input, helping to make the escapes more dramatic. I had to find my own niche and push the limits.

### **What is the most rewarding aspect of your escapes?**

The Audience! I spent a lot of time underground developing ideas with other artists and performing for each other. I enjoy performing for a crowd,



*Talking magic around the breakfast table*

and taking them on a journey from doubt that your performance is just an "illusion" to the gasps of "OMG, it's for real". To feel the mixed emotions, laughter, crying, fear, exhaustion – feeling the full roller coaster ride of emotion, and knowing you are taking the audience with you is extremely gratifying.

**How do you manage a career as an escapologist, a CEO, and daily living?**

I don't, it manages me. Sometimes you wish you could spend more time putting on events, but you just don't have the time. If I could I'd do escapes 24/7! As a CEO, I try and keep Escape For Life fun. My intent was to do what we do as long as we have fun, taking a break when it becomes stressful or tedious.

**How do you choose the music for an escape?**

This is hard, I try and fit the trends, it also depends on the type of escape. Some escapes need more dramatic music than others. I tend to get the escape in my head and hit the play button. I will go through thousands of tracks before I find one that fits best.

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My straightjacket escape symbolized the fight against cancer, the initial diagnosis, the treatments, and the fear ...

**Did you ever get in trouble at school for practicing escapes?**

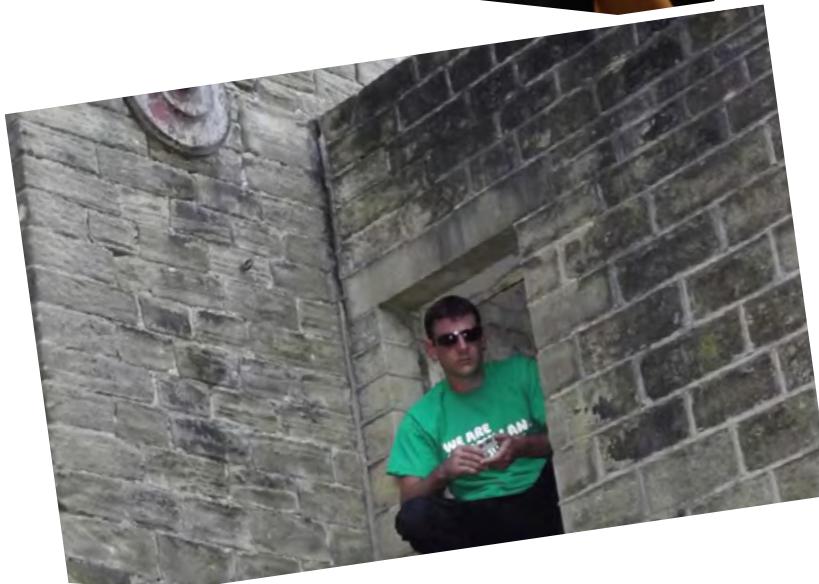
(Laughs) I got into a lot of trouble at school, but never for my escapes.

**What fears did you have to overcome before being bound or confined?**

I think I have been lucky in this; I don't fear anything, win or lose. I see all my escapes, even the classics, to be a 50/50 chance of success.

**Are you willing to accept corporate challenges similar to the challenges Houdini accepted in the early 1900's?**

Yes. I would except any challenge from any corpo-



rate company.

### **Do you have any rituals you adhere to before a performance?**

Hmmm, I just shut my mind off to everything around me.

### **How do you see escapology as a medium for world change?**

I think if done right, and using the correct escape. You can tap into the minds of your audience and take them on a personal journey.

### **Are there any regrets associated with choosing escapology as a career?**

Regrets, Never. I love pushing things. I may attempt some illusion or mess about with cards and coins but my love will always be Escapology.

### **Do you strive to outdo yourself or other performers with each new escape?**

I always try and out do myself, I think if you always try and better yourself it keeps you focused on your own performance. There are so many great performers within escapology, illusion, magic and other performing arts. So no, I don't try and out do people, I just do what I do and do it to the very best I can. If I'm not happy with how it goes, feels, looks, I will go back and do it again and push the elements.

### **Is there another escapologist performing today who you respect?**

There are too many to list. I have respect for so many within the industry; Kristen Johnson, Steve Santini, Robert Gallup the late David De-Val, who was an epic performer and creator to name a few. My very close friends Stuart Burrell, Roslyn Walker, Dan Robinson are all people who I talk to on a daily basis.

### **Have you ever used your skills to get out of an unfortunate situation?**

Yes. It was just for a laugh mind you and it cost me £250 fine (\$338 US), we was out partying and we ended up in the police van. I thought it would be good fun to pick the cuffs on my friends and I. When they opened the back doors, we all walked out and handed the police officer the cuffs. Everyone else got a slap on the hand, but I got a fine for disrespecting the law enforcement. The security in the court also got told off because they couldn't stop laughing.

### **What does being an "escapologist" mean to you?**

Everything. Pushing your audience to the line, and tipping them over, then bringing them back. Watching the audience's faces is what makes it all worthwhile.

### **Are there any criteria you use when developing an escape?**

Good question, not really no. I may see something in the

street or on TV that makes my mind start going over and over. At that point I put pen to paper sketching, tweaking, then I'll take it all over to the workshop to make it happen.

### **Do you consider escapology a lifestyle?**

Yes, a lifestyle and a passion. Once you have got the bug, there is no stopping you. It's everything to me.

### **When did you aspire to pursue escapology as a career?**

I have always loved extreme things so it was the next stage when I was a kid. I used to ride bikes off the local cliffs in to hay, or jump over the local kids. I think it may have been when we chained me up to the back of a car. I had rolla boots (roller skates) and I had to get free before the vehicle hit the 90 degree corner ahead. Depending on the speed of the car it took about 70-80 seconds!

### **How much time do you put into practicing and developing escapes?**

I put a lot of time into developing escapes. I see something that's impossible and my mind starts working to make it MORE impossible. The final process after developing an escape is how to get out of it. You're constantly dreaming about it, playing it over and over in your head. When it comes to practice, if it works in your head it's physically possible, if you struggle in your head it may not be a good idea. With Lucifer's Chamber, the first attempt was a fail by one lock, so when I decided to bring it back I made it MORE impossible by adding 10 more spikes and 2 more padlocks. Now it is a success.

### **Is there a world record you would like to beat?**

Not really, however never say never, I may go for one of them.

### **Where do you see your career in 10 years?**

Alive!

### **EFL Questions**

#### **If you had to choose between EFL and the Limelight of Performing, which would you choose?**

Escape For Life. That's actually happened several times. EFL is bigger than just me; it's designed for all performing arts and world issues. If I had to give up EFL, I couldn't sleep at night.

#### **Do you have criteria for choosing EFL Performers and Charities?**

Everyone is welcome to join us to help raise awareness and funding. Performers do have to know what they are doing. It wouldn't do anyone any good to have an accident, especially on the dangerous side. That would be irresponsible on our part.

#### **What is the biggest hurdle in attracting Sponsors for**



#### EFL Events?

To get them to part with the cash! Seriously, the biggest hurdle is to get them to "believe". To see what we do is not just for charity, that there's more to it and that it's for the community. Making them believe in what EFL is about and the benefits locally and globally. Letting sponsors know "hey we're here, look at what we're trying to do, listen to what we're trying to say".

#### How would you describe EFL?

Explosive! There are so many different elements, and there's no other organization that does it in the style we do. The EFL Mission works on three principals, Community Engagement, Raising Awareness, and Outreach. It's an epicycloid concept. EFL is a permanent center point the talent is constantly circling - bringing the public, businesses, charities, and performers together to enjoy a day out. It is a very visual concept. When you add a crossbar to the top of the circle that is EFL, Escape for Life becomes the fulcrum that balances apathy with hope, and dreams with reality. We try and represent the four elements of Earth, Wind, Fire and Water, and incorporate them visually in everything we do.



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# INTERVIEW

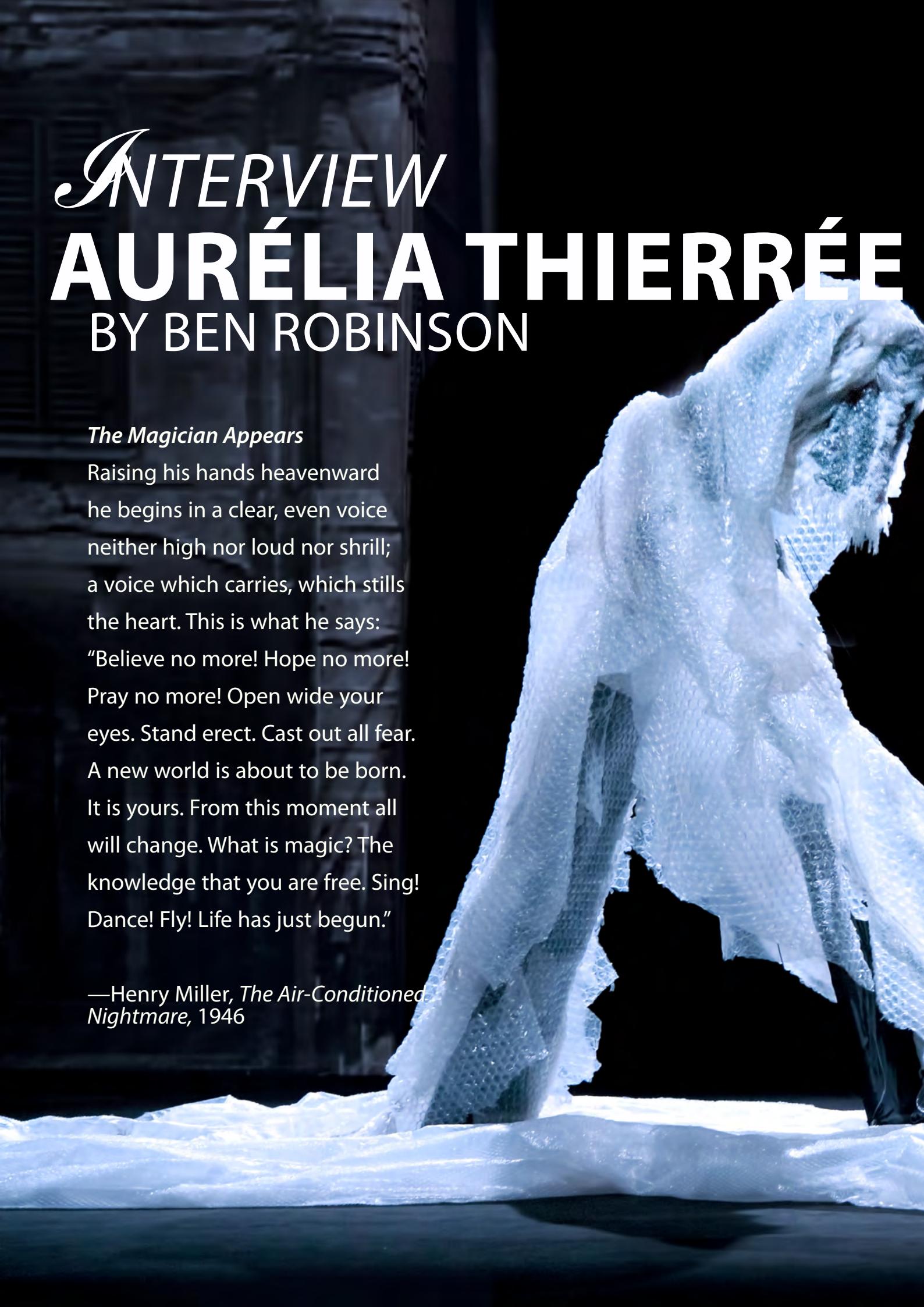
# AURÉLIA THIERRÉE

BY BEN ROBINSON

## *The Magician Appears*

Raising his hands heavenward  
he begins in a clear, even voice  
neither high nor loud nor shrill;  
a voice which carries, which stills  
the heart. This is what he says:  
"Believe no more! Hope no more!  
Pray no more! Open wide your  
eyes. Stand erect. Cast out all fear.  
A new world is about to be born.  
It is yours. From this moment all  
will change. What is magic? The  
knowledge that you are free. Sing!  
Dance! Fly! Life has just begun."

—Henry Miller, *The Air-Conditioned Nightmare*, 1946



A photograph of a woman with long, wavy hair, seen from the side and back. She is wrapped in a green and blue floral blanket, sitting on a bed with white, crumpled sheets. She is looking upwards towards a large, dark window with multiple panes. The scene is dimly lit, with light coming from the window.

**"I looked into the mirror. I saw a Cheshire cat grinning back at me."**

—Charlie Chaplin, from *My Trip Abroad*, 1922, p. 8.

# INTRODUCTION



I've spent over 40-years studying the work of Charlie Chaplin (1889-1977). I knew of the master's granddaughter, Aurélia Thierrée, because I've come to know slightly (and write about) her parents Victoria Thierrée Chaplin and Jean Baptiste Thierrée, since meeting them exactly 30 years ago. However, it was not until a call at 12:45am in late July from clown scholar and veteran performer John Towsen<sup>1</sup> in Paris, that I was alerted to her five performances of her North American debut of her new show *Murmures des Murs* (billed simply in New York as *Murmurs*) in the Lincoln Center Festival, which ran July 6 - 28, 2013.

I sat in the balcony near her mother Victoria, the director, choreographer (with Armando Santin), and set designer of the show. Ms. Chaplin also designed the costumes with Véronique Grand, Jacques Perdiguez, and Monika Schwarzl. After the show we had a nice reunion since I'd seen her only a few times in the last 20 years. She asked me what I thought of the show. I told her that while I recognized the adventurous family imprimatur, this was a show that stood alone—this was Aurélia's show. Victoria Chaplin's resultant smile is eternal.

After my initial review of *Murmurs* appeared, VANISH editor Paul Romhany, also unfamiliar with Ms. Thierrée's work, assigned me the task of interviewing the alluring actress who doffs many chapeaus in her performance: dancer, comedian, aerialist, juggler, acrobat and illusionist extraordinaire. Remarkably, she doesn't utter one spoken word in the 90-minute no intermission show. Magic is part of the landscape; happening as an invisible "presence" un-announced, spectacular in its surprising essence. Invisibility is something she and her family weave well!



<sup>1</sup> See CLOWNS, Hawthorn Publishers, New York, 1976

The task to interview this sprightly sprite was made simpler by 21st century technology. Coordinating parties in Germany, France, New York and Canada had to align; then, a location was selected conducive to privacy and celebrity safety; and finally, the schedules of at least six busy people had to be arranged. (Then Murphy's Law arrived: all was interrupted by a surgical operation for your scribe's poor right hand, injured the night of Ms. Thierrée's performance that wrought five curtain calls and screams of "Brava Aurélia!" by many in the packed house.)

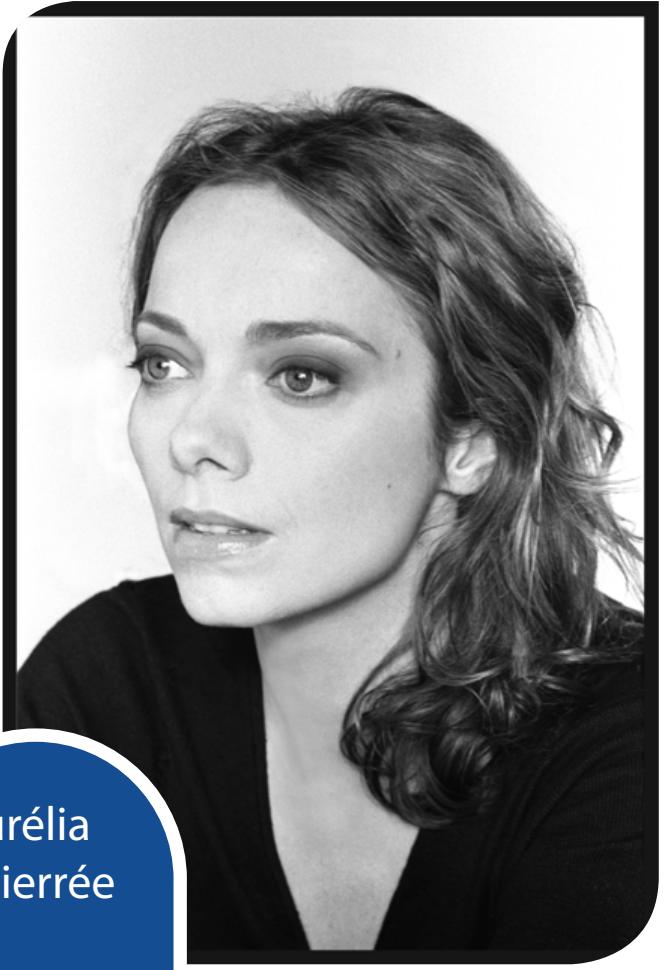
Having filed my initial review within three-hours of the last bow by the cast, I was left in deep appreciation for the artistry involved; my mind agog at what went into creating and doing this show. The voice of Michael Dunn playing Jim West's arch nemesis, Dr. Miguelito Loveless, in the famous episode of *The Wild Wild West*, "The Night The Wizard Shook the Earth" rattled in my head: "I am a man of huge curiosity. I love to pry into things. I've almost a loathing for unanswered questions. And you—just by being here—raise the most fascinating questions in my mind."

However, as Dr. Loveless was my spiritual guide to spend time with Ms. Thierrée, I also heard the voice of the sage booking agent of *The Doors*, Marty Hoberman, who always reminded me, "Those knowin', ain't tellin'. Those tellin', ain't knowin'." Would Ms. Thierrée's fiction-filled stage produce satirical satyrs of jestful avoidance; or disquieting "don't bother me" fact? Would she still be on stage, even when off in the presence of an inquiring, yet sincere, observer?

With these fictional and factual voices in my head, I realized the location to delve into Ms. Thierrée's métier, and resultant oeuvre, had to be special; conducive to an honest inquiry to a very special artist. I realized the words of writer Nick Tosches, who described Circa Tabac in SoHo, in lower Manhattan, as "the last real bar" in Manhattan might be just the place—it is safe, quietly rambunctious; elegant. Sometimes called "the best kept secret in New York." Luckily, I have a long relationship with the owner and he extended to me and Ms. Thierrée every courtesy of the house, even opening the beautiful art deco lounge—one of the very few places on Manhattan island where one can smoke and drink simultaneously—to us well before the general public was allowed in.

For nearly two hours we sat, basked in the 1920's décor, were attended to with élan, and were left to explore prepared questions, prepared answers and the unfettered road saturated with intrigue. Aurélia Thierrée is a precision artist who blurs lines; as easily as she disappears into a wall that grows human arms and then instantly re-appears atop a Venetian balcony dancing a sensual tango with a masked lover.

Aurélia Thierrée toured for seven years in Europe, the Bal-

A black and white portrait of actress Aurélia Thierrée. She has dark, wavy hair and is looking slightly to her left with a thoughtful expression. She is wearing a dark, low-cut top.

Aurélia  
Thierrée

tics, even Korea and no doubt other places, in a show called *Aurelia's Oratorio*. Crowds, depressed by severe economic downturn in Greece flocked to the theatre where she appeared flying high above heads in a spectacular Spanish web act that drew cheers, but little notice from the clown-variety-magic communities. "We were virtually unknown by the clown-circus world with *Oratorio*" she imparted to me quietly.

Her talents present a masterful display; potentially a one-woman circus of the id. Yet, *Murmurs*, artfully directed by her trapezist-cum-fantasist dream-weaving mother, is anything but a one-woman show. Several other stage players we know of entangle themselves with beasts reminiscent, but dissimilar, to those found in the drawings of Edward Gorey and Maurice Sendak. The backstage crew is kept mighty busy flying in and out a panoply of gorgeous photo-realistic sets, and massive bolts of canvas that assume metamorphic qualities better left seen than described.

The phantasmagorical element is all in *Murmurs*. Yet, American audiences misinterpret the word "phantasmagorical" to mean "an ornate parade to the senses,"

what a circus might present in colorful pageantry. Ms. Thierrée's show is full of fantasy, but it is elegantly presented, with so many scenery changes, the pop-up, teardown and amazingly detailed backgrounds seem to change with an eye blink. In fact, I turned to my companion to say, "isn't that gorgeous?" and in the time I uttered those three words, the entire, enormous stage setting changed completely.

*Murmurs* succeeds wildly in truly attaining a surreal essence. "Surreal" is another word over-used and misapplied to anything (particularly American) audiences find unusual or strikingly odd. However, there is a real difference to the genuine meaning. The noted photographer Anne Arden McDonald wrote after seeing *Murmurs* "So many people use the word 'surreal' to mean 'dreamy'— this show was genuinely surreal."

It was this powerful accomplishment by this mature artist and her celebrated mother (a recent recipient of the Molière Award, one of the most distinguished of all French Arts honors) that brings forth true elements of the hidden unconscious. These are not easy tasks.

In fact, nearly one hundred years ago Dadaists and Surrealists waged an international movement where games were played to unlock universal, un-manifested images. One game was called "The Exquisite Corpse"<sup>2</sup> where a folded piece of paper was sketched on by multiple artists, sometimes producing as complex images as a lion's tail threaded through a sewing machine topped off by genitalia pouring gold coins.

In *Murmurs*, a quill becomes a dagger, which produces a blood trail of ethereal red feathers. A hand bellows metamorphoses into everything from a mask to a menacing weapon. Bubble wrap becomes practically anything the creators wish including a near-life-

size elephant. People disappear and our dear heroine is 'splayed within a buffeting and rollicking ocean that incredibly has a cartoon personality of its own! The extemporaneous changes are puppet-like, not physically impossible; but all making sense as if in a child's dream: innocence precariously perched near a threatening abyss. Then again, there is a great deal of now-you-see-it-now-you-don't skillfully wound within the tapestry of this irrationally rational theatrical adventure. *Murmurs* appeals to all ages at all levels.

A germane historical sidelight regarding Harold Lloyd (aided by biographer Annette D'Agostino Lloyd:

**Harold Lloyd once gave a tour of his massive 44-room, 26-bath mansion called Green Acres (at one time, its 32,000 sq. feet being one of the largest private residences in the US). His visitor was the actor-photographer Roddy McDowall. McDowall recounted that when Lloyd was stopped by an onlooker who noted the worn emerald green velvet arms of an elegant chair, the onlooker mentioned that the weathered chair probably needed replacing, because it was not as elegant as the rest of the furnishings. Lloyd, stopped, looked, and sighed. Lloyd explained "Oh, I don't know, those shorn arms, that flat seat has memories, tales, moments captured in the wear. I like that."**

Memories, captured in objects: *Murmurs* exemplifies Lloyd's conceit, without one word uttered. During our interview, this talent surfaced. Ms. Thierrée commandingly mentioned the word

"competition" and complemented the meaning by shuttling her shoulders back and forth quickly. Had a statement not predicated her movement, I still would have gotten her meaning; a wily pantomime she is. "Captured memories" throughout the performance take on wonderful, meaningful abstraction. Her red shoes disappear and reappear from her feet faster than she can physically put them on or take them off. One interpretation: Did the shoes ever leave? Or, is Ms. Thierrée remembering taking them off from another time?

The stimulus to some of the action in *Murmurs* may be madness. However, I tend to think madness follows categorical logic from another dimension. I wanted to know what Aurélia Thierrée thought. Perhaps more precisely, I wondered, if she'd tell me what she thought. A stage enchantress can also be a vexing vixen; as a magician may habitually win games of chance.

Having seen (or was I swallowed by?), the exploration of "inner and outer" space in *Murmurs* I ap-



<sup>2</sup> See Drawing Surrealism, Morgan Library & Museum, 2013.

"The stimulus to some of the action in *Murmurs* may be madness. However, I tend to think madness follows categorical logic from another dimension."



proached my interview with Ms. Thierrée with anticipation, expectation and a tinge of remorse. The latter feeling came because I don't like analyzing others' entertainment—especially entertainment that is powerfully artful, genuinely surprising and take-your-breath-away amazing. I like my mystery well done, perhaps dashed with the existentially oblique. You?

As well, when investigating something so complex as an international touring show of many years' construction and rehearsal, one cannot help but put the creator slightly on edge. When Philippe Petit was arrested in 1974 after rigging a clandestine wire across the yet uncompleted World Trade Center twin towers and then walked a high wire a quarter-mile in the sky, a reporter stuck a microphone inside the police car taking Petit away in handcuffs.

The reporter shouted, "Why did you do this?"

Petit bluntly replied, "There is no 'why'"

So it is with *Murmurs* and the lineage Ms. Thierrée upholds. When her parents' shows *Le Cirque Imaginaire* and *Le Cirque Invisible* (both hot ticket successes) came to New York City between 1983 and 1993, both instances wrought the same basic query from the press: why? Why did the clown's kneecaps suddenly sing opera? Bubbles, struck in space with a menacing hammer elicit effluvian bell sounds! It does make sense. The kind of sense where you say to yourself "That is so...right!"

Victoria Thierrée Chaplin and her husband, the wildly talented surrealist-illusionist-clown Jean Baptiste Thierrée, remained ethically the same as Petit: the work is all before you; make of it what you will. Petit said he "wrote a poem in the sky" of truly otherworldly beauty. The Thierrée family, and particularly Aurélia's *Murmurs*, delivers inventiveness, beauty and effervescent illusion, from the heights (and depths) of genius. Judging, reviewing or characterizing seemingly limitless performance is often difficult for we who sit in the theatre darkness. Descriptive handles are needed, if only to titillate yearned-for fellow travelers.

A magical scene from *Murmurs* where Aurélia Thierréé vanishes instantly from one box only to appear in another.



Perhaps audiences who patronize syllogistically skillful, mind-expanding stage play in the technologically over-run 21st century have lost too much innocence? Can today's global metropolitan audience accept wonder delivered pure, simple and with purposeful, planned, artfully-orchestrated chaos? We would hope so. This mother-daughter creation is so singular, I suspected much of what is on stage might be hard to define; perhaps because there are rightful secrets to any artists' methodology. Mysteriums cannot exist for those non-versed in "hidden corridors." Billy Bernbach, scion of the ad magnate, told me about a refrigerator company that had their New

York ad agency, Doyle Dane Bernbach, ask Picasso (in Spain) what color their new kitchen aid should be? Picasso wired back, "Send one million dollars. I will tell you." The decision was made to go ahead. Picasso's answer provided the color of refrigerators for the next 50 years: you could get any color refrigerator as long as it was white. But, why the refrigerator should have been white is something Picasso never shared. *Murmurs* are secrets that remain secret, yet, inviting!

Recently I met a performer who was hired to entertain children of a very wealthy man. When it came time for the show, the celebrant said he did not want to watch the live show of

juggling, clowning and magic. The child said, "I'll watch the videotape later." My heart sank hearing this. The component of live theatre seemed lost on a boy whose father could afford the best. Deep pocket volatility sometimes excludes soul. We accept *Murmurs* mystery unconditionally.

If a mission can be applied to art, then *Murmurs* leads the way to dazzling on many levels; reinvigorating innocence, inspiring and preserving wonder. It takes work; hard work by exceptionally trained dancers, designers and technicians. This troupe does accomplish the impossible.



Achieving the truly impossible takes a familiarity with the random stripping away of desire, letting the ocean of happenstance sweep you away. Kismet, serendipity, and synchronicity are your allies; not the end result. Real artists know that small accidents and seemingly random incidents are the seeds of rapid mitosis; explosive creation.

George Harrison leaving his guitar at Tom Petty's house, and taking Jeff Lynne over to retrieve it on his way to recording one song at Bob Dylan's simple home studio created The Traveling Wilburys. Of course, Harrison had dinner the night before he retrieved his guitar with Roy Orbison. The former Beatle said, "Ac-

idents created this magic." Such sensitivity is of an intellectual accomplishment and raw spirituality. Music, unadorned in rhythm and pattern, may come close to the creative Thierrée-Chaplin process; or did it, I wondered? *Murmurs* breathes intrigue.

Beyond the eye-widening, thrilling stage theatrics that swell from the spiritually inventive minds and talents of the collaborators, I sought to see if Mr. Chaplin's self-described "meager" ideas that grew into comic brilliance with his performing partner Buster Keaton, in the film *Limelight*<sup>3</sup>, was at all similar nearly 65-years later. It was a comparison I kept to myself; fully respecting the consuming shadow of an unprecedented world icon. My sensitivity is personal.

I am of the unfortunate experience of also having grown up in the shadow of another's fame. It is unsettling—putting it mildly—to be compared, judged or dismissed as being family to another's talents and deeds. Family can nurture; strangers can torture—the result, often unkind, misguided at best. Hence, carving one's own signature in experimental and adventurous theatre can be arduous, yet, marvelously exciting. It takes a strong person to roll the Sisyphean boulder of creative independence. It turned out, not surprisingly, that Aurélia Thierrée is made of strong stuff clothed in elegant French femininity.

One sunny afternoon in August 2013, I sat down in SoHo's Circa Tabac — the golden afternoon blaze slipped gracefully into shimmering silver dusk. The fading afterglow dramatically saluted the art deco interior. The star of *Murmurs* sat resplendent in her transcendental element. Smiles, occasionally airborne, played like children in a country yard. Laughter was quiet; knowing; eroding recalcitrant commuter horns. The city undertow was the clarion call for stealth jackanapes hiding behind an invisible, silent curtain of brilliant sunlight.

What conversation would ensue? The beauteous silent siren; the wounded writer sans tools? *Dans un monde d'un surréaliste n'importe quoi peut arriver!* I discovered — the politely charming, deftly defining, and confident French mistress of mystery, Aurélia Thierrée.

*(What follows are excerpts from our conversation that centered on her history, training, her current show Murmurs, and, yes... dreams.)*

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3      Covered as a first-ever look behind their creative process by LIFE magazine in 1952.



Ben Robinson and Aurélia Thierrée

# A VANISH WORLD EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW



## Interviewed by Ben Robinson

BR: Bonjour Madame.

*AT: Bonjour.*

BR: Are you older or younger than your brother James?

*AT: It depends who you ask, on which day.*

BR: What show of your parents did you begin with?

*AT: When we were little, my brother and I started out both in Le Cirque Imaginaire, and then Le Cirque Invisible. We appeared in magic boxes, sometimes suitcases. And we also had our legs coming out of suitcases... we graduated to being little monsters! We tumbled, worked, a lot of folding backstage ...we were there so our parents could rely on us.*

BR: So, born in a theatrical trunk; raised on stage, yes?

*AT: Yes.*

BR: Did you come here early 80's with the shows?

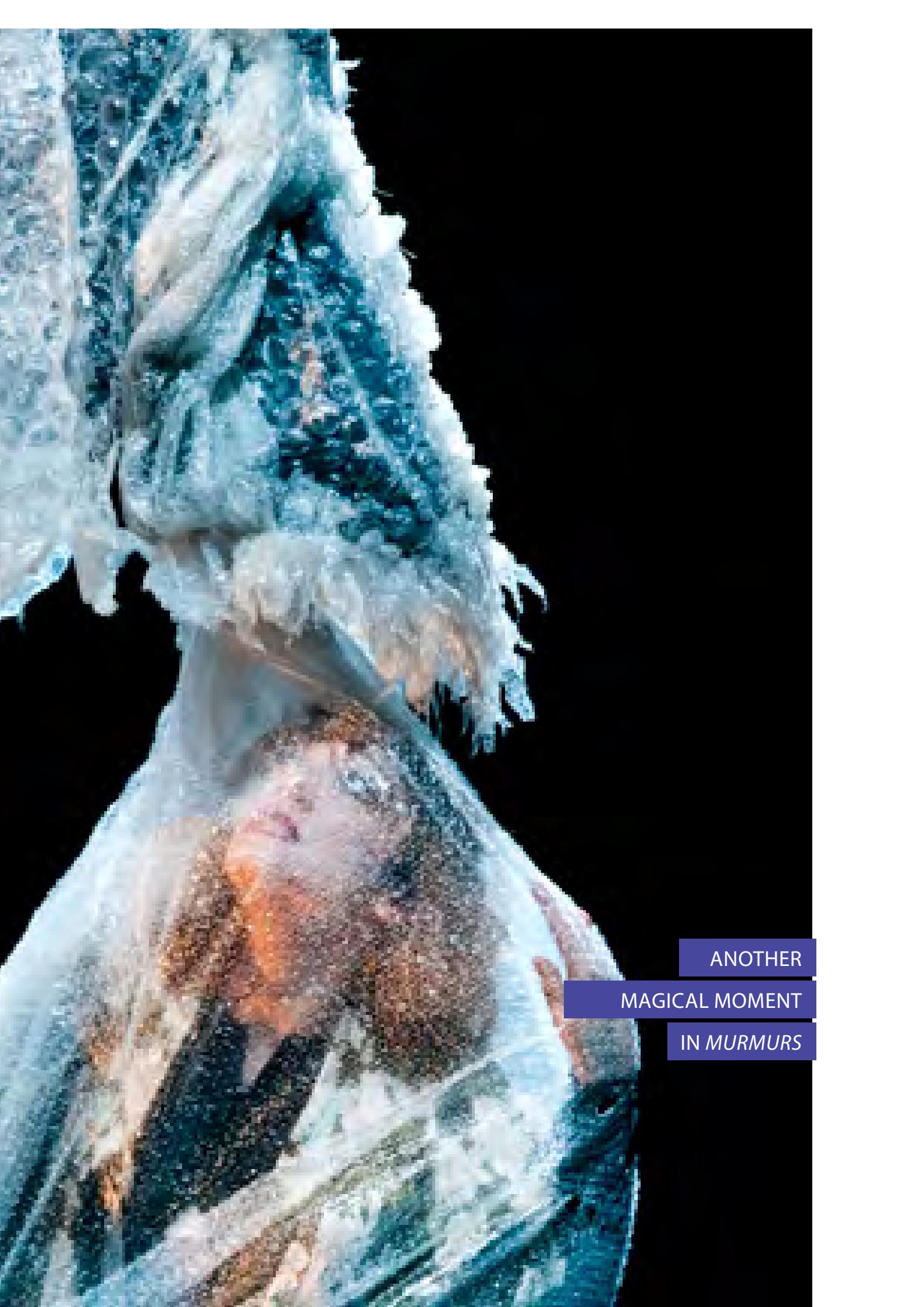
*AT: No, by that time I wanted to go to school and live in a house. I had traveled so much by my early years. You know (I wanted), normalcy. I wanted to be in a social jungle. My studies were those of your American high school; not specialized as in upper levels.*

BR: Ah, the normalcy rebellion! And you went to school in...

*AT: France, Italy. I wanted to experience going to school*

*"It's just that little by little I started circling back and I really went with wherever my desires led me ..."*





ANOTHER  
MAGICAL MOMENT  
IN MURMURS

*and being with kids my own age.*

BR: Did you ever attend school in the US?

*AT: No, the first time I came to the US, was when I was eighteen years old.*

BR: Once here in the US, after I understand you finished the equivalent of American high school, did you then study ballet, voice, fencing, general theatrical training at all?

*AT: No. I took a lot of odd jobs in the theatre. I was an assistant. I toured around this country. My training is, ah...informal?*

BR: I dropped out of theatre school, having been making money standing on stages since age 14. I knew what they had to teach me organically, but like you I sought normalcy. So I got a degree in Asian Studies...

*AT: You've studied literature?*

BR: Yes, I've read the *Mahabharata* and *Bhagavad Gita* three times, and I can get my face slapped in four Asiatic languages.

*AT: (Laughs.)*

BR: All right, so now you have finished your training. When do you start doing your own show?

*AT: It happened gradually, I don't know if at some point I consciously wanted to do my own show? It's just that little by little I started circling back and I really went with wherever my desires led me, you know? And then it happened really gradually, I went back to my parents' show for one tour and worked backstage, and everything about it, I missed. Everything, and I missed the smell of the stage, and the work itself, the curtain, and so without really putting words to it, I went back on that road because I missed it. I didn't think further than that.*

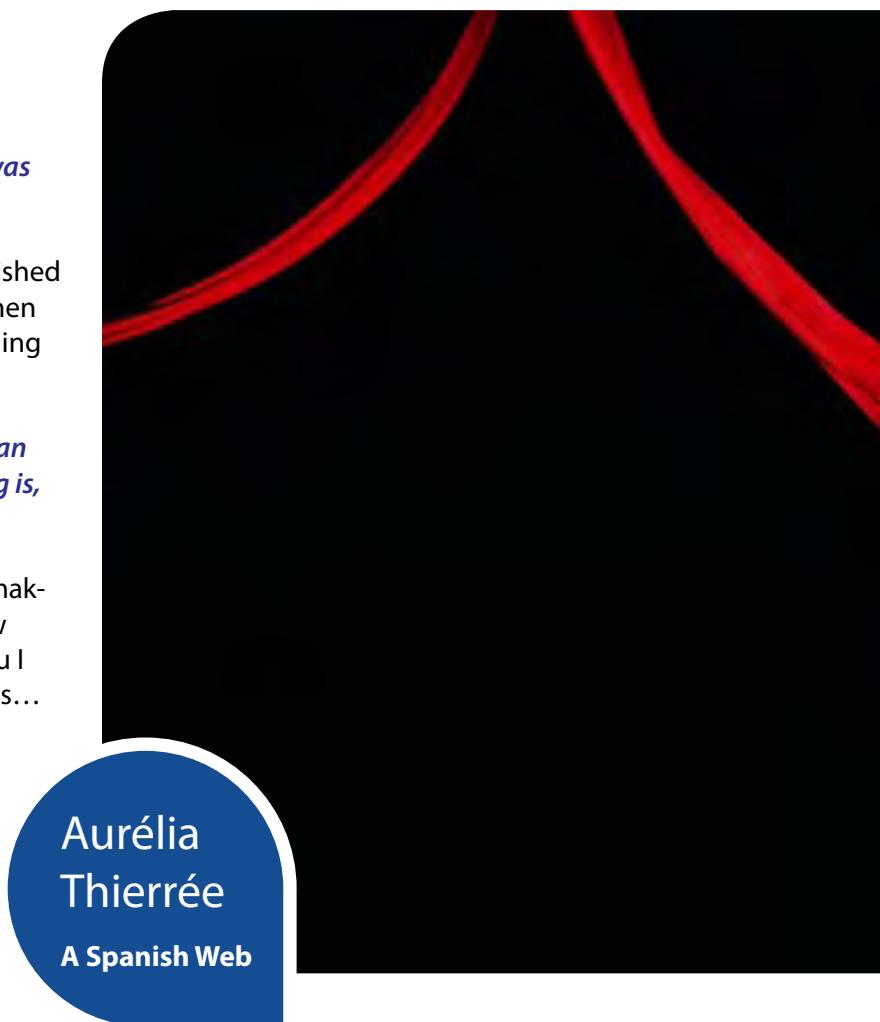
*I did not have my own show right away at all. It took a long time, and when it happened I really didn't think it would have had the success it did.*

BR: Which is the first one, *Oratorio*?

*AT: Yes. I've never been very good at projecting myself into the future where I make big plans. Because, usually, in my life when I make big plans, the opposite happens. And, I know this!*

BR: You mean, about to go on tour and break your arm? I don't know anything about that (shows arm in cast).

*AT: (Laughs) I usually make the opposite plan to seek*



*the other side, opposite result.*

*It's weird, in the first show we did; we did one act at a time.*

BR: May I ask: how long was each of the acts?

*AT: Five minutes. I toured the acts in variety shows. You know, the tents with mirrors? And the Winter Garden in Berlin. All over Europe. With a group called the Tiger Lilies (Martyn Jacques). And with them I toured for three years. They were London-based. But had a German-Italian Director.*

BR: Ah, sounds very similar in venue to my Art Rock'n Roll Circus, 1995. We mixed a live band, projections, live stage acts, all at one time, occupying one thought; very hard, but rewarding.

*AT: With each song there was an act that accompanied ... and we performed...ah, in...nightclubs or in circuses, and of course the circus with all the mirrors...*

BR: Schpielgaltent! I worked one in 2009. Odd shaped pie wedge stage. I enjoyed the work. Very hot inside a tent in August.

*AT: Yes, we were very big in Schpielgaltent, thank you! I learned a lot with the Tiger Lilies and it was when I went*



PHOTO by Richard Haughton

*to them, that I really felt like I had gone back where I belonged. You know, you feel these things. I realized, 'Ah! I am happy now!'*

BR: Yeah, you're where you are, doing what you do; where you are supposed to be.

*AT: And at that moment it changed happily. Of course it can change, but at that moment...it can change afterwards, but—there was something grounding about it all. This doing one act at a time led to a residency where we presented 18-minutes of the acts all-together. And a year later we had the whole show.*

*And something took; you know...the timing was right... it was a very nice surprise. For me, the thrill was to come back to my family and work with my mother was a challenge...*

BR: (Laughs)

*AT: ...and yah! but, really, I had missed them also (smiling), so I didn't think further than all that. So when it came to working again with all of them, it was really nice! You sort of follow where life leads you. Now it's a new show, I don't know how long it is going to go for. I hope a long time. I feel I am exactly where I am supposed to be. You know when something is so right?*

BR: Indeed. Perfect symmetry. Life. Action. Accomplishment. Le jeu est fait!

Ah, one more question about your years with the Tiger Lilies.

*AT: Yes?*

BR: What sort of acts were you doing?

*AT: There was a chest of drawers. Little by little, I got dressed in the chest of drawers. It was sort of acrobatic. Contortion looking. And then there was another number where there was a train going through my midsection. And then there was one where I would make a piece of music where only clocks go off.*

BR: Were you the creator of these acts?

*AT: No, my mother was. The way it happened was that my mother designed the acts. And then she puts me in and then we search for ideas within the act. So the collaboration happens for me once the structure is there. The initial idea she always has. 99% of the time she has it. I have to admit, Oratorio started with me in the chest of drawers, and then the train going through my middle. The interesting thing about her work is that it always sounds impossible, when she first describes it.*

*I went along with the train idea, cautiously — of course — not! — to hurt her feelings. Then I saw the costume and I was even more unsure, but...you know maybe people would never buy...*

BR / AT: (Both start laughing)

*AT: But...but...!!! Then you adjust and you find ways, and you present it to an audience and then they believe it! It's such an interesting process, in the sense she has these mad ideas, and her initial building of a prop might be fragile and so...impermanent, reliable? (Laughs!) And it is really what I like in her work at the end of the day.*

BR: I think it is the idea that sweeps us away, yes? One has to deliver beyond looks and talent, and you obviously do this, with...perfection, many believe.

*AT: Right away the train thing was for me something that came, from, something very personal. That's why I did the show for eight years. It is difficult in the long run to find each night the same challenge where you don't know what is going to happen.*

BR: Yes, keeping it fresh...

*AT: But the thing is, I could never quite grasp — something would always elude me, so every night I would*

*look for it. And those acts that were made to be surreal mean something! Mean something to me personally! Then it is not only an act, or a trick, but, it becomes something a bit more personal.*

BR: Perhaps what is created takes us to an invisible place, that is there already; a pathway to dreams while awake? Unfortunately my upbringing was described once as being a David Lynch movie. He is popular here for his surreal movies.

*AT: Yes, his work on the greater unconscious; he taps what we all have.*

BR: I see a reality others don't (sometimes), and people say, "Hey buddy, you're a lunatic!"

*AT: (Laughs)*

BR: (Explains pers. background) But this accounts for a different point of view by some creators who see what others do not, even if what is seen, is...universal, on some level. Your understanding is genuine of the surreal.

*AT: I agree completely.*

BR: Found objects fascinate me. Hidden stories of a bolt ripped loose from a carriage. All contain secrets!

*AT: Indeed, this is like detective work. There is a structure to penetrate. You strip away, to find, ah, I don't know, essence...individuality? To me, it must have meaning; to others, not so much — and a surprise when it does. It's like there's a structure there, but the story's not there yet...*

BR: So you have to connect them?

*AT: Connect them, oui. But... unveil them!*

BR: Do you find that there are things waiting to be unveiled?

*AT: I am pretty sure that is the way it has always happened most of the time. And it's just a question of...*

BR: Getting through it.

*AT: Exactly.*

BR: Michelangelo chipped all the marble away that was not his David. DaVinci created pneumatic air tubes by understanding air could be pressurized!

*AT: Now that's an act!*

*BR / AT: (Laugh)*

BR: (DaVinci) saw the invisible.

*AT: Yes.*

BR: That's powerful!

*AT: The work my mother does is instinctive to her.*

BR: I esteem this work.

*AT: At first there is structure, the whole becomes soon enough; we see the end. It comes with a stripping away and seeing the center of*

## SHOW BILLBOARD

Photo taken outside a theatre in Russia



*what we're after. She does this naturally and it is hard to see her idea at first, but it becomes clearer with more work. She does things without thinking. It's very sort of, uh...*

BR: Spontaneous?

**AT: Yes. I am much more mental.**

BR: I'm curious about this. You've been quoted saying the show is about what the audience thinks it is about; reviews mention this. Do you seek to have more narrative in "the work?"

*AT: I am trying to introduce this in the beginning of the rehearsal process. It is hard to describe, and may sound corny, but what I look for is something true. So the narrative defines itself little by little, because if you try to force the narrative into it, especially in our kind of work, it becomes too intellectual. Whereas, while there is still work to be done, I think narrative comes together at the end and is applied once everything else is put together.*

BR: After it is done.

**AT: Yes. You can't force it at the beginning or you'll come up with a whole different one, I'm pretty sure.**

BR: It can also be expensive to change things at the end.

*AT: Yes, and why would you want to? In the previous show, the train so obviously belonged at the end. We wanted to, close the show (Laughs)...you know, in an uplifting way! There is a part of the process that doesn't want to be described and doesn't want to be defined. And you have to embrace that part of the process. Here, Russia, Spain, they all begin with narrative. Certain nights an audience will find a narrative; other nights, not. It's very different.*

BR: Sure.

**AT: In Greece, they came in droves...**

BR: Escape from what was happening. Yes?

**AT: Yes. In a technological world, people need simplicity.**

BR: Do you think the Skyping, texting, the whole computer thing, will make a society that will have us as dinosaurs?

*AT: (Laughs) There are 3D movies, yes? Well, come to the theatre, we are even better than 3D...we are real people!*

BR: (Laughs) I know it is a new concept, but I really think if they give it a chance, this theatre thing might work

out.

**AT: (Laughs)**

BR: Sometime when people ask me to do my tricks over again (because they were not paying attention the first time), I say, "there is no rewind button on this." You don't just do it again. They get very angry about that.

**AT: (Laughs)**

BR: I feel the moment is everything. What is interesting to me is that in your work you are not afraid to be small. Tiny things on huge stages (though, yes, you do have disappearing staircases too).

**AT: You know this?**

BR: In London I did very dramatic magic; *The London Times* did not notice that. What they loved was a singular, teensy weensy small routine I did with a lone cigarette paper in a baby spot.

**AT: (Laughs) Nice, nice.**

BR: I wonder if the sensibility you embrace is singular to your family? A European circus emblem? A tradition you know? Most don't "do" subtlety, they think (gesticulates) big, ah! Mount Rushmore!

*AT: That would be a question my parents would be able to answer. I had a bit of experience with this growing up. And then through the diverse jobs I got growing up. In other words I will never stop learning; if I'm lucky—I hope! But I also feel like I don't have the authority to answer a question like that. I like the fact that we don't belong to one category. We are a hybrid.*

BR: Very much so.

*AT: I like that we have the freedom to be, well, I am not an actress, a performer, a dancer, but I do a bit of everything. The lines are a bit blurred that way. I am fine with that.*

BR: The VOGUE piece I thought was, revealing in that it mentioned an offer to play a French mime in a reality series... "Not interested!"

**AT: (Laughs)**

BR: But, it shows how a TV mind encounters you. They are trying to fit you in to their world!

*AT: I think they probably offered it to other people in the time they offered it to me too. But I like the things without formula. When they are done, they can do what they want. You have to figure out what works, what does not.*

*At the end of the day—it's pretty mysterious what will or won't.*

BR: Very much so. You said you were not very good at projecting into the future.

*AT: Yes?*

BR: But all little children have dreams. So, can you share with me what your dreams were as a child?

*AT: I'm a big dreamer. Meaning, I have spent, oh, maybe more than half my life in my head!*

BR / AT: (Laughs)

*AT: The rest of the time I am adapting...*

BR: Trying to figure it out...

*AT: (Laughing)*

BR: A ballerina? Married with lots of children?

*AT: Well, no. Maybe, all of that! No, what I wanted to be was a farmer.*

BR: A farmer?

*AT: I don't know...I don't know, the thing is, I l-o-v-e-d reading! And I love the sensation of just plunging into a book and forgetting who you are! To some extent, and following, and just forgetting yourself. So, I don't think I dreamt myself, you know...*

BR: Sure, doing those things...watching, having typical dreams (common to most futures).

*AT: Yes, exactly.*

BR: So I understand, the day-to-day dreams were enough.

*AT: Yes, but for instance, when Oratorio came along, and it was a success, this for me was a dream come true. Though, I did not know that I had had that dream. And it felt fantastic! (Giggles.)*

BR: I understand that.

*AT: Meaning, sometimes the dreams you have not dreamt are better ...*

BR: I absolutely agree.

*AT: Probably sometimes the dreams you experience by not being there, are better than the ones you...*

BR: Because we survive...

*AT: ...on dreams!*

*BR / AT: (Laughs)*

BR: My biggest successes and failures more so have been because I embraced dreams.

*AT: But, was it worth it?*

BR: Well...(explains routine in show; audience reaction through years)...probably. Mostly, I guess.

*AT: Yes, this is the language I am fascinated with. That language that talks not with words, but to some in a way that is not with, almost...almost—visceral.*

BR: This is the highest art. I believe you speak the international language of wonder.

*AT: Thank you. I don't know if that is true.*

BR: I think you do it, and well, Madame.

*AT: Merci.*

BR: Bon soir, Madame.

*AT: Bon soir.*

- fini -

(Addendum: Since this interview, *Murmurs* will have been performed in Russia, Italy, Switzerland and Mexico through 2013 into 2014.)

PHOTOS: supplied by Ben Robinson & Aurélia Thierrée





PHOTO by Laurent Stinus



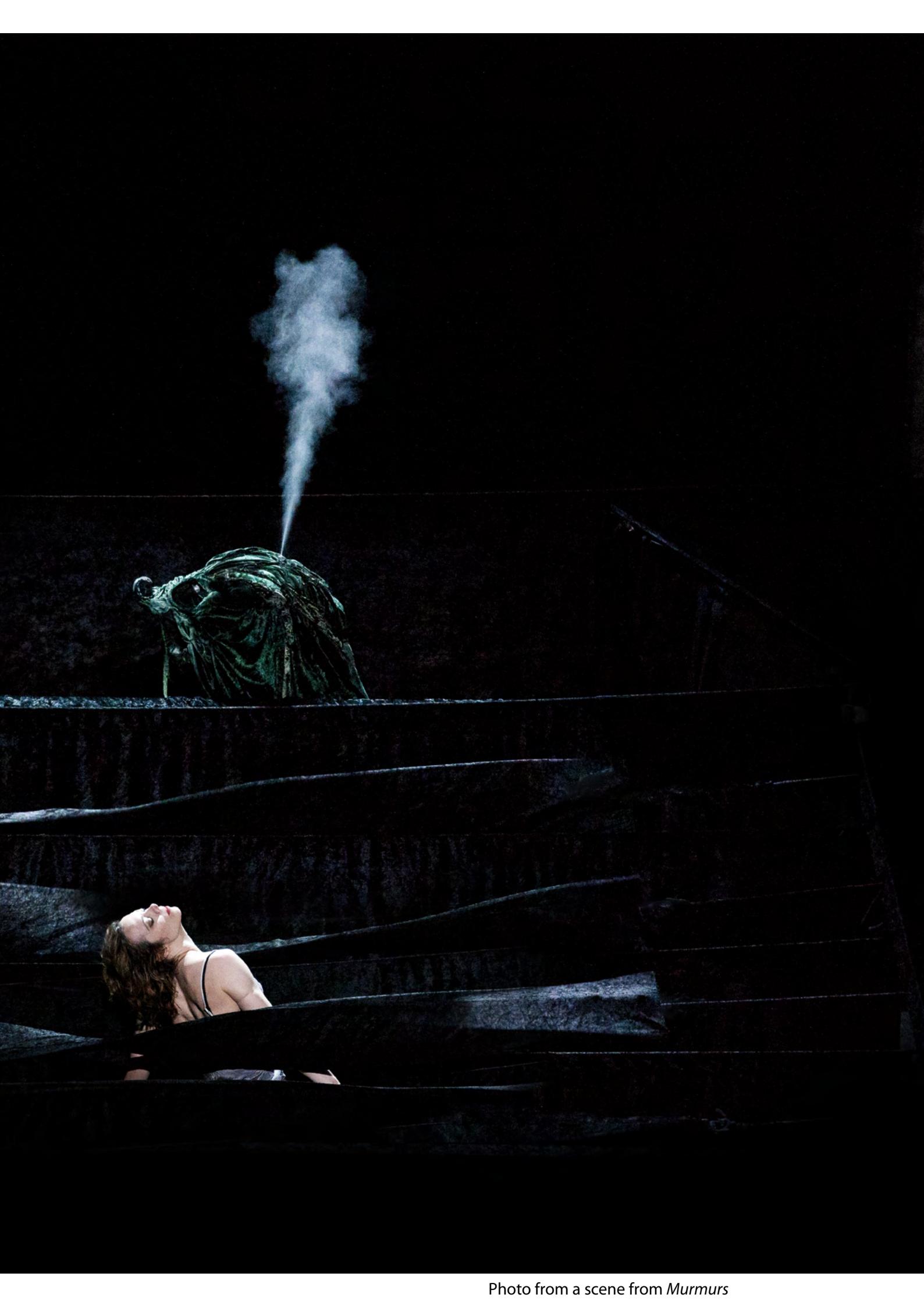


Photo from a scene from *Murmurs*

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IF YOU'RE GOOD ENOUGH TO ENTER YOU COULD BE GOOD ENOUGH TO WIN!

## STEVE SPILL

**A**s a kid I had a bunch of different jobs. I pumped gas when it was 25 cents a gallon, I worked in various restaurants as a bus boy or in the kitchen peeling potatoes, at a warehouse picking, packing, and shipping wholesale orders for various women's undergarments, swept up metal shavings in a linotype shop, had a paper route... I was always taught that you had to get a job and I realized early in life that work was important.

In 1973, before there were any comedy clubs or open mic nights, I was a senior at Taft High in Woodland Hills who practiced and polished his magic act at non-pay showcases, talent contests, and hootenanny nights all over Los Angeles. Clubs ran these shows on off nights and people could see me, along with folk singers, angry poets, and comics at Doug Weston's Troubadour... The Show Biz, owned by Murray, a guy who became famous for his appearances as the Unknown Comic on TV's The Gong Show... The Palomino, a cowboy hangout...

When I wasn't performing for free, I was folding pants. I worked at the Tarzana branch of Pants Galore, a store that sold clothes that were rejects, seconds and severely flawed. We had bellbottoms where only one leg was flared, jeans with the back pockets sewn upside down, belts with no holes for the buckle... the gimmick was everything sold for five dollars. In the store I developed a bunch of smart ass answers to common questions. "Do your pants shrink?" Only if you wash them. "How do your pants run?" They don't. And so on.

Pants Galore was a small chain that did a lot of radio advertising. The commercials were hard sell boring assaults by a screaming announcer. "Blue jeans five dollars, Pants Galore... Corduroys five dollars, Pants Galore... Khakis five dollars, Pants Galore..." I hated those commercials, and so did everyone else. The owner, I'll call him Barney because I think that was his name, was a nice guy who had a son around my age.



One day he walked in just as one of his awful commercials was blasting at us from the radio. I told him how I felt about his advertising. He said, "My son feels the same way. What do you think would be better?" Out of the blue I had been given the opportunity to create a Pants Galore commercial. I created the Pants

# TO B LEADS LEADS TO Z



STEVE SPILL

Galore Answer Man. Barney decided to try it. The commercial included the same smart ass answers to common questions I'd been using on the job. Now, not only was I the writer, I became the announcer. The commercial was recorded and aired on KWEST, the greatest rock

radio station ever, and that's where I met Kyle Emorian.

Kyle sold radio advertising and his was the first hand I shook when I went to the station to record the spot. I showed Kyle some card tricks, and asked him to come see my act in a hippie coffeehouse at the Whole Earth



Mastering these shows gave me a kind of power I had never had before. At times I had total command of these crowds ...

Marketplace in Encino. He laughed and applauded louder than anyone. We became fast friends and Kyle started acting as my manager, which was fine with me.

Besides selling advertising to all the big rock clubs in town, Kyle also started selling me to all the big rock clubs in town. By the time I graduated high school in June of 1973 I was opening for bands like the Spencer Davis Group at The Whisky on the Sunset Strip and Cheap Trick at Starwood in West Hollywood. At first it was extremely tough holding a rock club crowd's attention... but I learned how to make it work and audiences got off on me. Clubbers were watching and listening and actually liking what I did. The process was slow but sure, I felt myself improving each week, building my confidence as a rock magician.

I spent hour after hour, day after day, month after month, perfecting bits specifically suited to this niche audience and my popularity continued to grow. That

was cool. I made a ton of visits to Starwood and the Topanga Corral among other clubs. I called myself "Highdini" and my act was more inspired by Cheech & Chong – who had just released their first comedy record album, but not yet made any films - than anything one could see at the Magic Castle.

Several big bouquets of marijuana appeared from nowhere then vanished in a puff of smoke. Throughout the act I snorted table-spoons of white powder, as a finish to the bit I grabbed my nose and a long stream of salt-like stuff poured out. One by one eight smoking pipes magically appeared between my fingertips which "gave me cotton mouth" and I spit out dozens of cotton balls, then it looked like I drank a huge thirst-quenching pitcher of beer in a fraction of an instant. I pretended to be a little stoned while I did these drug-inspired tricks, in the same way I assume Dean Martin "acted" drunk when he sang songs.

Mastering these shows gave me a kind of power I had never felt before. At times I had total com-



My buddies treated me like a big shot, but I didn't experience any feeling of monetary accomplishment.

mand of these crowds. I loved having their attention focused on me. This wasn't about my ego. Well, maybe a little bit, but mainly I loved that these rock audiences were tough and I could actually entertain them. Every once in a while someone would come up to me and ask "How did you do that?" or say "You're funny," and it would make my night. Of course, they were always slurring their words, or on the verge of passing out, but that didn't matter.

One weekend at Starwood I opened for Sorcery, whose musicians dressed like wizards. They did a club size production show not unlike what Alice Cooper was doing in concert. Alice brought audiences to the edge of their seats when he chopped his head off with a giant guillotine. One of the Sorcery guys was suspended on the tip of a sword. As he slowly revolved 360 degrees, he suddenly dropped down onto the blade, impaled. The band Sorcery has long been forgotten, but "Impaled" an illusion developed for the band by Ken Whitaker lives on, and has become a modern classic performed by magicians all over the world.

At the Corral in Topanga Canyon I opened for The Flying Burrito Brothers, The Eagles, Neil Young & Crazy Horse, and Little Feat, among other groups. Little Feat's Lowell George kept asking me if I could teach him how to cheat at gambling, which I couldn't.

For a couple years I was on the fringe of the LA rock club scene. My buddies treated me like a big shot, but I didn't experience any feeling of monetary accomplishment. I was just an unimportant act and my salary was small. Most rock clubs didn't budget for a magician, but I was a paid performer. I'd usually get \$10 to \$15 a show, which I guess in 1973 - 1975 dollars wasn't that bad. What was bad, was that discos started to replace live entertainment in general and rock clubs in particular, and I was on the way to nowhere. Fortunately, I was still earning \$1.65 per hour at Pants Galore... by working overtime, and with my employee discount, I was able to put together a fine wardrobe.

To be fair, as I celebrated my one year anniversary as a rock club magician, Kyle started to book me some plumb gigs: A charity benefit for the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws at the Playboy Mansion, a party thrown by Elton John on the back lot at Universal Studios, and an appearance at the National Fashion & Boutique Show in New York for Glass Head, a bong manufacturer.

And some concert shows. The first, opening for a band called Flash Cadillac and the Continental Kids, was a gig that may not have been one of the most humiliating moments of my life, but it came close. My first big venue, a raucous crowd of 1500 at the Colorado Springs Municipal Auditorium, which was packed

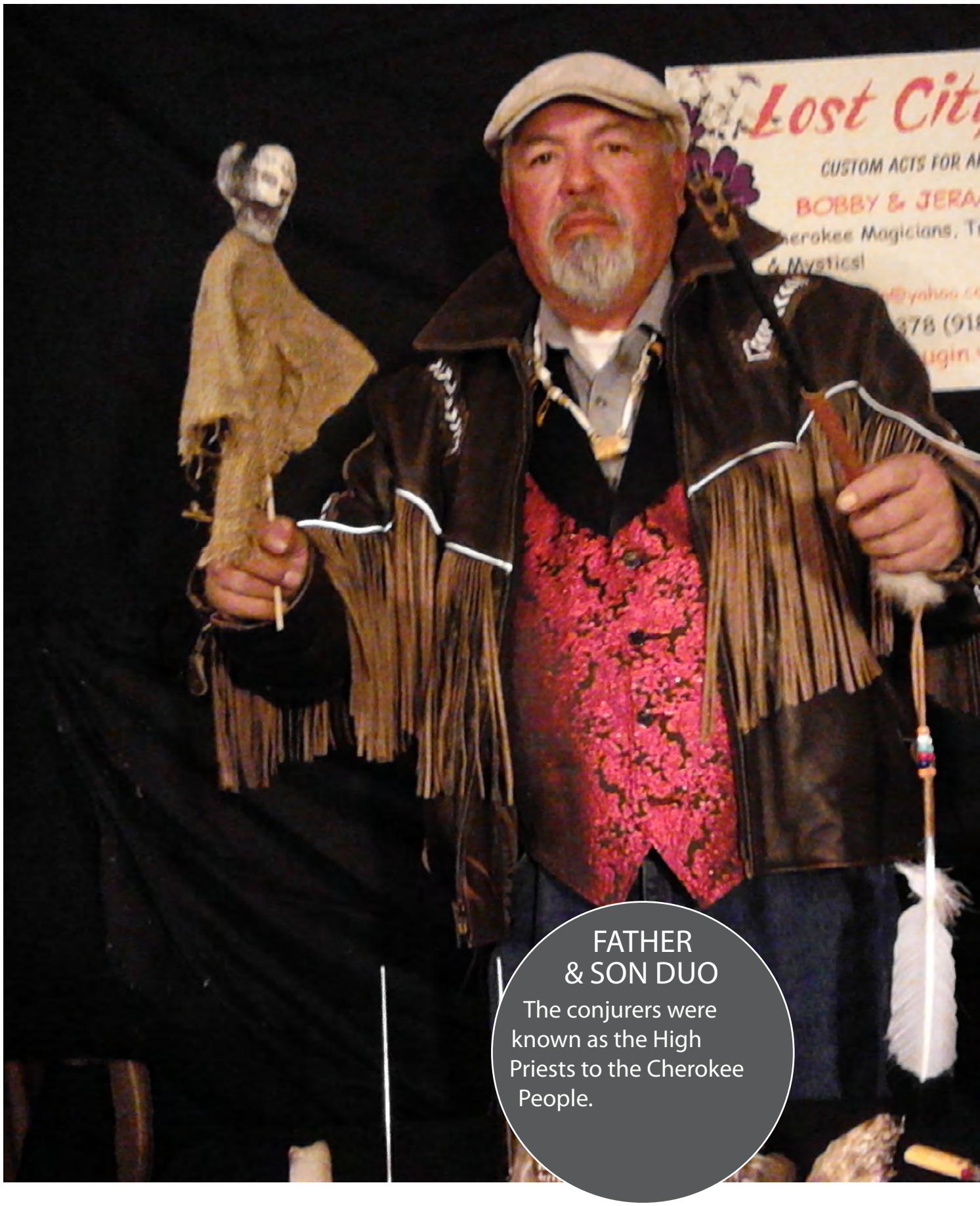
beyond legal capacity. The fire department delayed the show to trim the herd. Those who waited an hour for the show to begin were just as enraged as those who were forced to leave.

Not a pleasant atmosphere, especially for an unexpected opening act. As the rabid Flash fans booed the local DJ who emceed the event, he introduced me, "Please welcome a young magician ...." The next thing I knew I was standing in a glare of light. The boos from the unruly angry crowd were so loud I couldn't even hear myself speak, as they chanted "Flash, Flash, Flash..." It was a disaster and I was petrified. Somehow, automatically I began my routine, and, after some hesitation, I cut the act short.

I gave the audience the finger – with both hands. I stood there like that, flipping them off, with both hands out, and walked off. I was a proud nineteen and a half year old magician and I wasn't going to stand there and be booed without retaliating in some way. I had to come off looking good somehow, and there was no good way to get out of that.

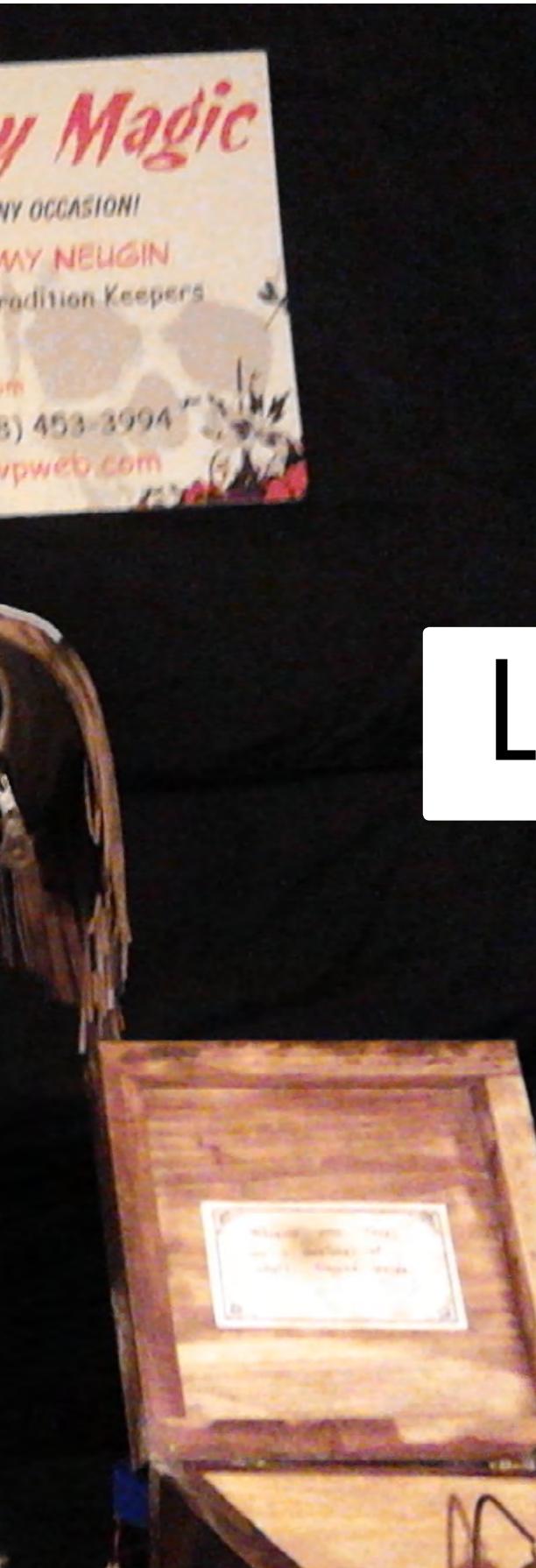
It was the first time in my young career that I learned what it felt like to really fail on stage. And I always learned a lot more from failure than success. At the time I was unaware of any rock concerts, besides the ones I was doing, that had a magician as an opening act, maybe there was a reason for that? It was a relief to know I could fall flat on my face in the middle of nowhere and there wouldn't be any cameras there to record it.

But it was horribly embarrassing, and although you can't really die from embarrassment, it definitely can feel fatal. The band was on the side of the stage watching. Flash said, "Oh, I'm really sorry that happened to you." I said, "Who cares, maybe I can catch an earlier flight home and get out of this stinking state." I became a master opener at a plethora of rock shows in nightclubs, but a half dozen attempts at the much larger rock concert venues left me feeling confused, numb, and not very confident. From start to finish, the entire life span of my ill-fated drug-themed magic act was a scant two years. When I opened for Paul Revere and the Raiders at the Bakersfield Civic Auditorium, the band's manager told me, "Your first talent isn't going to be comedy or magic, kid, it's going to be taking rejection – just don't let it get you down."



### FATHER & SON DUO

The conjurers were known as the High Priests to the Cherokee People.



Bobby and  
Jeramy  
Neugin of  
Lost City  
Magic  
seized  
on their  
heritage.

## Lost City, Oklahoma

The original name of this little community is lost forever. Legend has it that it wasn't always called Lost City. Rumors about this mysterious land and its ties to the supernatural existed long before the Native Americans settled there, about people who tried to live there disappearing and vanishing like smoke in the wind.

When the settlement was founded again after the Trail of Tears, some families left to search for the rest of their clan, as everyone had been mixed and separated during the removal. When they returned, they found the home fires were still burning, possessions remained behind untouched, and food was still laid out on plates, a meal set for people who weren't there.

The people however, were nowhere to be found. They'd vanished without trace. Some

believe that those who disappeared left to join 'The Little People,' helpful spirits to the Cherokee, who were similar to Irish fairies and ghosts. The Little People lived with the Cherokee and some followed them on the Trail of Tears to Oklahoma. Since then, the land was forever called Lost City. As that is where this Father and Son Illusionist duo is from, it is only logical that they call themselves Lost City Magic, or 'The Conjurers from Lost City.'

BUT WHY THE TITLE 'CONJURERS?' The Native Americans have al-

ways had people who were involved in magic. Shaman, Medicine man, Witch, Conjurers - Each one was a specialized field, separate from each other, while all shared each of their beliefs. None used them more than the Cherokee. The conjurers were known as the High Priests to the Cherokee People. They were called 'Conjurer' by Missionaries, in an attempt to demonize the culture. They spoke to the dead, guarded their people against the Supernatural, communicated with spirits in nature, and guided those who had strayed from their right path. They spoke to and dealt with 'The Little People,' helpful forest spirits to the Cherokee.

They also predicted the fates of the tribes' members as well as the outcome of battles. They were the tradition keepers, the story tellers and the historians, keeping their culture alive by using magic and illusions as visual aides. They were an important part of Cherokee culture, advising both the chiefs and the people until 1801, when missionaries declared them evil, and magic was wiped from our heritage. By 1820, most Cherokee were practicing the white ways of life, with little regard to what the white missionaries described as "heathen rites." Few conjurers held on to the traditional beliefs and ways.

In 1838, the removal called "The Trail of Tears" took place, one of the darkest most shameful events in U.S. history. The Cherokees were forced out of their homes with just the clothes on their back, if that. Further knowledge of the conjurer was lost. They retained only what they could remember. The missionaries were again waiting for them when they arrived in Oklahoma. It seemed the ways of old were long gone.

Or so they thought.

Some survived. They passed down what little history and knowledge survived from generation to generation. They are determined to bring the magic back to the tribes. They are the last two conjurers left of the Cherokee Nation.

WHO ARE THEY?



Cherokee history is fraught with legends and stories, some of which encompass the supernatural.

Cherokee conjurers, Bobby and Jeramy Neugin of Lost City Magic seized on this aspect of their heritage when they began performing magic a few years ago.

Bobby said their interest in magic originated with their Native American culture, but the idea to develop tricks or gags and perform them for an audience was born 12 years ago while working in the mountains of North Carolina.

"Magic has always been in Cherokee legends. It's one of the things that we don't see any more, but they actually had magicians. Every Indian tribe had magicians," he said. "We're just trying to keep some of that alive."

The lack of TV reception in the high hills of North Carolina gave them a chance to catch up on a little reading after work, Bobby said.

"We had a lot of magic books, and we had the opportunity to sit and study," he said. "We got to performing magic tricks for each other, and then it just kind of progressed from there. We've incorporated a lot of legends from the Cherokee in North Carolina and Oklahoma in what we do."

They have been performing magic for most of their lives. They said it comes to them honestly, as they had ancestors who were also magically influenced. "We've been practicing and doing this our whole lives. My father picked it up from his grandfather. The magic's has just always been in our family," Jeramy said. "Our family have always been amateur magicians." They learned the Cherokee lore while growing up in Lost City. One day, while tracing their family tree, they discovered they weren't the only members of their family with a love of magic. They learned they had various Cherokee practitioners of different types of magic, including fortune tellers and rainmakers, going all the way back to their ancestor Rebecca Neugin. She was the last surviving member of the Trail of Tears, and was known to dabble in magic and speak to helpful spirits known to the Cherokee as 'the little people.'

"We had medicine people in our background and an ancestor that was a rainmaker. Learning stories like that while growing up has influenced us to learn magic on our own."

Bobby said he does not know of any other Cherokee magicians, and that it's important his Cherokee heritage be in the shows in some way. He said a lot of the magic they learned came from North Carolina Cherokee while he and his son lived there. "We were just checking the traditions of the Cherokee people and the legends,



and we have incorporated that into our magic," he said. "We noticed a legend about a Cherokee Conjuror, using three wooden cups to tell a story about the trickster animal rabbit, and a light went off in our head. This is the cup and balls, but done with a story!" said Bobby.

Another story used in their shows is of a legend of giant wasps from a mountain range. "This mountain supposedly had giant wasps living there years ago. People lived there and these wasps would eat the kids and old people died from the stings. The wasps were too fast for their arrows and spears. The Conjurors prayed to the spirits for help in destroying the creatures. Lightning hit the mountain and opened a door into their hive. The Conjurors led the warriors into the cave with fire, and burned the creatures out. Legend said the dirt was magic, and they could return anytime. We have dirt from that mountain and Jeramy produces live wasps from that dirt," Bobby said.

The men have done a great deal of research about magic, including the origins of voodoo magic and conjuring. Jeramy said they have learned that a lot of voodoo magic practiced by people in the southeastern United States originated from Cherokee conjurers.



Bobby said a voodoo practitioner in New Orleans told him the items voodoo doctors use for their magic came from Cherokee and other Native people. An "untold amount" of Cherokee conjuring tricks have been lost since ancient times, he said. "We learned a lot of the voodoo magic was actually Cherokee magic like this little voodoo doll...that was actually a Cherokee cornhusk doll they used. And a lot of the voodoo spirits that they used, what they call gris-gris bags, were actually medicine bags," Jeramy said. "So we were not only learning about magic, but we were also learning a lot about our heritage and history." They have also learned, Jeramy said, that Cherokees were mediums who could speak to dead ancestors using crystals. When white missionaries asked the mediums if they believed in gods the Cherokees told them, "we don't believe in gods, we believe in our ancestors. We talk to our ancestors."

Many of their tricks, Bobby added, come from books, videos and television. "We have debates on magic tricks. We'll see a magic trick on TV and I'll ask him 'can you do that?' and he'll say 'yeah, I can do that,' and I'll say 'well I can too, but how would you do that?' That's how we come up with a lot of our tricks," Bobby said. He said another bonus of having a business with his son is the quality time he spends with him. He said Jeramy "is one of the best, and he now beats him at magic all the time." Lost City Magic does all types of shows, including birthdays and weddings, but the duo's specialties are

stage shows, stage illusions and street magic. "We have got enough knowledge incorporated that we can do just about any kind of setting for any group of people," he said. The most enjoyable part of a show is seeing the look on a person's face when they see a trick that astonishes them, Bobby said. "I just enjoy seeing people have fun with it," he added. "We do a trick and it is just amazing to see the awe and amazement on people's faces." The Lost City Magic act was first performed in front of 1,400 fellow employees and their families at a work-related picnic in the city of Locust Grove, Oklahoma.

"We had put a little bit together, and we thought we were pretty good," Bobby said. "After that, it's been easy. It's been no problem getting in front of a crowd and performing."

"The Neugins established an international network of contacts through performing their tricks and illusions on the street and for other magicians during their travels," said Jeramy.

"Becoming magicians opened us up to a huge network. We can discuss magic with people from all over the world," he said. "We've got friends we talk magic with in the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Asia, and I think the last one we spoke with was from India. He was giving us tips on how to do our magic. A lot of these people helped us to make our relics and tell our stories, or give our information to someone who might help us."

According to their website, Lost City Magic, Bobby and Jeramy are known to perform dangerous illusions describing Cherokee legends that involve bursts of fire followed by live swarms of red wasps emerging from the palms of their hands, to pulling dreams and nightmares from audience members' heads while they hold a dream catcher.

The Neugins perform close-up or on stage and are the only magicians in Oklahoma who specialize in custom magic shows tailored to an event's specific theme.

The Neugins said they received "black magic" criticisms and were labeled as "being in the league with the devil" when they first began performing in the area, but their goal has always been to keep their culture alive, while bringing some history and entertainment to what most consider the world of the supernatural or magic.

Ripley's Believe It or Not Odditorium in Gatlinburg, Tenn., helped influence the development of their act, Jeramy said.

"I thought, why not do that same thing and bring it here, but have all our exhibits do stuff and interact with the audience. Do the magic tricks with them and tell stories about Oklahoma, our history and our Cherokee culture. Oklahoma is chock-full of supernatural stuff, if

you just look."

Bobby said they tried to get some signs and displays produced similar to what a patron would see at the Barnum & Bailey Circus, but local sign makers wouldn't help them.

"They wouldn't do it. When we first started, we toned our magic way down," he said.

"I told Jeramy, people are superstitious around here, and that's why we would have to tone our tricks down. After we started catching flack, I told him, 'Well, that's good advertising!'"

Bobby said it takes constant practice to maintain the quality of their tricks.

"There are some tricks I've worked on all my life that are only now getting smooth," he said. "We practice every night."

"It wasn't until a couple of years ago that we decided to go into magic as a full-time profession," Jeramy said. "We decided that in order to make us stand out even more, we were going to do tricks that no other magicians perform. We decided we were going to incorporate as many of our Indian legends as possible into the magic."

[www.neugin.vpweb.com](http://www.neugin.vpweb.com).





PHOTOS TAKEN BY BEN ROBINSON

# Nothing To Hide

Ben Robinson  
reviews this  
show from a  
performance on  
November 2nd  
in New York

Werner Entertainment and Ostar Productions brought a show called Nothing to Hide to the Romulus Linney Courtyard Theater at the Pershing Square Signature Theater in New York City on 42nd Street for a run that elicits two immediate comments:

Bad news. Good news. First, the good news: the show is a gem. The bad news: they've only booked 56 performances.

But, given this show was extended five times in its LA run at The Geffen Playhouse it is probably likely New Yorkers will cotton to

a show of all card tricks done by two masters of pasteboard prestidigitation. And prestidigitate they do!

Meet: Derek Delgaudio and Helder Guimaraes. Mr. Delgaudio is a gent who describes himself with comic self-deprecation as a "Bob's Big Boy kind of looking guy" and his pal Helder? "What do you want from me, I'm Portuguese!" he wails at one moment sending the audience into hysterics. He is called "Moppet-like fellow." It would be easy to see him as a physics grad student impassioned about quarks and zero gravity.

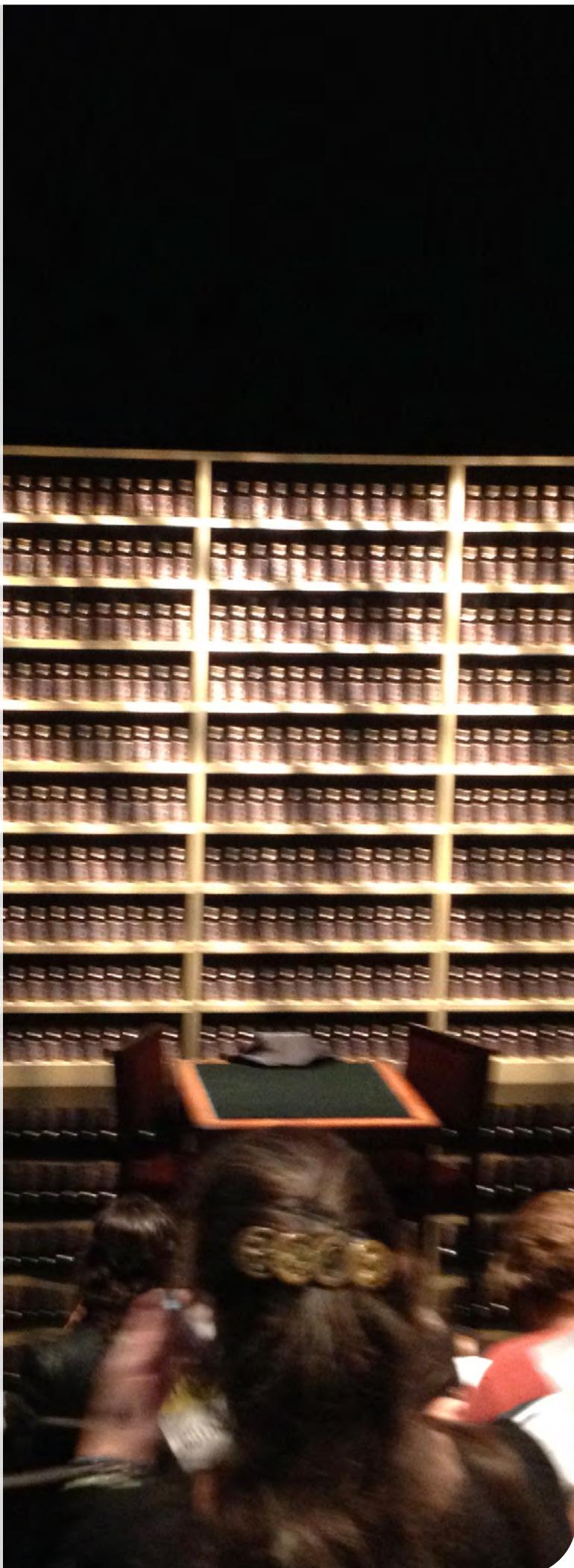
It is not character stereotyping, it is two pals with hands as dancing

objects who open their small show with a duet that cascades hands, dreams, soft lighting, quizzical mastery of one deck of cards. To give away what they do might spoil the live viewer who is lucky enough to see this.

The show has been staged and directed by TV and Broadway star Neil Patrick Harris (currently *How I Met Your Mother* on American TV, and for the last five years the dynamic multi-talented host of the Tony Awards on Broadway's biggest night), who is also President of The Magic Castle in Hollywood where this show debuted in the Peller Project. Mr. Delgaudio has been voted the Magic Castle Close Up Magician of the Year twice in a row. Mr. Guimaraes is known for continuing a deeply sophisticated intellectualization of magic with the bedrock of poetic feeling.

In the course of the fly by 60-minutes, cards are mixed, found, teleported through time and back again by a large rope suspended curiously over the audience, and a wall of Harry Eng-like bottles adorn the back wall culminating one of the most impossible feats with cards this reviewer has ever seen. The setting has a David Lynch dream-like essence to it as a dream is described and then lo and behold, the discussion weirdly morphs into a surreal setting with an impossible occurrence that sent shivers down many spines. Later, one of the team will remember 26 different cards abstractly selected at random by audience volunteers. At another point one card broadly and eerily predicts random occurrences, and then later changes when the other actor also plays the same part with different results.

Where the young men mis-step is in taking cues from previous magicians who beat up bad magic shows. Unnecessary comments about lesser performers and their references to dreams taint an otherwise pristine performance. This show is definitely not a comedy magic duo plus the Faustian bravado of another magician who mounted an all side arm snookery with cards show to great success not too long ago (also Off Broadway). No, this is a deft, dynamic matching of two heavyweights young in years, who are green enough to note press and length of previous engagements on stage. (In light of Bob Dylan still performing at age 70, and a magician such as Doc Eason putting in 27 years straight at John Denver's Tower Comedy Magic Bar, a



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## NOTHING TO HIDE



reference, a 19-week engagement is not even big league in the Big Apple.)

Yet, their brash, "watch what we do and thank you for still making magicians relevant in the age of the I-Pad" is charming and less than off-putting. The show closes with the audience divided, in a nod to Blue Man Group's long stringing, industrial conquest of the audience, and the hilarity begins. "Welcome to the non-accent part of the show" brightly assails Derek Delgaudio. His co-star rejoinders with "Welcome to the international section of the show." Then the magicians begin

attacking their decks of cards until one of the most impossible occurrences one cannot even think of, actually happens.

The sprightly magicos have a symbol; a tell tale semiotic styling of their own really. They contort their bodies into a gentle "U" shape and they bring their hands to their head and then quickly throw their arms forward while their fingers extend and a "swooshing" sound comes out of their mouths. They are indicating that your mind has just been "blown." A certain expansion of consciousness has happened. Is it real? You decide.

The sprightly magicos have a symbol; a tell-tale semiotic of their own really ...

”

The magicians shake hands with almost anyone who wants a signed program. Daring folks to touch so many hands, when the hands is the money! Brave, gutsy, talented fellas—master magicians!

V

# STEVE SPILL'S THE MINDREADING GOOSE

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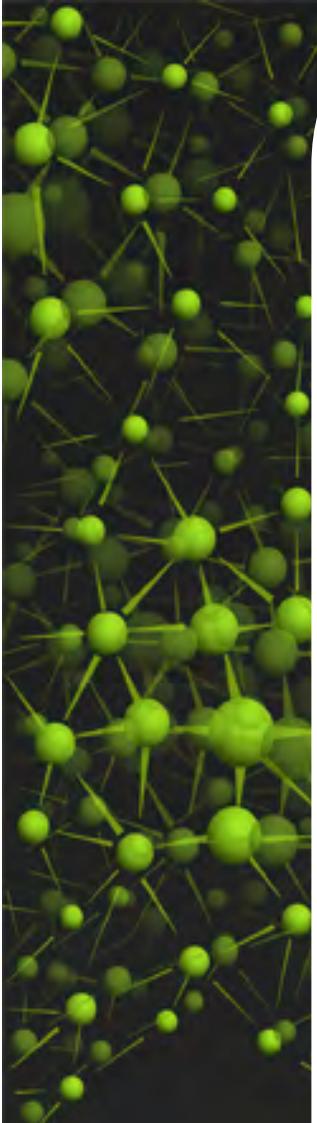
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# MENTALISM:

## AN ADVENTURE

## IN MYSTICISM

**Part Four in a Series by P. Craig Browning**

### {PART II OF THE BASICS...}

The previous article covered those skill sets that are of greatest import to the working Mentalist and as best as I could, I've listed them in order of import so as to emphasize the fact that you need little to nothing more and the only reason you need mastery of Billets is to embellish the previous 3 skills. So what else is there?

SECRET WRITING TECHNIQUES is the next biggie and that would include the following;

- **Swami/Nail Writing**
- Stylist Work
- **Pocket Writing**
- **Double Writing**
- Faux Writing

**SWAMI WORK** could technically fall into the status of being a billet's second cousin in that it is an aspect of working with a slip of paper for the sake of revelation and for this reason it has significance. But as Lee Earle points out, one

needn't be so skillfull with one as to be able to write War & Peace with it when just a simple X, Check Mark, Circle or Underline will do.

The nice thing about a Swami is how it lends itself to fast paced routines and certain "carney" activities like the old *Guess Your Weight/Age* gambits. But like the Center Tear and other Billet work, the Swami has helped build many a church and evangelic followings over the decades and so it is an important tool to our arsenal.

**Stylist Work** is for me, one of the most important psychological "one off" methods one could ever incorporate. This refers to the use of a transfer system, usually sat within a sealed envelope that has a handwritten prediction with blank spaces that the performer fills in ala Swami but by exploiting either a Carbon Paper transfer or the use of

a capillary type paper a.k.a. White Carbon/NCR Papers. The Stylist itself is a boon style device made of hard plastic that has a bulbous point that allows for a uniformed writing transfer.

**NOTE: The interior of an envelope could be saturated with chalk powder or else lines with a white or yellow carbon that would permit you to write on a black paper. If you use a wider Stylist point you will be able to easily mimic the style and look of chalk writing on paper.**

**POCKET WRITING** is just as powerful as working with the Nail Writer but not as versatile and too, it is a technique that requires the performer to be aware of his surroundings and being able to obfuscate the action, otherwise it appears that you're playing with yourself and of course, proves far less impressive when you pull your revelation from the same pocket folks just saw your hand in.

Learning to Pocket Write does entail our developing the pronounced habit of tucking at least a portion of our hand(s) down into our front trouser pocket, even when you aren't doing anything sneaky. By conditioning the audience to see this as a personal quirk, it will take the heat off the act of executing the dirty work when it is actually done. I've found that wearing a vest and using the vest pocket a great and far more natural feeling alternative, especially for those leaning towards a 19th early 20th century pitchman type persona.

**DOUBLE WRITING** is not something many of us pay attention to but it is a very cool technique when you learn to use it correctly. The action is quite simple; you are replicating information being shared by the

participant(s) in a covert manner, so as to employ the details later in your performance.

**Faux Writing** is not so much a focus skill as it is a deception that can prove far harder to pull off than most imagine. As the name implies, it's the act of faking the action of writing down information. Devin Knight has given us several clever routines that use this principle but long before him we found suggestions by others when it came to using a dried out felt tip marker so that we could actually write a word or phrase on a page without leaving a mark, rather than acting as if we are writing; contrary to popular belief the public can (subconsciously) "read" a pencil's motion. They may not know what it is they are or aren't seeing, but they know something is afoot when you move the writing instrument in a random pattern vs. actual writing. Learn how to do this properly and you will get away with murder.

**GIMMICKS & DEVICES** has to be the final area of venture in that there are several important tools used by the Mentalist that are related to the above but fit their own category more than a direct connection to another skill set. A great example of this is the IMP Pad/Impression Device. There are literally dozens if not hundreds of methods by which to gain an impression and use it to your advantage and I promise you, we will take a stroll down that path sometime in the future. For the moment however, we need to focus on the fact that such devices exist and up into the 1980s/early 90s every single one of those methods tended to require you to go to a back room or in some way gain time for accessing the details which were typically transferred

to paper via a Carbon paper or chalk paper transfer. As time and technology advanced however, the use of the mighty "clipboard" evolved, the great Jack Dean offering us a glimpse into use of a carbonless means of information transfer that would spark off a trend of similar products.

John Riggs however, gave us the biggest, most practical sense of advancement that can now be seen in a massive collection of Impression Systems that range from the traditional looking Clipboard or professional looking Portfolio to Post-it Notes, Book Covers and even a single Tarot or Playing card. Arguably John's offerings are viewed as some of the very best by professionals worldwide even though there have been that handful of individuals who've tried to improve upon his technology; the only genuine improvement coming in the form of the BUMA Board and the current reigning champion, the ParaPad. Learning about the various Impression Systems and Techniques and how to employ them is in fact, a skill set. There are times when using the classic clipboard makes sense and "fits" the environment and yet, there are times when it makes more sense to hand someone a book to use as a small desk for writing and absolutely nothing is thought of it. But there is another way of looking at this concept;

Imagine people simply filling out a questionnaire using only the table that's right in front of them or the bar/fireplace mantel top?

No, this isn't "High Tech" but very old technology at work . . . the paper has been treated with a wax coating that transfers to the surface. Once you move your guests to a second

room an accomplice can use powdered charcoal or graphite to find the tracings and thus, take notes. Needless to say, they then clean and polish the surfaces so nothing can be found later, when the group returns to the room.

There's more to this method, I'd encourage you to look up "*The Field's Device*" as part of your investigative journey, in that you will find another version to this thinking, in which the surface is heavily waxed. Usually in this latter method you would have to tilt the surface at an angle in order to read the impression but the developing powder method can likewise be applied and readily "blown" off the surface prior to giving it a good rub-down and "polishing" so as to be rid of all evidence pertaining to sneakiness.

While there are electronic systems that can steal out a person's writing I do not recommend them and I find many a seasoned pro that feel the same way; the technology simply isn't as clean when it comes to accurate translation and transference of people's handwriting, as we would typically require. Where the concept is awesome, we feel that we are still several years away from having a reliable transmission system of this sort. I personally believe that when it is finally developed that it will rely on a Smart Phone system in order to view the details in secret; possibly even an advanced version of the Google Eye concept, that gives you a "heads-up display" the audience cannot see (a premise that would prove awesome for drawing duplications, don't you think?)

**Billet Loaders** are a rare gimmick these days that can be very empowering. In short these devices assist you in both, switching out billets as well as covertly loading a billet into an envelope, small box/chest, etc. They come in the form of envelope openers, knives, pencils, pens, keys and more. While I'm not a huge proponent of these things, I have used them. My personal gripe being that the "prediction slip" is typically small and usually folded or rolled in a manner that's really not pragmatic in today's world. Sadly, I have no answers when it comes to cleaning-up the use of such tools and how they are employed; or, to be more specific, how to load a much larger and naturally folded prediction using such a device without a rather elaborate "exchanger" using stage magic technology such as a Dove in Balloon type tray (which I've actually used when doing the old "Air Tight Prediction" vs. the original method).

In my mind the best and least complicated switch, is the old "Turn-Over" move. You allow someone to place an envelope with information on top of a writing pad, for an example, and in the action of walking them from point A to point B you simply turn your wrist 180°, ringing-in an identical envelope with the correct or needed information. There are literally dozens, possibly hundreds of ways to incorporate this simple move into acts of Mentalism as well as Stage Magic; when you add some of Mr. Harbin's thinking you end up with a phenomenal and debatably "dangerous" tool. The great Dante used just such a combination to ring in the gimmicked bars used in one of his favorite transpositions; ex-

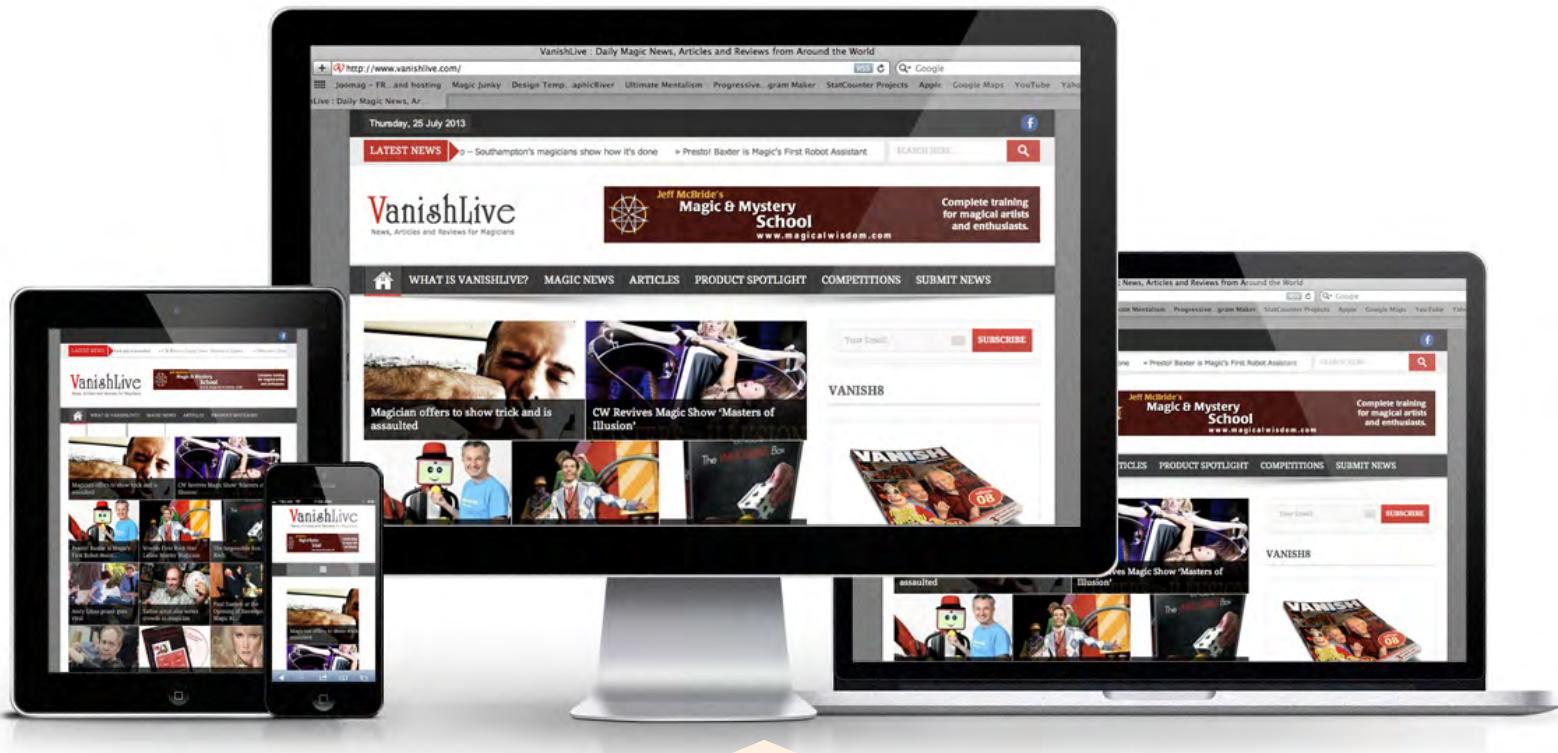
changing the real, solid & inspected bars for the set he actually required, all done under the watchful eyes of the committee, which frequently included other magicians (seen the old guy loved hurting their heads a tad)...

...or so go the rumors

So what other evils roam through the mind, & heart of the Mentalist? You'll have to catch me next issue...

1. *The Air Right Prediction incorporates a balloon with a small vial covered in balloon rubber that has been slipped into the balloon that is to be sat on display a few days prior to the reveal. It is an excellent New Year's Eve stunt in that you can apparently use one of the balloons from the party and then do the reveal a day days afterwards at a press luncheon. In the original version a dummy is placed into the balloon for people to see; when the balloon is popped a real vife is tossed in with the part with the actual details while the dummy is stolen out by the mage or simply over-looked by the committee when done correctly ... my dove tray variation allows for a larger sized prediction "card" (vs. small billet) and when the balloon pops the standard switch takes place and the mage allows a member of the committee to pick up the prediction, etc. keeping him/you from ever touching it.*





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## WHO WE ARE

Paul Romhany and Mick Peck are both professional magicians who set up the website for those who wanted to get VANISH MAGAZINE on a daily basis. Paul is editor and creator of VANISH MAGAZINE and VanishLIVE is under the VANISH umbrella.

Mick is based out of Auckland, New Zealand and is also editor of Inside Entertainment Magazine as well as curator of Vanishlive.com.



## OUR EXPERTISE

We offer the same excellent articles by professional performers who write for VANISH Magazine including; Bizzaro, Jeff McBride, Eugene Burger, Chipper Lowell, Lee Alex, Banachek, Paul Romhany, Wayne Rogers, Richard Webster, Charles Bach to name a few.

We also offer the latest reviews of DVDs, magic tricks, Apps and books. These are reviewed by professionals with over 25 years in the business.

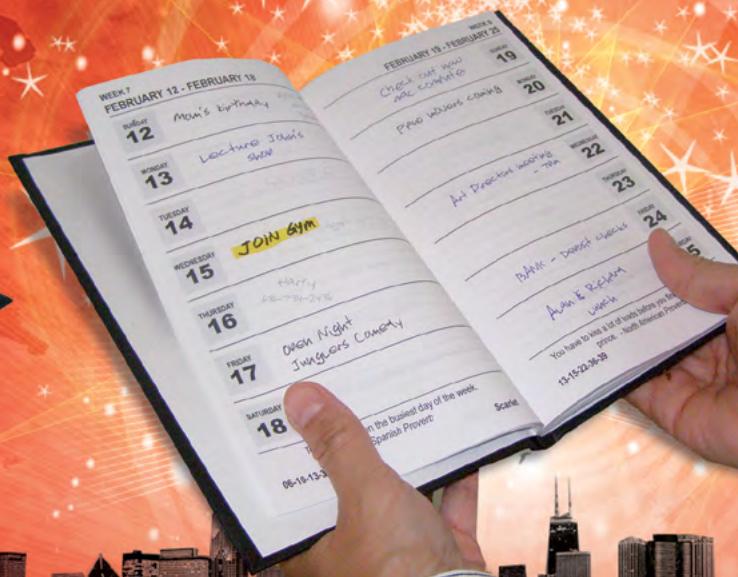


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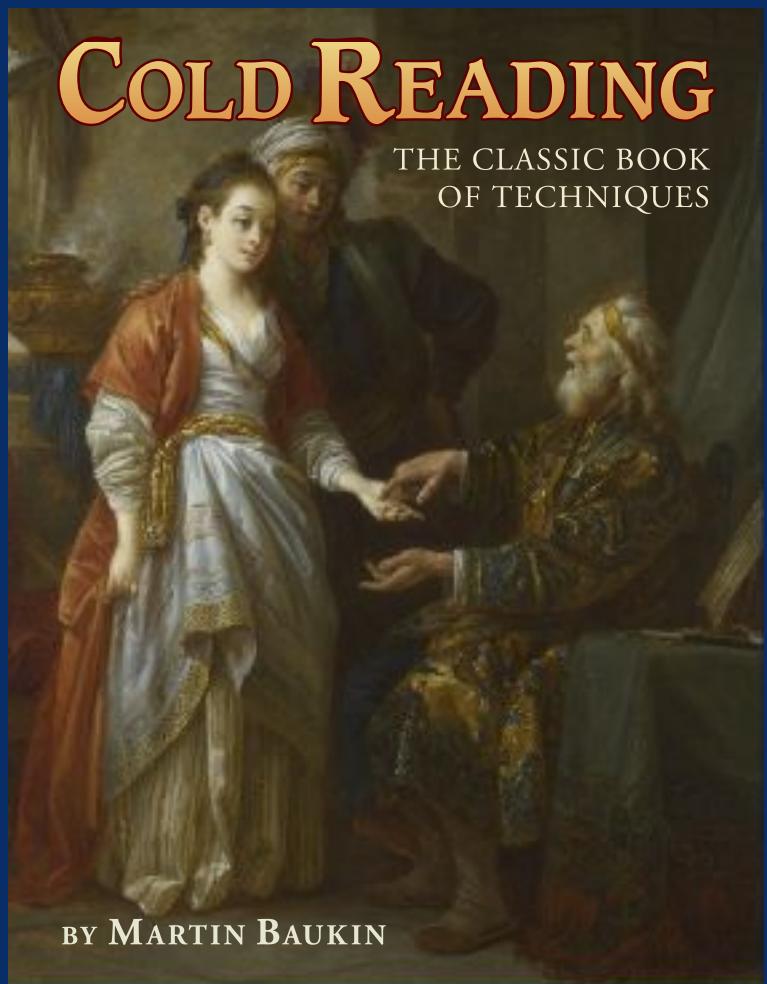
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# COOL BALLOON GUY UNDER PRESSURE

Matthew Johnson is based out of Vancouver, Canada and is one the hardest working balloon artists in the world.

**H**i there, my name is Matt Johnson, as a Balloon Artist I perform under the name *The Cool balloon Guy* - The Rock Star of Balloon Twisting. You can check me out at [www.coolballoonguy.com](http://www.coolballoonguy.com) (shameless plug).

As *The Cool balloon Guy* I perform in jeans, converse shoes and a T-Shirt with my logo, a far cry from the normal attire of a Balloon Artist but an image choice I made from a marketing perspective. It is one that has served me very well over the years and certainly one that makes me stand out. Standing out and having people remember you is key when it comes to being a successful artist.

But I am not here to talk about my image or marketing techniques, we can save that for another issue. I am here as I was asked to write a column for Vanish by my good friend Paul Romhany and the folks at Qualatex. What? Me write an article for a magazine, Hmmmm, this is going to take both time and careful consideration, both of which I don't have much of but hey, in for a penny. So my plan is to write a column that will include fun travel stories, tips and tricks from the perspective of yours truly, a professional balloon artist.

For this, my inaugural column (sounds very presidential) I thought I would share the ups and downs of my recent trip to the Middle East, Dubai to be precise. The contract was a weeklong and it turned out to be quite the undertaking in more ways than one. One of the coolest destinations of my career and at the same time, one of the trips that caused me the most stress. Read on and all will be revealed.

It all started on an August morning in Vancouver much like any



other. I woke up, made my coffee and ventured into my home office to start my day. Now while I would like to say that I get straight to work in a morning I do have to admit that I can't start my work day until I have trawled the message boards of Face book. I know it's completely useless from a business perspective but seeing whose cat played the piano and who had what for breakfast just sets me up right for my day. So I open up my inbox and that's when I got the email offering me a weeklong contract performing at a mall in Dubai. Now, don't get me wrong, I

have traveled the world performing but this email was from Dubai. I had never been to the Middle East so I was excited about performing in this exotic location. Experience has taught me not to get my hopes up too early as you have to jump through so many hoops in this business before an email turns into an actual paying gig! Nevertheless, the prospect did peak my interest.

Upon my first phone conversation with the agent in Dubai it was made clear that they were looking for a balloon artist like myself to demonstrate a number of balloon twisting techniques. The client was looking for line up work, you know the kind, twisting balloon animals as fast as you can while a line up of 3000 sugar loaded children with sticky fingers wait to get their hands on one of those awesome balloon creations. The kind they can take home and love and cherish forever and ever, or at least until it pops, whichever comes first. The agent also required balloon workshops to teach children how to twist their own balloon platypus or aardvark and a number of 20-minute stage shows per day. To add to this they required large balloon sculptures for the mall ceiling and sculptures for each of the 6 separate entrances to the mall.

Now at this point I should explain that I am a balloon artist that specializes in cool balloon sculptures utilizing 4 to 9 balloons per sculpture. Things like Elmo, Road Runner, you get the idea. My niche is doing this kind of work in a line up type setting but doing it really fast and with a fresh comedic style that is uniquely my own. I have never done a balloon workshop or a balloon twisting stage show but I figured I could take my experience as a stage magician (oh yes, I do that too) and make this work. The only problem I had was building the large sculptures the mall

## THE LIFE OF A WORKING PROFESSIONAL

required for the grand displays.

As I don't make large balloon sculptures I certainly had an obstacle standing in my way, however I was not about to let this opportunity pass me by on a minor detail. So I convinced the agent in Dubai they needed my skills as a Balloon Artist, performer and MC to draw in the crowds. I knew I could do everything else they required so I convinced the agent to book another balloon artist to build the sculptures with my help. The master plan I pitched to the agent was that of two balloon heads being better than one, after all we could get much more done if there was two of us. I searched Vancouver to find a suitable balloon artist and I found one, whoop whoop. May be I could pull this off after all and get my butt to Dubai. Now I usually like to work alone but this opportunity called for drastic measures

### SAVING GRACE

Matt and Jeremy  
Telford



if I was to get the gig. So, I booked the other performer as part of my company. Unbeknownst to me, booking the other performer through my company was about to become one of the most stressful situations in my 23-year performing career.

The fee was good, plans were in place for the sculptures and the agent in Dubai approved my choice of performer so it appeared we were all set for our adventure. The week before flying to Dubai I was heading to Las Vegas for 6 days. I was due to return to Vancouver 4 days before my flight to Dubai. While I was down South plans quickly went south, oh the irony of it all! The balloon sculptor who I had hired and who the client was expecting backed out of the deal at the last minute! Suddenly, 4 days before flying to Dubai I had no Balloon Sculptor and the client was expecting one. What now? To make things worse I had insisted on a deposit being wire transferred to me and it was sat safely in my bank account and I was now down my sculptor with 4 days to go, holy s#!t!

That day in Las Vegas was one of the longest and most stressful days of my life not to mention expensive as I called back and forth to Dubai on my cell phone. You can only imagine how expensive calls to Dubai are from a North America cell phone. The situation simply had to be solved as my own contract and more importantly my reputation was on the line! I spent the next 24 hours literally searching the globe for someone that could do the gig with only 4 days notice. I can honestly say that in that 24 hrs I experienced stress like never before. What was I going to do? What was I thinking? I was a balloon artist literally under pressure!

Now I have been in the entertainment business for a very long time and while I don't enjoy the stressful situations which sometimes present themselves I do pride myself on having and exemplary reputation and work ethic that is second to none. Clients all over the world hire me based on this reputation and work ethic. I have worked long and hard to build this



reputation and it really is the main contributing factor to my success. I was not about to let this particular situation get the better of me or slip through my fingers although it very nearly did.

So imagine the situation. 3 to 4 days to go before flying to Dubai and both myself and the agent in Dubai are on the hunt for an incredible Balloon Sculptor somewhere in the world with an incredible reputation, amazing work ethic, oh yes, and with an open schedule for the next week or so. It's like looking for a needle in a stack of Qualatex 260's (which by the way would be a very unfortunate situation for the balloons).

Finally, at literally the last minute we found just the guy, Jeremy Telford from the good old US of A. I came to realize that finding Jeremy was simply meant to be and if you believe in destiny this could not have been a better example. He was available for the event, happy with the budget and most importantly MORE than qualified. You can check out Jeremy's work by visiting his website <http://www.balloonguyentertainment.com>. Little did I know when I arrived in Dubai I was about to meet a kindred spirit, a heck of a nice guy, an amazingly talented performer and above all a new friend. To say Jeremy is talented would be an understatement; then again he says the same about me. It seemed we were the perfect latex couple. So, after all that stress and last minute scrambling I was off to Dubai. I boarded the plane in Vancouver and settled in for the long haul to the Middle East with both in trepidation and excitement, oh, and a case full of 6000 Qualatex balloons, the finest money can buy. No turning back now, my adventure was finally underway!

When I landed in Dubai it was about 6pm on Sunday the 13th of October and I was feeling good and ready to take on the world, well, at least a shopping mall in Dubai at the very least. As I walked through the glimmering, polished arrivals lounge of Dubai International Airport I realized very quickly I was not in Kansas anymore Toto, this place was something quite different. The floor glistened the pillars shone and the roof sparkled with all the glitz and glamour of the Las Vegas strip. My hosts met me at the airport and transported me (via a quick stop at my hotel to meet Jeremy) through the incredibly clean streets of Dubai to the Marina Side Mall, my home for the next 7 days. What first struck me about Dubai as I traveled to my destination were the impeccably clean streets, the incredible architecture and the lack of any Graffiti whatsoever! I mean this place sparkles!

So I arrived at the Mall with my new friend Jeremy Telford on Sunday evening at about 7pm. The task ahead of us was to build 2 sculptures for the atrium ceiling and 6 large (9ft tall) cartoon type characters for



### BALLOON FISH

A sculpture in Dubai.

each of the entrances to the mall. Building sculptures like this is no mean feat. It requires not only the incredible skill of someone like Jeremy to actually twist the balloons but also an artistic vision akin to Leonardo da Vinci to plan out the ideas before the build. Jeremy is that artist!

The plan was to build a 22ft long rocket and 15ft high moon along with planets and stars for the Atrium ceiling, a veritable out of this world space scene it were. To follow this appetizer we had to build robots, snowmen, monkeys, fish and ducks for the entrances.

Our first challenge was to get this stuff built in time for the grand opening of the festival on Tuesday at 2pm. It was now Sunday at 7pm.

We quickly realized the challenge ahead of us was a monumental task requiring 1000's of balloons to be inflated by hand and twisted by hand. Not only that, the main sculptures had to be suspended from the atrium ceiling. We only had 2 days to do it all in. We did the only thing we could do and that was to pull a 2-day

straight balloon twisting session with no breaks plenty of Coffee and the odd can of Red Bull. All became a necessity to keep us awake! By Tuesday morning Jeremy and I had pulled off the impossible and had all of the large sculptures built, placed and hanging from the Atrium ceiling. It was quite the sight and the guests of the mall were in for a real treat as they arrived for the Bubbles and Balloons festival running from Tuesday to Saturday.

The event was spectacular and so much fun. We worked the stage with Sam Sam the Bubble Man, 9 times Guinness Book of World Record Holder and Tall Will, the world's tallest Stilt Walker. Our hosts at Marina Side Mall had set up a stage in the mall that would make a rock concert jealous. We had sound guys, controlled lighting and a team of security guards to keep the 100's of families and children from mobbing the stage. Twisting balloon animals in this kind of setting was an experience to say the least.

Our day would start at 2pm with a 50-minute line up session for 100's of children. Jeremy and I would stand side by side in front of the stage and exchange a balloon creation for a ticket that each child eagerly clutched in their fist like a piece of solid gold. They knew this ticket was their ticket to getting that little piece of latex magic made by those cool guys from the other end of the world. After all that's why they hired us from the far reaches of the world, to give the festival that international flavor that it so rightly deserved.

After our 50-minute line up work the craziness would start. Each day at about 1:30pm Jeremy and I would inflate about 100's of balloons and pack them into large black garbage bags. After the workshop we would throw these balloons in to the crowd of children like rocketing airships in readiness for our 10-minute balloon-twisting workshop. We didn't really have a plan for the workshop before getting to Dubai but ended up being a stroke of pure genius. We would stand on the stage and turn our backs to the audience with the balloons held high above our heads so they got all the twists from the correct perspective, i.e., our left hand was their left hand (hope that makes sense), we would then teach 100's of children at the same time to twist a balloon poodle while accompanied by the musical delights of Gangnam Style. It was perfectly executed, and choreographed craziness, the children loved it.

Finally after this hour we then did our 1st 20-minute stage show of the day. Now before I arrived in Dubai I had planned a 20-minute stage show that was to include a magical balloon swallow, and a few sculptures like Elmo, a Grandfather Clock and a Harley Davidson all of which were choreographed to appropriate backing music such as "Rock Around the Clock" and "Elmo's World", it really was delightful. However

when I got to Dubai Jeremy and I decided it would be really fun to have a balloon competition between him and I and turn this into a highly interactive show. The idea was simple, Jeremy would make a balloon sculpture and we would have the children scream out what they thought it was. As the balloon sculpture neared completion and its identity became clearer the children would scream louder, it was perfect! After we gave this balloon away I would then try and one up Jeremy by making a balloon creation of my own and we would repeat the process for the next 20 minutes. Throughout all of this we had great music playing and intelligent lighting and spotlights to give it the feeling of a rock concert. Jeremy remained the silent guy and I was the ringmaster keeping everything together with jokes, audience participation and back and forth banter with the crowd. To finish each show off I would twist one of my pre planned balloon creations to its appropriate choreographed piece of music. We repeated this 3 times a day and it went amazingly well. The audience loved it and the energy was incredibly high. In a word, perfect!

We did this schedule for the next 5 days. Each day we finished at about 10pm and then headed back to the hotel for food and sleep only to awake and repeat the process again the next day. Once I was in Dubai and the stressful situation was out of the way this ended up being some of the most fun I have ever had on a gig. Dubai was quite simply AWESOME!

When all was said and done Jeremy and I packed up our left over balloons, bought the cheesy gifts at the airport and settled in for a long flight home. I went north to Canada and Jeremy went south to the US and that my friend is the story of how I got to Dubai.

I cannot wait to go back and hopefully we will get to do it again soon. I sincerely hope you enjoyed my story and just a few of the pictures from our trip. Tune in next issue and when I look forward to sharing more of my crazy life in my world of balloons.

Thanks to Paul Romhany at Vanish and Qualatex for this opportunity.

Matt Johnson - The Cool balloon Guy



**IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT** on my HOT SPOT / HEAT  
THIS WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE again at this year's UK Blackpool  
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**WE DO NOT LIKE EACH OTHER AT ALL** ( you can read the full  
Derek Lever story, It is still on my web site: [www.cdrmagic.com](http://www.cdrmagic.com) )

May I suggest to all magicians going to Blackpool in Feb 2014,  
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# IMAGINARY CIRCUMSTANCES

## JOEY PIPIA

Practice is  
what you do  
to learn the  
sleight ...  
rehearsal is  
what you do  
after practice.

### Rehearsing Will Set You Free!

Many think rehearsal chokes the life out of performance, however, theater – and magic in particular – actually benefit in big ways by its inclusion in the creative process. Much happens before you get on stage and perform; you think about what you're going to do, you practice what you preach, and then you rehearse.

#### Rehearsal vs. Practice.

It's important to recognize the difference between the two, and there is a difference. Let's take a few minutes and examples to explain. Practice is the attainment of a

certain level of skill.

Practice is what you do to learn the sleight or skill involved in a particular effect, rehearsal is what you do after practice. Both should be fun, but the two need to be treated as separate entities. I'll begin with practice since it is what you do first.

#### First Things First

Most of us practice all the time. I practice wherever and whenever there is a mirror available. I used to practice my retention vanish with a coin in front of the mirrors in department stores when shopping with my mother. (I bet there's counseling for that.)

I practiced my top palm with

playing cards while being a passenger in a car one vacation. I learned while my wife got us there safely.

The examples above illustrate two different kinds of practice. One was to achieve a very specific goal; to make it look as if a coin was being placed in my hand when in fact, it wasn't. The second was to learn a movement without seeing the result.

When my retention vanish was believable I knew from watching in the mirror that the technique I had practiced had created a successful illusion. Alternatively, when I was able to do the top palm intuitively, I still needed to watch in a mirror to see if I had mastered the technique sufficiently; concealing the palm of the top card.

Okay, both of these examples deal with raw, unvarnished practice of a particular technique. Here's the thing; both these techniques, without a routine, or reason to be performed, are to a certain extent valueless. Thinking about how to use these skills, and then creating a routine, gives them reason to live, and makes all that practice worthwhile.

### **Rehearsal Integrates the Skill Into the Performance.**

Rehearsal, according to Our Magic, by Maskelyne and Devant, is what you do after you've first thought about the effect, then mastered the sleights, written and memorized the script, and blocked your movements.

As you can see, rehearsal is a last step as you move toward your performance. A good friend, mentor, and director, Sy Kahn (not the music Sy Kahn), recommended an hour of rehearsal for every minute of performance. While that is for a theatrical play, I suggest you use it as a guideline for your process.

As is true with magic and a magician, an actor should come to the rehearsal having already learned his or her required skill. If the play calls for an actor flipping a coin a certain way, the rehearsal is not the place where that would be practiced. That coin flipping would have been learned before rehearsal.

Rehearsal is dedicated to going over the show. In the case of a magic show,

it includes all the parts identified by Maseklyn and Devant. Your rehearsal will be different from mine, but all of them share similar important elements. Some are: going through the routine to weed out weak parts, then make them better. To identify strong parts, and make them even stronger.

There is much so much to say about rehearsal that most books on performing magic take an entire chapter of many pages. Your magic performance will be as strong as possible if you add one or more of these books to your library.

### **Dress Rehearsal. No Going Back.**

Here is a tip for you that most theater people – and therefore even fewer magicians – know. It's about Dress Rehearsal. Dress Rehearsal is your last rehearsal and is done just as if you had an audience watching.

Start and stop as much as you want during regular rehearsal, but not during Dress Rehearsal. The Dress Rehearsal is your opportunity to see what it's like with an actual audience. Take advantage of this before there is live audience. You must have everything you need for performance from your show clothes to all your props. You may not start again if things begin badly. What would you do if the audience were actually there? That's the point of a Dress Rehearsal. So if you flub a line, or forget a prop, dress rehearsal is your chance to see how you'd handle it with an audience. Also, immediately after the Dress Rehearsal you have a great opportunity to write down the forgotten item and then remember it at performance.

### **Free At Last!**

Many of my best lines have came as ad-libs. I think I've mentioned in a previous column the benefit of memorizing your script. Rehearsing allows you the freedom to move off the script when you need it. It liberates you.

One last shout out in support of extensive, exhaustive, total preparation. Your performance will be the tightest it's ever been if you treat it with the respect it deserves. Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse.

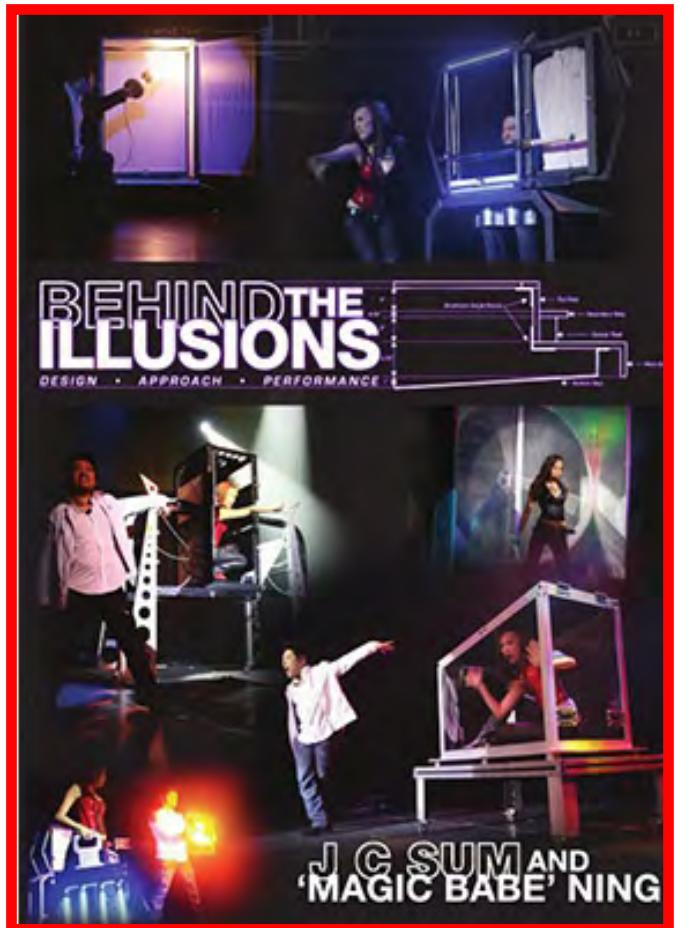
**...rehearsal is  
the last step  
as you move  
toward your  
performance.**

Then when you're done, rehearse again.

Finally, performance psychologist and Juilliard graduate Dr. Noa Kageyama teaches musicians how to do their best under pressure at his website: <http://www.bulletproofmusician.com/> I'm not a member of his program (nor am I an affiliate in any way), but he has some free resources there that I believe can be used by magicians.

***\*\*"Imaginary Circumstances," is a VANISH feature dedicated to your success as a wonder worker. The focus of each column is a different aspect of theater, drama, acting, and how to incorporate it into your magic performance. "Imaginary Circumstances," comes from Joey Pipia's new definition: "A magician is a person who lives truthfully under imaginary circumstances."***

***Joey Pipia is a professional magician. He lives in Port Townsend, WA, USA***





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# A magician needs A PLACE TO BE BAD



## George Parker

an audience member that they saw the palmed card in my hand or when people can see I'm turning over two cards instead of one.

Part of it is that hiding the method is an essential part of creating magic. So it's not surprising that when we fail to bury the secrets deeply we feel much more exposed and vulnerable than when we miss a note or lose in a judo-match.

But I think there's more. When we miss a note while playing a song that mistake may be remembered, but it doesn't necessarily mean that the rest of the song was terrible. However, when we make a mistake by flashing a palmed coin it seems to devalue the entire routine and perhaps the whole show. The magic is gone.

It's like pouring some salt into your coffee or a drop of black ink into a cup of fresh water. It's exposing the Wizard of Oz. There is no going back.

### Discard a Routine?

From experience I know that this type of shameful experience can lead one to stop developing a routine further. We suddenly think the trick isn't very good, the method isn't deceptive, or maybe the script just doesn't work, and we abandon it. While that might be true, those conclusions can also be our way of avoiding the work of dealing with feedback, analyzing what the problem is (such as the method, premise, script, props, our handling, our timing, and so on), and fixing the problem.

### Doubly Painful and Shameful

When I started to become interested in magic I overheard an older magician say something that always stuck with me. It was at a convention. A younger magician had just demonstrated his latest invention and failed. The older magician said, "Don't worry. We all fail and you're in the right place: every magician needs a place to be bad." At the time I thought this was very supportive, and later I appreciated it even more when I discovered that, for me, failing to execute a magic routine perfectly is much more painful than failing in other areas of my life.

For example. I played the accordion for about twelve years and did judo for twenty-five years. I became quite skilled in both areas, but when I became a magician I observed that missing a note while playing a song or losing in a judo match was far less painful and shameful than making a mistake while doing magic. Of course, I felt some pain and shame in all three situations but for some reason it feels so much worse after being told by

And the only way to get that feedback, to discover the problems so we can fix them is by doing a routine for real people. And so we will be more nervous, we will breathe a bit more irregularly, our muscles will be a bit more tense. Which makes it much harder to get past those first bumps and very likely will cause some significant bumps of their own. I am sure you can see the dilemma here, the Catch-22.

## Failing Comfortably

One way out of the impasse is to create spaces where we can fail comfortably. For example, when I am breaking something in I typically go to a bar, order coffee, and start to play with my cards. This will catch someone's attention. Once our eyes meet I will make the first move by saying hi. If they engage me back, I will introduce myself, "My name is George Parker. I'm a magician. I'm working on this new trick and I think I need to perform it for a live audience. But I feel there are still some weaker parts. Can I seduce you to help me rehearse? I'll treat you to a cup of coffee or anything you want and I have a small magical gift for you as well."

I have found that, unless they're in a hurry, they will help. I record (audio and sometimes video) my performance for future reference. I always close by thanking them with a gift magic trick (a concept explained in our Magic & Mystery School Faculty book *Gift Magic, Performances that Leave People with a Souvenir*). Also, be sure you close with a strong routine so you'll feel good about your rehearsal.

By framing my performance this way, I avoid the sometimes paralyzing and haunting feelings of shame. It's an extension of my practice and rehearsal process in the real world. As my real-work rehearsals continue, I build slightly bigger audiences in somewhat different conditions. All this helps me work on a routine longer and build more confidence. I will not discard a potentially good trick

before I have gone through all the necessary stages and this includes these "try-out" performances.

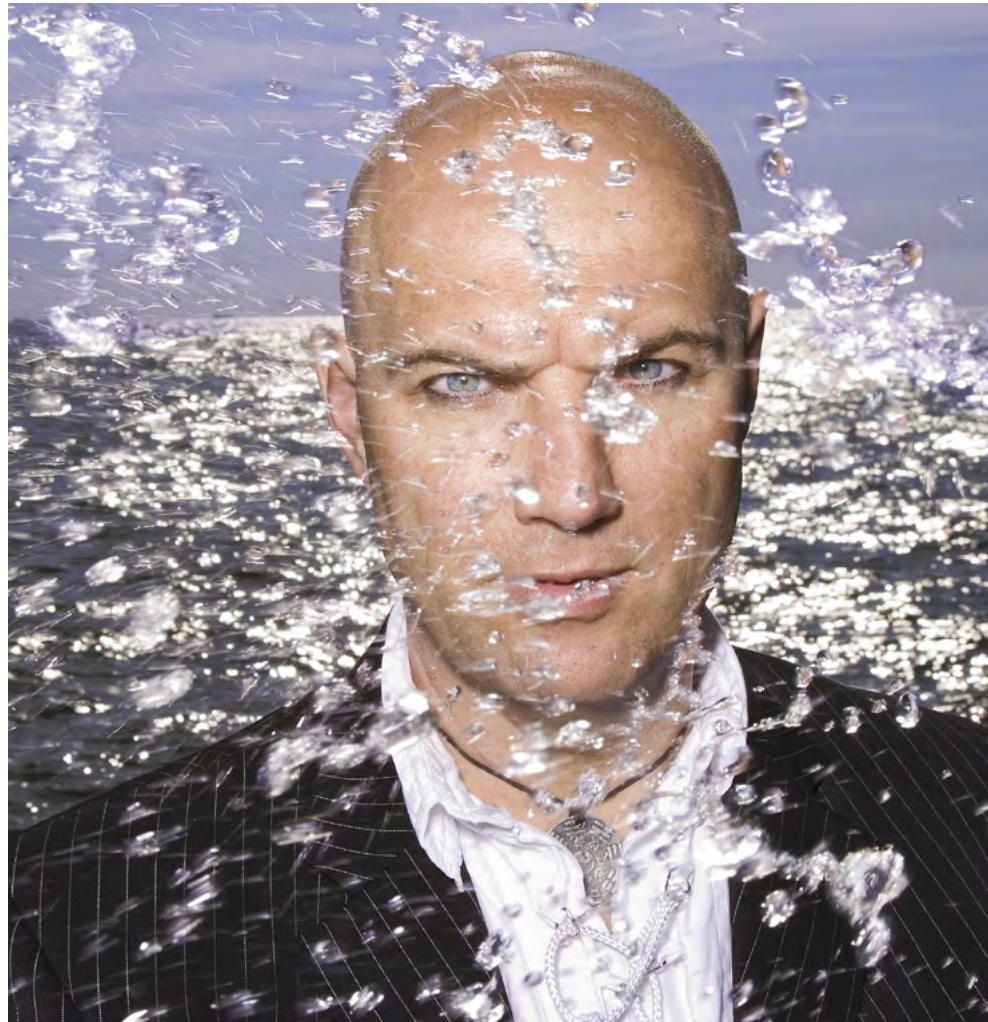
### What's in Your Closet?

Perhaps there are tricks you have discarded because you performed it unsuccessfully a couple of times. Maybe you're still frustrated by it because you know it's a great trick. Instead of stopping too soon I encourage you to create some try-out' opportunities for yourself. Take in the feedback and work on it a bit more.

Remember: "difficult," "shame," and "pain" are not criteria to decide if you should stop working on something. Stay focused on the effect and work comfortably to discover and fix all the flaws.

***George Parker, a Dutch performer in great demand, is on the faculty of Jeff McBride's Magic & Mystery School. For full details about the School's live learning and online classes please go to: [www.magicalwisdom.com](http://www.magicalwisdom.com).***

... one way  
out of the  
impasse it  
to create  
spaces where  
you can fail  
comfortably ...



# QUESTIONS WITH NICHOLAS EINHORN

## FROM Full Circle Magic

The following questions were asked by members of FCM during an online interview with Charlotte. We would like to thank all those who took part and to the FCM team who are working with us at VANISH to release these interviews.

Nick, let's get right into it. What would you say is your favorite effect to perform from your repertoire?

Well it depends on the show I am doing, (i.e. close up or cabaret) - but for close-up it is probably 'Spooked' (Haunted Deck) or my ring on string routine with additional things either side. I always have about 6 pet effects, but often I perform stuff I have not done for years

and realize that it is also super material. I am having a lot of fun with Michael Close's 'Dr. Strangetrick' currently. I have to say 'Spooked' has been good to me over the years and has become a bit of a signature effect for me.

Can you tell us when why, and how you started in magic?

I was 4, a magician performed the Milk Pitcher and that was it! Then by 12, I was doing kids shows and after that I was heavily involved in magic performing as much as possible. I worked for Marvin's

NICHOLAS EINHORN



Magic(David Berglas' son) in 'Harrods' and 'Hamleys of London' selling his range of magic and that was great performing experience.

So you sold products for them by performing those products?

Yes I was a salesman and demonstrator; lots of Svengali decks, Dynamic coins and the usual plastic props.

When did you decide to become an author?

I was approached in 2000/2001 about doing a book. There were several other people up for the job - but I happened to have a little write-up in a national newspaper that weekend and the publishers contacted me.

Did you think you or your publisher ever expected your books

would become as popular as they have?

Never. They have sold over 1 million copies worldwide now - I am astounded. I always get messages from people who have seen them in the strangest places – However I rarely see them!

Who did you publish your first book with, and you said they had the idea?

The publisher was Hermes House/Lorenz Books and they were committed to doing a magic book for the public - but had not chosen an author - I researched all of the items and the contents were really down to me - A BIG project spanning 9 months for the first book and 5 months for the second book. Second time around they used a digital photographer and so that saved loads of time!

What advice can you give to young authors wanting to be published?

There are two routes to publishing your work - One: Write it and find a publisher. 2: Find a publisher first. My advice would be to write your own book and that way you get into the discipline of writing. Explaining things clearly is actually very difficult to do. Nowadays there is a 3rd, self-publishing. Never been easier with programs that allow fortysetting and places online where you can print 1, 2 or 100 copies as and when you like.

Which is most favorable? A lot of people are putting out pdf's; do you recommend that?

PDFs are quick and cheap to make, but I love nothing more

### "I WOULD RATHER ENJOY A BOOK THAN WATCHING A DVD"

than to hold a book in my hands - I have 100's of DVDs here - some still shrink wrapped. I just don't like watching TV, so for me I would rather enjoy a book than DVD.

Tell us where you get your inspirations from outside that you bring into your magic?

Inspiration... I like to watch musicals and see how they make music and script work. Not always practical in most performance situations but none the less a musical and even a singer can touch an audience very quickly. It is harder to make people care about tricks.

Nick, how was your experience on Penn & Teller and how long had you been developing that effect?

The effect I performed on P & T was a variation on something, which has been in my act for a while, but for TV, I had to make it visually more interesting and thus the theme of food, etc. Doing the show was stressful, but obviously I am glad I did it! The show never got re-commissioned, which was a huge shame as the public seemed to love it, however not enough of them tuned in so the maximum viewing figures were around 4-5 million and that was too little for the prime time audience they were hoping to capture - I guess that is the nature of TV. The

format was a little flawed in that no revelations were really made in order to respect the magicians (Which was great for the magicians) but the public wanted the revelations to be more obviously exposed. Teller is a genius though and P & T's show in Vegas was one of the most motivating and inspiring things I have ever seen.

Do you enjoy the stage as much as close-up?

Yes, I love stage work - mostly after dinner cabarets for clients, but I'm doing my own show for 4 nights at The Magic Circle in London next month, so I'm working hard on material for that!

Nick, what is your practice regimen?

I practice new stuff A LOT but the things I do in my regular close-up set I usually don't rehearse too much. I can spend hours working on a new item though. I find that when magic is my sole income stream the "business" is as important, if not more so, than the magic - so I spend a lot of time doing the boring stuff.

What do you think is your biggest achievement to date?

Biggest magical achievement would probably be performing on the stage of the London Palladium, although winning some of the competitions I entered has also been up there.

Wow... outstanding. Do you notice differences in reactions to your effects from different cultures?

I perform in the UK and reactions are all, by and large, the same,

however, when I perform on a cruise or abroad reactions can be amusingly different - In India and Marrakech I nearly started a religion! In Marrakech I pulled a coin out of a child beggar's ear and he ran away screaming and then returned moments later with 15 of his relatives all chasing me across the square!

That's funny Nick! Can you explain your philosophy on how you approach people to do close-up? Those first few seconds are the hardest. What's your best approach?

My approach is to say (and this may not really work when written): "Hi, I'm Nick, and I'm a magician, here to show you something amazing... you look delighted to see me!" This lets them know that I realize they are generally not delighted to have been interrupted by a magician but they give me a few seconds to do something amazing

That's good... I love that! I'm taking notes here.

Another good line of approach is... I am a magician here tonight and I have 2 minutes to show you something AMAZING. That lets them know I am not going to be overstaying my welcome and generally gives me a few seconds to get going.



What advice can you give beginners who want to get out and perform full time to market themselves?

Full time...I say get residencies. Residencies would be regular work in a particular restaurant, bar or venue. (i.e. a weekly show) where you are paid to perform. I had 4 per week at one time. It's very important to get the performing experience and to be seen by as many people as possible. Use the residencies as a marketing tool and choose your places wisely. I have had one particular residency for over 15 years - a major Soccer club where I perform in the corporate hospitality lounges and boxes... it has been exceptionally good to me and a massive spiral of work has come from it. I have had one particular residency for over 15 years - a major Soccer club where I perform in the corporate hospitality lounges and boxes.....it has been exceptionally good to me and a massive spiral of work has come as a result.

If you could spend the day with any magician, past or present, who would it be and why?

Great question. I would love to spend the day with Dai Vernon - I have not studied his work too much but he had such a huge influence on magic that it would be amazing to be able to see him in action. Of course, here in the UK I was spoiled and got to spend a lot of time with Pat Page, Ali Bongo, Alex Elmsley Alan Shaxon (A great man) and many other greats who sadly are no longer here.

Can you tell us a little about your next writing project?

I was meant to be writing another book for 8-12 year olds, but the publisher has disappeared on me! I would like to collate a book of my work up until this point in time, but that probably would be a work in progress for the next 10 yrs. or so... and then release something with a lot of stuff in it.

The Einhorn box-set? lol Nick' s greatest hits?

I did also think about releasing a magic set for the professional performer - basically a replica set of stuff I make a living from - I figure that would have some worth to people with a serious interest.

Young magicians are so impressionable, what are your feelings on YouTube magic?

YouTube is great and awful! Like most technology it can be both things.

What do you feel about young magicians learning from YouTube?

I think kids can find secrets too easily nowadays - I liked the hunt.

What do you consider your greatest effect?

Greatest effect? I guess 'Spooked' but I also use 'Pro-Flite' and the 'Nest of Wallets' every show I do. 'Spooked' would be the one I'd pick above all of them though.

Spooked is a great piece of magic. Now magicians have been nesting things for centuries. What was the impetus for 'The Nest of Wallets?' How did that idea happen?

Nest of Wallets is actually over 40 years old! I just popularized it again... Over a 10 year period I developed lots of ways to use it and routine it. The originator is unknown, although someone mentioned a Japanese magician but I have been unable to trace him.

The 'Nest of Wallets' just works and you don't get caught.

Yes, it is another of my favorite props to use -Never fails to get a huge reaction and just so versatile.

Nick, there is something unique about your magic. What do you feel makes your magic unique and why?

Unique? - I think what makes my magic unique is ME. And I think the fact that I know I will never be funny like Williamson or Malone , I just do

it my way - and people like genuine people. They can tell if someone is trying too hard. I have a rule... I don't have to be the best magician in the world; I only have to be the best magician they have ever seen! Thank goodness my clients don't know Malone or Williamson etc. or they would realize they should have booked them instead!

Nick if you had unlimited resources to do any performance you wanted what would you do, where, and why?

Jees -toughie... I don't actually know! I think I would like to make a soccer team appear from the center circle surrounded by 40,000 people at the start of a match. Not entirely sure I have a method, but that is what I would choose!

Where do you see yourself in say... 10 yrs. from now?

10 years? Probably still doing much the same as I am now but perhaps less shows - and less table-hopping, which is tiring on the back!

**WATCH BONUS VIDEO**



Nick fooled  
Penn & Teller.



# THE SUCCESS SERIES ... CRIS JOHNSON



I've been doing magic full time for 10 years and professionally for close to 20 years and over the years, my love of great magic has never waned, but as it's been my primary source of income for so long, I definitely look at magic with a more critical eye and with a leaning toward the business side... in other words, the honeymoon period is over!

When I talk to magicians who are either just starting out or are part-time or amateur performers, I hear things that cause me to shake my head because they're doing the kinds of things I used to do as well.

One of the things I've learned as a full-time pro is to have a set list...or rather, a SET set list, meaning that in the vast majority of situations, I know what routines I'm going to

perform the second I book the gig. By that, I mean I don't put together a custom show for clients very often anymore. I have a certain sequence of effects and I string them out every time in the same way.

Now don't get me wrong – I'm not claiming to run the exact same sequence of routines for each performance I do, although I could if I limited my markets. What I mean is simply this: If I'm performing for 400 school children for a daytime assembly program on a given topic, I know well before the show date what I'm going to do. If I'm booked to perform for 20 kids at a child care center, ages 2-6, I know exactly what I'll do. If I'm performing for a corporate group of 70 people, I know exactly what I'll do. The set lists will vary quite a bit based on my audience's demographics, but

99% of the time, I know what I'm going to do.

Granted, if it's an unusual situation, I may alter a given set list a bit. In a week or so, I will be performing for 400 5th grade students at a school...a very targeted age group, so I've altered what I usually do to suit that unique circumstance. Or the gig two months ago where I was asked to just do a short 20-30 minute act as part of a variety night where I was but one performer and I had to be able to get on and off the stage very quickly.

But those gigs are the exception. So, what do I mean by a set list? Simple – for a given set of performing parameters, based on age of the audience, number of attendees and other factors, I have routines that I do in the same sequence each time. For instance, for one of my corpo-

rate holiday party set lists, I always start off the show with Steve Spill's Mind Reading Goose, followed by Martin Lewis' Technicolor Prediction, followed by Banachek's PK Touches and so on. For my school Bullying show, I start off with Kevin James' Bowl-A-Rama and end the show with Losander's Floating Table (and obviously a ton of stuff between!)

Now, I realize that some reading this will be horrified by the fact that I seemingly mindlessly spit out the same effects in the same order every time for a given set of parameters. "Where's the artistry?" I can almost hear some people saying. The artistry comes from knowing what I'm going to be doing each time...and that security, that rock-solid certainty that only came after literally thousands of performances, gives me and other pros who follow this mindset an incredible freedom of performing.

Huh?

Simple – I follow a set list and a script so I have the safety and security to leave the script when an opportunity arises for a great adlib or other wonderful interactions. For example, my Hand Chopper routine, which is 6 minutes of non-stop laughter of mostly completely original jokes, was built from the ground up exclusively from adlibs slowly, over the course of 15 years or so. It's now the funniest routine I do and the one I'm proudest of. Unlike my Pro Viper script, (which, after 500 or so performances, is still very close to the script I crafted on a road trip through Pennsylvania 5 years ago) I'm delighted that the Arm Chopper routine grew organically, as the rush of performing and the feeling of security freed the creative part of my mind to be able to come up with some really great stuff live, on stage.

In short, having a rock-solid, finely crafted set list that is fully scripted, gives me the freedom to actively

search out, either consciously or subconsciously, the opportunities to try out new things in front of live audiences. It's gratifying and an extremely fun way to work and to my way of thinking, is art in the truest sense: I walk out onstage completely prepared and confident to give my audiences a great show...and because of this preparation, true spontaneity can occur and allow me to say or do things to truly connect with that audience on a personal level so they KNOW they're not just getting a robot regurgitating lines.

On the other hand, being so prepared and (to an outsider) rigid in this manner can also save us if we're not at 100% when performing. As of this writing, it's November 3rd, 2013 and as is customary for me, I just finished an intense schedule of performing for the month of October. In the United States, in most parts of the country (at least the Northeast) school assembly programs – my bread and butter – are in high demand, so I often make close to 25% of my gross income for the year in that one month. As a result, it's often physically and mentally exhausting to me and to make matters more challenging, this past week brought two other considerations:

1. I was debuting a brand new school assembly magic show with 75% of the routines brand new, due to the particular theme of this show being wayyyyy out of my usual comfort zone.
2. I was sick as hell, and shot physically before I even got to the first school that week.

Fortunately, because I had spent the last several months tweaking, re-hearsing, and fine-tuning the show, by the time I was to perform live in front of paying clients, the fact that I was sick and exhausted went unnoticed by everyone. I taped the first 4 performances and upon watching them, I even impressed myself with how little any trace of illness or fatigue showed.

Additionally, the big finale of the show was something I'd never performed before and it's a little unnerving to think that my lasting impression was something that as far as live performing went, it was brand new to me! As I said, everything went off without a hitch and I couldn't have been more pleased. So, to sum up, having your scripts and effect set lists locked in gives you a sense of ease and comfort that subconsciously is transmitted to the audience: "Oh, this guy is a pro - he's done this many times!"

Also, setting aside the whole "artist" thing, having your set list and scripting locked in means that if things go sideways, you can still just gut it out and get the job done. Sometimes, art gets tossed to the side and you simply become a mechanic...you're paid to do a job. You do the job, collect your check and once you're alone, THEN you can collapse...at least that's how I look at it.

I recently received confirmation that my way of thinking is not unique, either. When I was in my hotel room the other day, I was watching the DVD commentary of the classic movie "Big Trouble in Little China." During the commentary over the film, director John Carpenter and star Kurt Russell were reminiscing about a day during shooting where Russell was deathly ill, with a fever of 104. The director told the star, "Look, I know you're in rough shape. I'll shoot all your scenes and close ups first. Just get the dialog out, that's it."

It was fascinating, because both Carpenter and Russell clearly saw themselves as artists, but that day on the set, both became mechanics – they just had to get the footage onto film to prevent the film shutting down.

Art is important, but the BEST art comes from being prepared, as it frees your mind up to do other things and being prepared can help save you if disaster strikes.

# JAY ALEXANDER

## THE ART OF A MODERN MAGICIAN

Nick Lewin

In a recent interview Jay took the time to share his story and some of his secrets with me. I am now delighted to pass on that information in the following article about this unique and multitalented artist.

Jay was born in Houston, Texas and at eleven years old he started his love affair with magic in the traditional manner when he received a magic set as a gift. During the intervening years he has honed his skills and perfected a persona that has allowed him to become one of the most successful corporate magicians in America.

After Jay had learned to perform the tricks in his magic set, he was lucky enough to find an ideal spot to practice them. His mother owned a shoe store in which she worked, and Jay spent a lot of time there in the next few years performing his magic for the customers. It was here that Jay started to acquire his '10,000 hours of practice....'

He credits these beginnings as laying an early groundwork for his later corporate work. "Working in the shoe store taught me quite a bit about entertaining with my magic. It was my first lessons in selling product and customer service." In fact it was there in the shoe store that Jay first discovered a principle that became central to his future approach to magic. "It is all about entertaining the people, it's not about me. I strongly feel that at the end of the night it's about me making a great party for my clients."

When he wasn't busy performing Jay was influenced





JAY ALEXANDER

THE ART OF A MODERN

MAGICIAN

**"All you need is a sword basket, sword suspension and a sub trunk and you can travel the world forever!"**



and inspired by magicians he saw on TV such as Harry Anderson and the late, great Doug Henning. He saw Henning perform live in Houston in those early years. Many years later he was watching Henning in Las Vegas at the MGM Hotel and Casino on the very night the hotel almost burned to the ground. It was truly a night to remember.

At the age of thirteen someone in the shoe store asked him if he performed kid's shows and Jay instantly responded, "Yes!" This quick response led to his first professional booking at the grand sum of five dollars. After the show he took his five-dollar bill to 'Archie's Magic Store' in Houston to buy a trick.

Wayne Raeke, who worked at the store, was to become Jay's first mentor and began in this role when he advised him not to spend his money on one bad trick, but to buy a book and learn several good routines. This advice was as sound then as it now. That first book Jay purchased was Bert Easley's 'Doing Magic For Youngsters.'

Jay's second paid show found his fee doubling to ten dollars, and he returned to 'Archie's' and bought a copy of 'Royal Road to Card Magic.' He had now officially begun his own Royal Road into becoming the knowledgeable and highly individual performer that he has since blossomed into. Jay is still a voracious reader of every kind of magic book. Talking with Jay it is impossible not to be impressed by the scope of the magical information that he has at his manicured fingertips.

I asked Jay what books he would recommend to magicians and he responded with, 'The Tarbell Course,' '13 Steps To Mentalism,' 'Card College' and Ken Webber's 'Maximum Entertainment For Performers.' When faced with a new project for a corporate client, Jay returns to these books and other classics to serve as an inspiration for fresh effects and presentations.

Wayne was a fine tutor for Jay in those early years and helped him develop a dove act that won first prize in the S.A.M. Junior Contest. During a trip to Baltimore Raeke introduced Jay to seasoned pro Denny Haney, who was a very established cabaret and corporate performer. Denny was another inspiration to the developing performer.

After teaching Jay some card manipulations Haney told him, "All you need is a sword basket, sword suspension and a sub trunk and you can travel the world forever!" While realizing the truth of these words, Jay realized that his path was destined to be that of an adapter and developer, who could take old concepts and cause them to appear brand new.

At age eighteen Jay graduated high school and a couple of days later was on a plane to California where he attended the prestigious San Francisco Art Institute. The Art Institute was the perfect place to fine tune the artistic vision and sense of design that was already shaping his magical vision.

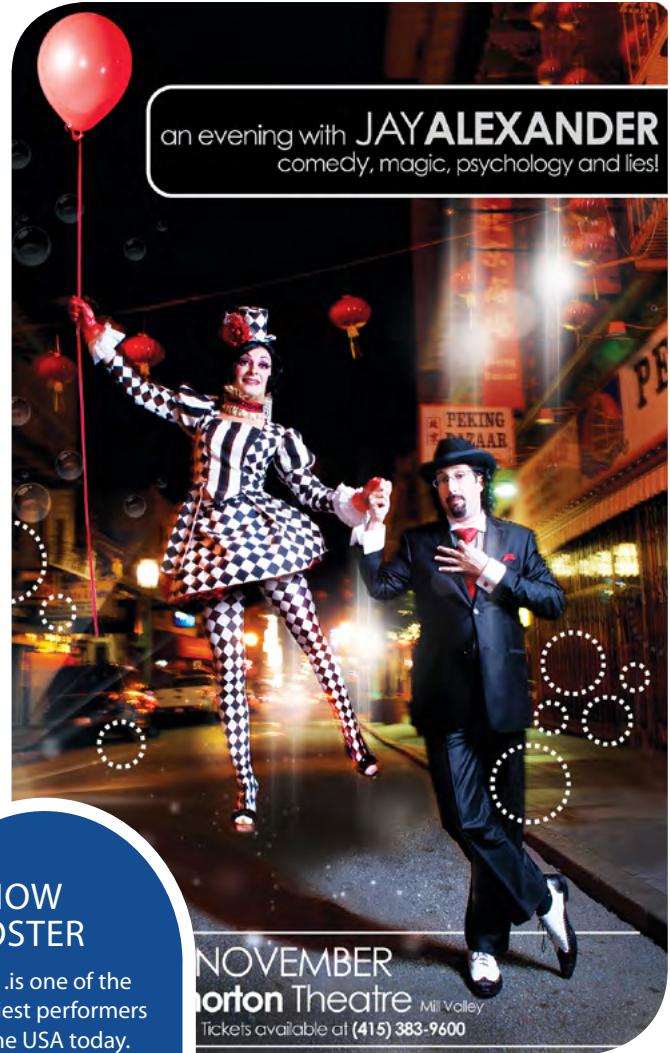
Jay was also attracted to San Francisco because of the thriving street performing scene. It had been instrumental in the development of many of his favorite performers including Harry Anderson, The Raspini Brothers, Michael Goudeau and Frank Olivier. It proved to be the perfect city, at the perfect time for his future career.

Upon arriving in the San Francisco Jay took his magic to the streets and the famous Pier 39 location, as he continued to develop the distinctive high-energy skills, and longhaired Rock and Roll persona that continue to define him today.

One of the first big breaks in Jay's career was when he became a favorite performer with the legendary Rock n' Roll promoter Bill Graham. Graham booked him for repeated performances at the famous Fillmore West and Warfield Theatre, where he performed backstage for iconic rock and rollers such as the Rolling Stones, Fleetwood Mac and Reba McEntire. Jay quickly became a very popular and busy performer in the San Francisco and Silicon Valley area with the help of these ultra hip credentials

"Magicians had always worn suits and ties and looked like sales people when performing for industrial events." Jay says. "I realized that I could be the hip corporate guy, then I could charge more for me because I was the right guy for the market."

Jay's long hair and leather motorcycle jacket (with an Apple symbol on it) created a bond with an entire new generation of corporate buyers. Jay quickly became the 'go to' guy for the wildly successful high-tech and dot-



coms' that were flourishing in the area.

Another big break for Alexander was the release of a popular magic DVD-Rom called 'Learn the Art of Magic,' that introduced Jay to the national spotlight and resulted in a series of appearances on major television interview shows. This project was a perfect blend of ground breaking technology and performance skills that have remained a personal trademark to this day. It is hard to tell which topic he enjoys talking about most—Apple or Magic!

Jay's success has continued building from those early days and he is now one of the most successful corporate magicians in the market. I was pleased that he shared some excellent and highly commercial advice about this lucrative field of work. Here are some of his thoughts about the after-dinner shows and corporate events in which he specializes.

Jay has a very simple and impeccably correct philosophy for improving your performance, "Nothing makes you better than working." However, we live in a time when you frequently hear performers grumbling that there isn't enough work out there. The Jay Alexander

datebook is living proof that this isn't always the case and here are some of his tips to fill up your datebook.

"The first thing to do is give all the people who supply you with dates the tools needed to turn potential dates into signed contracts. Good video, promotional material and photographs are essential. These are the items that will make it easier for your representative to book you to their clients." This is a simple but incredibly important point for a performer to remember. Sometimes just having a web site isn't enough.

The visual impact of Alexander's persona is particularly evident in the photographs that are part of his publicity material. His photo shoots are very pre-planned and he arrives at the photographer's studio with his ideas firmly in place. His advice to fellow performers is, "Don't look at photos of other magicians when you are planning a photo session. Check out Entertainment Weekly and the Internet for interesting ideas, and then keep a swipe file of cool photos that can act as future inspiration."

Jay has great advice on dealing with potential bookers. "Agents aren't out there just looking for work for you." Many of them are actually party planners, producers or agents acting as brokers. Rarely are there gigs where someone phones up and asks for a magician. Your job is to turn your agent into a partner, so that if someone phones up and asks them for a comedian they can say 'Well, we have a magician who is very funny who would work very well for your event, here's why....' You aren't usually competing with another magician, you are trying to win your fee away from a band, singing waiters or the caterer."

Jay feels that the performing gig begins from the moment you first make contact with the person booking it, and then continues until you send them the thank you note or email when it is completed. He has a really great approach to the 'thank you' note he sends to his clients after his appearance. Jay unobtrusively videotapes all his performances but usually focuses the camera on his audience. If he gets his customary standing ovation, a video clip of it is embedded into the email along with any useful video clips of attendees praising his performance.

The other reason he videotapes his audience is so that later on he can review it and



get visual feedback on how his show is actually being received by the audience. Where does attention begin to drift? Does he need to tighten up his routine at any point? This form of video feedback is a superb way to continuously develop and improve your audience impact.

This was the first time I had heard a performer discuss shooting the audience instead of just their own performance. It makes perfect sense to use this simple method to strengthen your show. There are even cameras/software that allow you to shoot in a forward/backward manner simultaneously to give a detailed view of both audience and performance. However very often Jay just shoots the video on his iPhone.

"The show has to be strong," says Alexander, "but the biggest mistake is in thinking that the show is about you. You need to have a really good show, but it is so not about you, it is about your client and their company." He adds, "It is also equally important that when you arrive at the gig to perform the show that you have the social graces you need to really make your client happy. Instead of buying another magic book, lot of magicians should think of buying an etiquette book!" Ouch! This is a statement that I know is all too true from my years producing industrial events.

Jay is a proponent of the theory of under-promising and over-delivering on all his dates. He shared an excellent piece of information that he credits to Jay Johnson the brilliant ventriloquist and seminal 'left handed leaguer.' "Every show should be personalized. It may also be customized." Hmm, what exactly is the difference between the two you may ask?

"Personalizing a show is easy and just requires finding out a few things about your client" says Jay, "Learn about their product, buzz words, sales team, rivals etc. You can then personalize the show by slotting these elements into your show rather in the manner of a kids 'Mad Lib' book." Customizing your show takes it to another level, when you create a special routine, add logos to specific props, or use a Modern Cabinet to magically produce the CEO during the event.

Alexander feels every show deserves to be personalized as a matter of course, while the actual customizing of it should probably lead to an additional fee. I really like this distinction and asked Jay about his feelings on fees and what to charge for a show. I was delighted with his insightful thoughts on the topic.

"There is no such thing as overcharging or undercharging a client. You are worth whatever you can get, as long as the people you work with are happy to book you again at that same price. It doesn't matter if you charge \$10,000 or \$100 for a show, if they are not

happy after the show then you charged too much."

Jay shared a great deal more information that I found fascinating and highly relevant for anyone working in the corporate market. In a future article, if he will let me, maybe I will detail a few more of Jay's personal techniques, but I think there are enough great pointers and advice contained in this article to constitute a veritable gourmet meal in the 'Food for Thought' department.

There is a lot more to Jay Alexander than you see onstage, and it only takes a few minutes in his company to feel the warmth and humanity that illuminate his professional persona. His generosity and caring are evident in the way he gives back to his friends and the community in general.

Every January for the last nine years Jay has performed a fundraising show to raise money for Arts & Music programs for schools in his hometown of Novato in Northern California. He began this series of shows when he looked at how many benefits he was appearing in and how often the full cash returns were not finding their way to the cause. He has now raised over \$80,000 for this excellent purpose, and every year he sells out a 700-seat theatre in which he stages the event.

A really unique and giving person, Jay is the perfect epitome of the smart and skilled 21st Century performer. Everywhere he travels to perform his shows the audiences are massively entertained not only by Jay Alexander, but magic itself as an art form.

I hope this brief article gives you a taste of the man and his ideas. It was a pleasure interviewing him and I learned a great deal in the process, count me as Jay's number one fan!





# PRE-SHOW

***"It's not about ego; it's about the end result."***



**"Criticism, like rain, should be gentle enough to nourish a man's growth without destroying his roots.**

**-Frank A. Clark**

## Pre-Show

When does your show start? 2pm, 5pm, 7:30pm? When you appear on-stage?

No, it starts once the audience begins entering the theater and taking their seats.

You are setting the mood and building the expectations of everyone before the curtain even opens. This time allows you to put the audience into the frame of mind that you want for your show before you even begin the performance. It also puts a crowd of normally complete strangers

at ease and forms them into a group that responds together through laughter, applause, and ooh & aah's.

I think all of us have looked from behind the curtain to see what the audience looks like. Are they smiling, happy and talking? Are their arms folded, checking phones, looking down, or sleeping? If they are bored and not given something to focus on during the time from being seated to the show starting, it will be that much harder to get them going once you hit the stage.

Bands, famous comedians, and stars almost always have opening acts. They are there to build the energy and get the audience "warmed up". Not all of us have the luxury of hiring another act to do that for us, so we must use creative ways to get the audience to be excited about being there for our show.

For some of us, the audience may not even know who we are when they come to the show. If they bought a ticket to our show, they may have learned about us through marketing, posters, or on the internet. Our show may be part of entertainment already provided at a theme park, cruise ship, variety show, circus, festival, fair, restaurant, or other event. In this case, it is a good idea to have a pre-show to let the audience know who we are, what kind of show we do, and get them ready before we begin performing.

If you start to look around, you will see that we are being "warmed up" nearly everywhere we go. There are

previews and ads at the movies; specially chosen magazines, paintings, and plants in the doctors office; even soothing music in the elevator.

Television sit-coms always use a warm-up act to get the audience laughing and responding before tapings. Once the audience has been "trained" to laugh and respond, even some of the lame jokes in the script might still get a response.

Theme parks such as Disney and Universal use pre-show to make the waiting time in line for a ride or attraction seem to move faster or less boring. They achieve this with special scenic elements, interactive effects, activities, and video presentations.

When the house opens before a show, it may be up to an hour before you come out. Who likes waiting for something to start? Don't make it feel like we're waiting for a start. Make it feel like once we enter the doors to the theater, that something has already started. We've left the normal

world and come into your world.

One of the best examples of a pre-show that I have seen is Blue Man Group. The stage has a few scrolling LED signs that display comedic lines about no video-recording, or photography, participatory bits with the audience, birthday messages & special guest shout-outs, and funny comments. It's very entertaining and keeps the audience active and involved. They are never bored and always intrigued. Music helps keep the energy and builds toward the opening. It's very visual and achieves exactly what the producers want before the show starts.

Here is a video of the Blue Man LED scrolling signs to give you an idea:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PDCV1CyxWDA>

"A Pre-Show can be a very powerful tool."

When used effectively, the pre-



Scrim Image for Charles Bach

show can be a very powerful tool.

Here is a list of some uses for a pre-show:

- Make them know and remember your name.
- Let them see what you are like before you enter the stage.
- Build excitement.
- Engage the audience.
- Inform the audience.
- Warm up the audience and get them into a responsive mood.
- Bring a group of strangers together into a responsive audience.
- Create back of house sales or grow your mailing list.

What mood do you want to create? What frame of mind would you like your audience to be in once you appear?

- Mysterious
- Comedic
- Party
- Serious
- Thoughtful
- Unexpected
- Uncomfortable
- Suspicious
- Fearful

For some solid examples of effective pre-shows, I have compiled a list of many of them below:

- Music – This is the easiest and most common way to create the mood you want for your show. Try to use songs that build or have mysterious magical sound to create your desired atmosphere. By increasing the volume as you get closer to show-time, the audience will talk louder and sound like a bigger crowd. You can also use well-known songs that are catchy to sing along with or you participate in. “If You’re Happy and You Know It.” will make them clap their hands and is playful, fun, and a little childish.
- Videos – Many magicians use videos to introduce their shows and it’s also an inexpensive way to engage the audience during the pre-show.
- Characters – Disney uses bird puppets outside the Tiki Room show to warm-up the audience during waiting time. Siegfried and Roy had masked & robed silent characters walking around with white tiger stickers placed on guests. Cirque du Soleil often uses a clown character that follows people as they are being seated. They mimic the guests walking, hold their hand, rub a feather in the ear, or knock popcorn out of their hands.
- Lighting effects - If you have the equipment available, lights moving slowly over the audience or stage with slow color changes can set the mood for magic.
- Slide show – I remember a show by Glen Campbell with a cool pre-show of the entire History of Art in 10 min. It started slow and went through slides of famous artworks, moving faster and faster till it reached the current year. I remember being extremely impressed, but surprised this came from the guy that wrote Rhinestone Cowboy.
- Countdown Clock - Have a countdown clock showing how much time is left before starting. Maybe a giant hourglass. Keep it interesting. If I remember correctly, Avner the Eccentric does his own pre-show as a cleaning man. He’s sweeping up and finds a piece of paper, which he opens, and it says, “5 Minutes”.
- Announcements - No smoking, no flash photography, cell phones to silent mode, etc. Make them funny or amusing.
- Display Props - In a spotlight on-stage, have a prop that will be used during the show for the audience members to examine. A box? An envelope? A jar of jelly beans? The audience members can check out the item displayed, autograph it, or guess the number inside. They become engaged and involved. This concept has been used very effectively by Darren Brown, Penn & Teller, Copperfield, and even Houdini.
- Cameras on the audience. - Amazing Johnathan had a really funny pre-show that fit his style of practical joking perfectly. He would use video cameras focused on audience members and have comments about them appear below. From time to time, a pre-recorded bit would happen, such as a Gorilla sitting in a seat or a topless woman.

These are just some of the examples of ideas that can be used in a pre-show. You can also take advantage of your “captive audience” for some advertising and sales. Below are a few ideas to increase your audience or make more money.

- Use the pre-show time to expand your mailing list, add subscribers to your news feeds, sell product, or grow your audience.
- Have cards to read while seated. Maybe they are used in a trick later and have all your merchandise there as well. Marshall Silver, the hypnotist/magician had a full menu of available products on each table to browse before his show.
- Allow them to see your Twitter feed live and let them interact with it through their phones. Let them sign up for your newsletter. Or, have them send an e-mail or call a number to get the answer to some question. Copperfield’s new e-mail trick is the perfect way for him to



## THE TOURISTS

Pre-show charac-  
ters who open the  
show.

"get" a huge mailing list and provide an amazing magic effect for each person that participates.

- Make money from the pre-show. For an extra charge, special "VIP audience members" can have early seating, receive a magic trick, a personal lesson in how to perform it (live or even a video), or some other extra thing that no one else gets. The nightclubs in Las Vegas are doing this like crazy and are making a killing. Front of line access, private tables, limo service. People are paying up to \$1500 for a bottle of alcohol, some ice and juice, glasses and a table...marked up by 2000% or more! You can do that with a Svengali Deck and a pre-show video!

What if I am a birthday party, street performer, corporate magician, or other performer who is not always in a theater? You still have an opportunity to set the mood and build the excitement for your show to begin. Music is the easiest and one of the strongest ways to build an audience and get them interested in what is coming. Any of the ideas given previously can be done on a smaller scale for nearly any performance environment.

Finally, get creative with your pre-show. I've experimented with a few ideas for my own pre-show. Here are a few I've done and thought about to get your own creativity flowing:

- Have a still picture of you projected on a screen that has little changes from time to time that people will notice. Maybe your picture winks, waves a hand, holds up a funny sign, or acts like it's cold and puts on a jacket. Then, the original still image returns again. When the show is about to start, the image becomes a video that does the introduction, flips a light-switch and the house lights go out, ready to begin the show.

- A DVD plays with optical illusions or interactive magic effects that the audience can participate in. It's cool to hear the audience reacting to the interactive tricks and know that they are already engaged and interested before the show has even started.

- I have two puppets that act as tourist audience members talking and making jokes about where they are seated, how long till the show starts, me and what the show is about, and about audience members seated already. They appear every couple of minutes for a short gag and then do more just before the show starts and the larger part of the audience has arrived. They are also part of the show and involved in a magic effect.

It may seem obvious, but you need to know your character and your show very clearly. Then, you can create a pre-show that fits with your theme and style. If you create the wrong atmosphere for your show, it will be difficult to

drag the audience to a different attitude once you begin.

Not all pre-shows are effective and usually need to change. Even the top magician in our field had what I felt was an ineffective pre-show a couple years ago.

David Copperfield used to open his show with a resume reel of his achievements, appearances in pop-culture, and old television performances. My personal feeling was that it only made you wonder why this was being played. Was he trying to tell us who he is and how great he is? We, the audience, definitely knew who Copperfield was and already bought the ticket. There was no need to "sell" us again. Many of the illusions shown in the video were more spectacular than those on-stage and Copperfield had more energy on the video than in the show. I felt it was not effective as a pre-show warm-up.

Thankfully, he changed it and it now does everything you'd want a pre-show to do. While they are still available, there are some links below to videos of Copperfield's pre-show made by some normal audience members. You will see many of the elements discussed in this article in use. In the first, you can see the moving lights, catchy music playing, and even the table tent selling merchandise. The second shows an e-mail address to send a message to and see your location light up on the screen, plus participate in a trick later on, and get added to the mailing list. The third link is the locked hanging box prediction being raised into position a few minutes before show-time.

[WATCH BONUS VIDEO](#)

[WATCH BONUS VIDEO](#)

[WATCH BONUS VIDEO](#)

The possibilities are endless and I'm sure you already have some ideas of your own after reading this article. Experiment and try them out. Please respect what others have done and take it in your own direction, but feel free to use all the tools available to achieve what you want.

The cost of putting a pre-show together is fairly low and what it will do for your show will surprise you. It's like having a warm-up act that travels with you.

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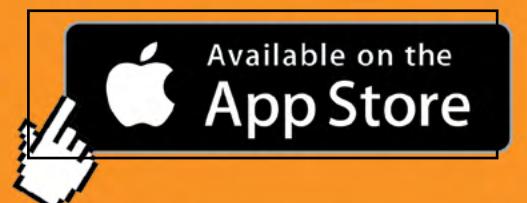
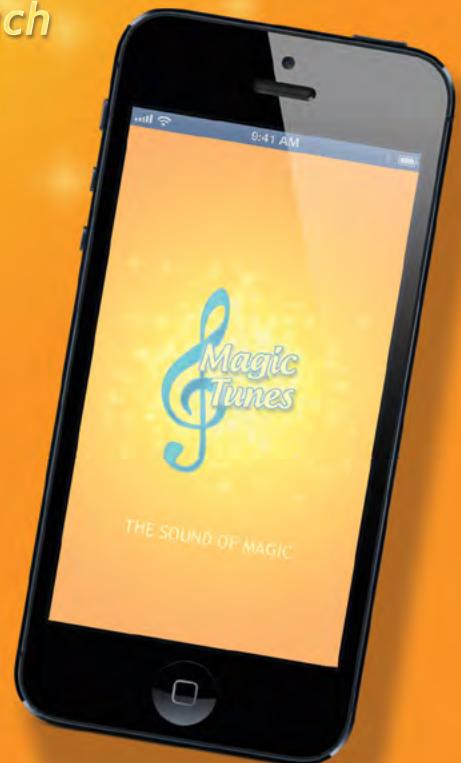
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# WHAT 10 YEARS IN RETAIL TAUGHT ME ABOUT SHOW BUSINESS

**PETER MENNIE**

## You get what you pay for - Part 2

### SHOP IN PERSON

Back B.T.I. (Before The Internet), the only way, really, that you could shop was in person. You had to get in your car, go to the store, pick up the product and see if it was right for you.

I still think that is the best way to do business – on both sides of the store window.

Being in the business of show business, means it's all about people. Every successful company made their success because of their dealings with people (both their customers and their employees). As a matter of fact, yesterday I called one of my upcoming clients to ask a question and was shocked that a human actually answered the phone. The company was a big hotel/resort and in the past I would get "Press 1 for ..... Press 2 for ..... This call may be monitored for .....". This time however, I felt like I was someone special; someone that THEY wanted to talk to – not the other way around.

How does this apply to what we do? Simple. Be available to your clients. Don't be like a WalMart employee and hard to find. You have a cell phone for a reason. Use it. Give out your cell number (or forward your business line to your cell), so that you can be available to speak to your clients – when they need to speak to you. That's why they are calling you. They want an answer. More importantly, they need to be reassured that they have made the right decision in hiring you.

They want to feel important.

Think about how frustrating it is to you when you call and don't get that person on the phone yourself. You have to leave a message. Then you have to wait until they call back. They feel the same way about calling you.

A few years back there was a marketing strategy that suggested you should never answer your own phone; that you should always let it go to voice mail. The thinking was that it gave the perception that you were really successful – too successful in fact, to



answer the phone.

Bullshit.

That was before the age of cell-phones and instant messaging. If you don't want to talk to your client then don't give out your number or email. People ALREADY KNOW you are successful, that's why they are calling you. Clients are contacting you because they want to hire you. They have already committed themselves. Imagine their delight when the president of your company – YOU – answers the phone.

Business etiquette today suggests that you contact a client in the same manner as they contact you. As an example, if they call you on the phone, you call back, on the phone. If they email, you email. However, here's a suggestion that will make you stand out. When a client emails you asking for more info (or fills out the form on your website), in addition to replying to their email, give them a quick phone call, introduce yourself, mention that you are sending them more information by email but that you just wanted to say hi and thanks for the interest in your service. Trust me on this, you WILL be remembered. Heck, they may even ask you for more info over the phone and you could seal the deal right there. Remember, clients don't hire the entertainer for *what* they do, they hire the entertainer for *who* they *are*.

*"It's not about the props, it's about the chops!"*

## **MARKETING**

Marketing and Promotion are two different things. Promotion is the advertising you would do for one event or a series of appearances in order to obtain an audience. Marketing, on the other hand is the ongoing promotion you do to

*"Business etiquette today suggests that you contact a client in the same manner as they contact you. As an example, if they call you on the phone, you call back, on the phone. If they email, you email."*



maintain status in a market. The key word here is "ongoing". Stores use flyers, radio and television ads, billboards, etc., to promote their weekly specials to get their customers in the store. Once they are inside the store, then the marketing takes over. They have uniformed staff, clean aisles, product displays, demonstrations, giveaways – anything that shows their customers that they are a great store to shop at. They offer their customers a great experience while shopping. You should do the same thing.

*Note: Successful stores market themselves all the time – even when they don't have anything to promote. They do charity events, host customer appreciation days, Senior's discount days – it's all designed to keep their name and brand 'out front'.*

Of course we don't have a physical building into which our clients can enter but our 'in-store experience' is us! Our marketing campaign is us! We are our best advertis-

## **POINTS TO CONSIDER**

- Marketing**
- In-Store Experience**
- Get the best raw materials you can afford**

*"Of course we don't have a physical building into which our clients can enter but our 'in-store experience' is us! Our marketing campaign is us!"*

ing and for most of us, we are also our own marketing team.

This means that in EVERY contact with the public, we have to be our best. The best clothes, the best hygiene, the best etiquette and the best language for our market. It's ok to be a slob at home, but going to the local grocery store could be an opportunity to secure a client relationship and we should be prepared. Personally, I never go out without looking my best. I don't wear my stage clothes, but I do plan my day to leave time for a shower and shave even if I'm going to the bank, (especially if I'm going to the bank because they see how much money I make and I want to look the part!).

Also, I don't think it's necessary to be prepared to perform at a moment's notice for a client out in public. I know, a lot of you may disagree with me. Of course have your card ready (or the QR code on your cell-phone), but don't make it into a trick. That's just lame and here's why.

As I've said earlier, clients hire you because of who you are, not what you do. Initially they may contact you because of what you do, but after that the decision is made based on your personality and business acumen. Clients really don't care how good a magician you are – they assume that you are a good magician - why else you would be advertising your services? You may or may not BE a good magician, but most clients are not capable of judging this – because they don't do magic. What they CAN judge, however, is your interaction with them socially and professionally and that's where it counts. It's all about how you interact with your audience that counts. If you pleasant, confident and professional with your client, likely you will be onstage.

So, market yourself well to your clients and you will have a better chance of securing the booking. Don't overdo it, though. No one likes to be inundated with a message over and over and over and over and ov.....

### **IN-STORE EXPERIENCE**

The "in-store experience" for most performers is really two sides of the same coin, with you being the coin. The 'heads' side is a lot like the Marketing section we just discussed. This is making the experience for our clients the most professional and pleasant experience possible.

The 'tails' side of the coin is the performance part of the equation. It's what your audience experiences when they come inside your store – your 'theatre' or the ban-



PETER  
PERFORMING  
ON STAGE

quet hall, if you will. A very good friend, Bill Abbott (the creator of Smart Ass) does something with his marketing and his 'in-store' experience that I wish I'd thought of. A couple of years ago, he changed his show title and marketing to 'The Bill Abbott Experience' it was brilliant! In one title he tells his clients and his audience that what they have is a unique opportunity to be part of something unexpected, unique and unusual. His performance is an experience.

Every show that you put on should be an 'experience'. Just as when customers should be curious and anticipate what wonders lie ahead when they enter a store for the first time (aka 'shopping'), so should they feel the same when they arrive at your show. Think about the ambience you want to create as people are eating their dinner or waiting for the curtain to rise. Do you want them to anticipate your arrival or do you want your appearance to be a surprise? Did they pay to come to your show or are you the after-dinner keynote? Are you the evening's entertainment at a family function or are you (hopefully not) the 'babysitter'? It's all part of how the audience 'shops' (enjoys your performance) and you have to set it up for them.

In my own case, I do a few things that highlight how I

want them to feel by the time I hit the stage because I hate it when I am the surprise entertainment for the evening.

**1. SIGNAGE.** I have two banners on either side of the stage that show my name and photo. This tells people who I am, that I'm a professional and also lets them know it's going to be a fun experience. I use traditional black curtains as my backdrop.

**2. INTRODUCTION.** I have a professionally recorded Intro for the show just in case my client has stage fright. In most cases though, I hand them a short, typed intro they can use to introduce me. Plus, I enter with a short piece of music after the Intro.

**3. BACKGROUND MUSIC.** I have a 30 minute warm-up music segment which I play before the show through my sound system to subtly direct attention to the stage.

### **GET THE BEST RAW MATERIALS YOU CAN AFFORD.**

This one REALLY bothers me, a lot. I have seen many performers who regularly devalue themselves and their work by not utilizing the best props and support equipment that they can afford for their show. They prefer instead to use quantity over quality – buying more and more tricks rather than updating or upgrading what they have. You owe it to your audience to present yourself in the best possible way and that way costs money. That's not a bad thing, it's a good thing! Here's why.

I'm going to hope that everyone reading this is already purchasing the best props for their shows – the best quality decks of cards, the highest quality routines and the best made props. If you aren't, stop buying crap now and switch. Stop buying the knockoffs and the cheap dollar store supplies. It hurts the

industry and it will hurt your career. Those props look second rate and they won't last nearly as long as the quality props made by the quality craftsmen. Quite often these tricks and props fail during a performance and you owe it to your audiences to give them a performance that is the best you can give and that means using only the best equipment. It also makes sense financially. If you spend half as much on a knock-off trick, it will only last half as long mainly because of poorer workmanship and materials. Then you'll have to buy another one. Now you just spent the same amount buying two of them as you would buying one of the quality prop in the first place but you've had the added stress of dealing with the breakdown and the disappointment of your audience – both in the prop breaking and you not giving a 100% performance. In the long run it really does pay to purchase the higher quality materials. It's like an apple with a big bruise on half of it. After you cut away the bruises, you'd have to eat two of these apples to be satisfied. It would have been better just to pick a non-bruised apple.

The same thing goes for your costume, sound equipment, lighting equipment, vehicle, promotional material and the support people you need to present a great show. Think about how you feel walking into a food store that has boxes piles at the front of the store, dirty floors, broken carts and the products themselves are displayed by just opening the carton with an Xacto knife. You take a longer picking out your purchases just to be careful of the product you're getting. You make sure it isn't bruised, out of date or damaged in any way, BUT, if it is, then you weigh the damage against the cost and decide if you can 'live with it'.

Now go into a higher end grocery store. The floors and displays are pristine. The staff is everywhere.

They are giving out free samples. The vegetables are washed and uniform. Do you examine every item in your (brand new) cart with a microscope? Not likely. Because of the manner in which the store presents itself, you make the correct assumption that all of the product is of the very best quality – and it usually is. But that piece of mind costs the store money. It's the same with an audience. If they see you dressed appropriately and elegantly; if they see a neat and tidy stage set-up with clean, well-cared-for props; if they hear your music and introduction through a high quality sound system, then they too make the assumption that they are going to experience a professional, high quality performance. They will not have to worry if they will be entertained. They will KNOW they are going to enjoy themselves even before you utter the first word of your script (and you have a written script – right?).

The next time you go into a store, look around. Look at their customers. Are they your audience? If they are the audience you want, then look around the store. Take in the big picture. See how the store is presented. What signage do they use? What music do they play? How are the employees dressed? Is the store inviting? Clean? Easy on the eyes? And yes, compare the prices. Is it a high end store or a discount outlet? The way stores target certain sectors of the public is the same way we as entertainers can target our audiences. If we understand who our demographic is then we can learn from a store that has a similar demographic by emulated their strategies and point of purchase effectiveness. Because after all, it's only about one thing – Customer Service.

Thanks for allowing me to share. If you have any thoughts, I'd love to read them: [petermennie@gmail.com](mailto:petermennie@gmail.com).





# Tony Chris child's Play

Performing  
for the very  
young

This month I would like to cover an age group magicians often forget about when they are creating their shows. These are very young children, the children between the ages of three and five years old. It's the preschool/kindergarten age group. For many magicians the thought of entertaining a room full of three and four year olds can be daunting, and they would rather not attempt it. But I assure you that it is possible to entertain this delicate age if you bring in a little creativity and a lot of variety. And at this age it isn't just birthday parties, but also preschools and daycares. I get plenty of bookings for both, and I perform for this age group throughout the year.

I realize that there are many children's performers who have a particular comfort zone when it comes to the age of their audience. I personally know several kids' magicians who choose to perform only for children six years old and up. If they have an enquiry for a party with kids mostly younger than this, they tend to pass these shows to me. They know I have a special program designed for the preschool/kindergarten crowd, and I will discuss this in more detail later. It is important to note right now that the show I perform for this age group is much shorter than my regular children's routine and I fill it with a variety of children's entertainment.

Choosing to only perform for the six and up crowd is fine. It is not a reflection on someone's skill as a children's entertainer. Sometimes, the performer simply feels that their material is better suited for slightly older children, and they gear their performing personae towards that age group. Also, some performers are just not comfortable keeping a group of these young children engaged and entertained, or they may lack the confidence that says they can. I created my preschool/kindergarten show because kids that age are awesome. They are curious. They are genuine. They are always in the moment, and they embrace

silliness and fun. The show I designed is very specific to that age group, and I adjust my routines and even my personae. I still perform as Zany Zack, however my voice is much more subdued, and my patter, sight gags, facial expressions, and my costume are all designed with that age group in mind. As mentioned above, this particular show is shorter than my standard children's show. I usually perform 40 – 60 minutes of magic, but for the three-to-five crowd I keep it to 30 minutes maximum, and very little magic is actually performed. I utilize several different varieties of entertainment in my show when called upon for this age.

But how do I do it? In my humble opinion, I feel the key factor for entertaining this age group is understanding their young minds. First, you must realize that at this age, especially the three and four year olds, have a much shorter attention span. This is why I do a shorter show. Plus, their self-regulation skills are still developing and they are in the early stages of learning how to monitor their impulses. Self-regulation in this context is the ability to hold back on what would be your first instinct. (In other words, if you think of a clever comment but your brain says, "Whoa, that might be funny or it might not," and so you don't say it – that is self-regulation.) The



comprehension skills of these much younger children must be taken into consideration as well. They can't comprehend how many numbers are between 100 and 1,000, yet Santa and the Easter Bunny are real. This is how their minds work.

Because of these factors, my 30 minute preschool/kindergarten magic show is not, actually, 30 minutes of magic. When I am hired to perform for the three-to-five year olds I have a completely different formula than the six-and-over shows. My formula has worked for me for over 15 years, when I started performing for the very young age groups. Before then I, too, preferred to perform for the slightly older kids. It was when I became a parent I started to understand much more about what a three, four, or five year old thinks is fun. Because these kids are all about fun and play, I knew I could have a great time giving them a great show.

I just had to create a show at their level. The following is essentially my show structure, especially for three and four year olds.

Let's start with the phone call from the parent or the preschool/daycare. With the majority of these shows that I perform, my audience is made up of three and four year olds, though occasionally there may be some five year olds in attendance. When I take the phone call from the prospective customer, I assure them that my show is designed for these very young ages. I explain that I perform my 30 minute show because it is the maximum attention span that a child of that age will have for a live entertainer. I also touch on the variety of my show, so the caller understands that I pack a lot into that half hour.

The variety is where your other talents will be very useful. If you don't have strong talents other than magic, not to worry. I will explain how you can work with what you have and make it into a variety show.

I start by performing a few interactive warm ups with the children. I present myself to them as a friendly and funny guy, so they will be comfortable during the show. Once I have accomplished this, I explain that we are going to have fun together. For young kids it's important to tell them what to expect.

I tell them I will be performing some magic, some puppetry, and some juggling. I also say that we will be playing a game, playing some music, and having an interactive story. Whatever I have on the agenda, they know it's coming. They like surprises, but adjusting to change is harder. Knowing at the start what will happen helps them move from one activity to another.

The basic concept of my show is to perform

magic they can comprehend. I try to connect with them on their age level. For example, children aged three, four, and five still like to color. So it makes sense that the Magic Coloring Book effect has amazing results at this age. They can relate to what is happening. Look! The drawings are now colored in! It's pure magic.

I also do a simple silk vanish with a thumbtip. At this age they understand that if they see an object, it exists. They also know that if the object is moved it stays put until it is moved again. That's it. Their understanding of the physical universe is not complicated. So the simplest magic can have the biggest impact. A Vanishing Cane to Silk is also effective and it's one of my standard effects for my shows.

I also perform the Vanishing Milk Pitcher effect because



they understand liquid being poured through paper equals a big mess. Again, their understanding is not complex, so they are astounded when it simply vanishes into the newspaper. Spongeballs are also great for this age group if it is kept simple and uncomplicated. I like to make the spongeballs appear, disappear, and even multiply in their own hands. It brings the kids away from being an observer of the magic and makes them a part of it.

And finally, I recommend a good ol' change bag. With the abundance of beautifully produced silk effects that are designed for a change bag these days you have tons of choices. I personally enjoy performing a routine where a caterpillar silk changes into a beautiful butterfly. This always goes over well.

These are just a small selection of the magic effects that are appropriate for these young age groups, effects that they will comprehend and enjoy. There are many others of course, but I only perform approximately four per show. Four is enough magic for that age. But whatever effects you include in your show, remember to keep it moving along at a quick pace.

Another part of my act is music. Music is always fun and interactive, and I like to include one or two songs during my show. Since I am also a children's recording

artist, this is an easy one for me. I have a mini acoustic guitar that fits in my performing case for these shows. I teach the children their parts, usually the chorus, and then we sing the song together. I will generally pick a song from such artists as Charlotte Diamond, Raffi, etc, being sure I pick something the kids will know. I also perform one of my original songs. I teach the children the chorus and have them sing along. This is a fun interlude and it gets the kids pumped.

For this age group, juggling is an appreciated art form. You don't have to be expert at it, but they like watching the pattern of the flying balls. I perform a simple juggling routine with three objects. My favorite set is one of the hackie sack variety that looks like vegetables. You can buy these at most juggling supply stores or online. Mine resemble a carrot, tomato, and cucumber. Because they are a juggling set they are all the same size and weight, easy to handle, and standard juggling beanie bags. During the routine I talk about how important it is to eat your vegetables and not play with them. As I juggle the vegetables I explain that, "This is playing with your food. At home you must not play with your vegetables. You must eat them." It's a cute gag



and the kids always enjoy this part of the show.

I keep the variety going with a short puppet routine using various puppets. I keep it quick, not usually longer than five minutes, and lighthearted and funny. You can also do ventriloquism. I have experimented with that in the past and it works well.

Another form of entertainment I enjoy doing with this age group is sitting down with them cross-legged on the floor and reading a story to them. The books must be age appropriate, current, and as interactive as possible. This means any bookstore or library will give you thousands of options. This activity is standard in preschools and kindergartens, usually called circle time or reading time. It's good because they know circle time is the time to quiet down, and bringing this into the show helps them with self-regulation. They will be familiar with this routine and they will understand this form of fun.

Now let's talk about games. There are so many fun games you can do with kids at this age, and the only rule is avoid elimination games, such as musical chairs. Elimination games systematically remove kids from the group, and you want to keep the kids together or mayhem will follow. I choose games that are simple to understand yet fun. Pass the Parcel (or Pass the Present) is one of my favorites. I play a song on my guitar and when the music stops the child who has the parcel will unwrap one layer of wrapping paper. It's a fun game that covers a wide range of ages, and with older kids there can be a dozen layers of paper to unwrap. I supply the present – one of my CD's in a dollar store box, but for this age anything small and fun would work. If you do not play an instrument you can still use this game as part of your entertainment package. Just use your cell phone or MP3 player. Download an age-appropriate song, and press play and pause to mark the turns.

Dance freeze is also cool. The children will dance to music and when the music is paused or stopped the kids must freeze in position. The funnier the position the better. You can award prizes or you can use it to "shake the wiggles out".

These are just two suggestions to give the kids a break from watching you and letting them play. They need to play often at this age, and if you don't provide them the opportunity they will simply make one.

So here you have six different forms of entertainment bundled into a 30 minute show. There is no down time and it is very well paced. The range of entertainment you provide also makes you look like a superstar. And even if you can't juggle or play an instrument, you can still do the games, the puppetry, the story time, and the magic. That still gives you plenty of variety in a half

hour. Either way, you made that time whizz by and the kids have a great time.

You may be tempted to include balloons in your entertainment package. I used to include balloon twisting in my preschool/kindergarten show, but I dropped it before long. I felt that with the latex choke hazard warnings, especially with balloon animals and the very young three year olds, it was in everyone's best interests to remove this aspect from the show. This was a personal choice and you may decide you want to include it. If you do, please be aware that three and four year olds may still chew on their balloons regardless of being warned not to. This creates a huge danger when – not if but when – the balloon pops in their mouth. Again, this was my personal choice and I am comfortable with it. So you can see that you really can provide an entertaining show for this age group. It doesn't have to be all magic and you can use whatever talents you have to add your personal touch of variety. It is easy to add any of these elements to your repertoire, and if you do you will have a whole new market for your shows. There is good money in entertaining this age group, including children's birthday parties, daycares, and preschools. You just have to make the effort to formulate a show just for them, one that you are comfortable performing, that gives you the confidence to entertain the younger crowd.

I have enjoyed performing for these age groups for a very long time now. I have found it very rewarding both personally and professionally. As a bonus for the kids, and promotion for me, I hand out my custom colouring sheets with my contact information on it at all my preschool and daycare shows. Most often this leads to private birthday bookings. I end up with an impressive number of birthday parties this way and you will, too. Even if after weighing all these suggestions you decide not to pursue this market, that's fine. It's your decision, and I've tried with this article to make it an informed one. It's important to note that if you take on this age group, you must do so because you want to perform for these kids and have fun doing it. They may be young, but they can tell the difference between someone who's having fun and someone just going through the motions. If you don't have fun, they won't, either.





1

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2

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3

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4

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NICKLE VAN WORMER PRESENTS

# BRICK AND MORTAR SHOPS



## MAGICIANS

### SCOTT PENROSE, BETTY, ROY AND FERGUS

**Store:** Davenports Magic & Davenports Magic Kingdom

**Location:** London, UK & Norfolk, UK  
**Owner:** Davenport Family

**Website:** [www.davenportsmagic.co.uk](http://www.davenportsmagic.co.uk) & [www.davenportsmagickingdom.co.uk](http://www.davenportsmagickingdom.co.uk)

London is where I experienced the rekindling of my passion for magic. After a several year hiatus from the craft, as life took me into a world of combat, war and survival, I found myself wandering the streets of London searching for something that I remembered enjoying – magic.

My search took me all over London, and my first stop was Davenports. Underground in an almost deserted, unused part of the subway arcade, sits the magic shop that has existed for over 100 years. The history and stories of Davenports could fill many pages, and has. So, in brief - In 1898 Lewis Davenport started selling tricks from his home, and in 1908 he opened his first brick and mortar shop. The shop moved many times between 1908 and 1984, before it settled into its current location. Not only has Davenports been operating for over a century, it has always

been owned and operated by the Davenport family. The shop has been passed down from generation to generation. Today Bill Davenport, Lewis's great-grand son, runs the day to day operations of the London shop. Betty, Bill's mother, is also still involved with the business. However, for his column I spoke with Roy Davenport, Bill's younger brother. My goal for the Brick and Mortar column is to discover what brick and mortar shops are doing to stay relevant and successful in today's magic marketplace. With Davenports it is not that simple. Davenports has

become more than a magic shop; it is an icon in the magic world, representing over one hundred years of magic history and innovation. Therefore, this specific column not only addresses the preservation of the brick and mortar shop, but also the preservation of the Davenport legacy. The project which Roy is spearheading is accomplishing just that, by bringing awareness to live magic, magic history, and of course Davenports.



Roy and Bill grew up in the magic shop. Their father worked for a company making scientific instruments and their mother ran the magic shop. "My earliest memories are crawling around the basement of 51 Great Russell Street, which was our shop in the 1970's," recalls Roy. While his mother was busy with running the shop Roy was often left to entertain himself. "So if I wanted to see what a trick did – and I couldn't read because I was five years old – I would look at the pictures and work it out. Then maybe walk into the shop and try it for some customer.

And then they'd say 'well actually son this is how you do it.' Customers continued to be a source of learning for Roy as he demonstrated tricks for them. "You get some people who haven't seen a trick in their life before, and you get some people who are keen magicians – and you don't know it. So you show them a trick and they go 'oh have you thought of this' or 'that's nice but I saw someone do it like this' and there's all this conversation in the shop."

One of the great mysteries is how four generations have carried on working in the same business. Roy

has an explanation as to how and why he believes this is possible. "If you're into magic – especially professional- it's all consuming. So many magicians' homes you go into and its card coasters and glasses with magicians on them. Pictures on the wall, books on the shelf – everything magic, magic, magic. As a professional magician, a kid comes (meaning your own), you're not working during the day and you think, 'right I'll spend some quality time with my son and I'll show him how to do a trick.' And then 'no you're not doing it right. No, no that's not right. No try it this way. Try it that way' - 'No dad let just try it...' - 'No this is how you do it.' And the kid goes (sighs in frustration)." Roy attributes the successful passing of the wand from generation to generation to the ability to separate the business from life. "In magic it's not a thing that really travels down (to the next generation). And I think it's because we get so enthusiastic as magicians. But then you get my family. (Laughs) Who are enormously enthusiastic but it became a way of life – part of our lives - to such an extent that we don't have pictures up on the walls in the house, and we don't have the magic coasters and the cards around the place. We have normal books of other stuff on the shelves. The magic stuff is put away somewhere else, and we come home to a normal life."



There is no disillusion amongst the family about what it takes to keep a brick and mortar shop open. How can there be after keeping one open through two World Wars, a Great Depression and magic dropping in and out of fashion. Roy mentions one reason he thinks magic shops don't succeed. "A lot of people come into magic retail – what they do is they go to magic conventions and they see all these dealers - and they see all the money going over and they say 'gosh that's a lot of money.' They buy the trick, they see a paperclip and half a card or a card printed on both sides, for twenty pounds, fifty dollars- or whatever. And with a DVD for an extra ten dollars and they think 'that much for that and for that, they (the dealers) must be making a fortune!' So all these people come into magic and they don't realize to make it in magic dealership it's a lot of hard work – it's graft - and continuous work to be ahead, to keep up-to-date and so on."

Davenports Magic Shop, while steeped in tradition, is always stocked with the latest effects. And not just with "the trick of the week" types effects, but new tricks you may not see anywhere else. And of course there is always Davenport exclusives. Books and effects only sold through Davenports. They also offer magic classes in their magic studio which is connected to their shop. (The shop is somewhat 'tardis-like' in that there are

more rooms than you would expect to find in such a small space.) The classes they offer are fairly extensive. Within a three day magic class students learn the basic fundamentals of cards, coins, cups and balls, sponge balls, IT, and theory. However, even with up-to-date stock, exclusive magic and magic classes, there is a more important element to the shops' success.

"The way we've always looked at it, anybody who comes into our shop we have to sell them something they can do. That's the first job of a demonstrator in a shop, to judge the skill of the customer, and make sure you don't sell them something too difficult. What you want is everything they end up taking away they end up doing; it doesn't go into the drawer. We've all got drawers full of stuff, and that's because we've been sold it, and we haven't bought it." Roy also explains that the second job of a demonstrator is not to sell a customer something above his price range. The lethal combination is to sell a customer an expensive trick he can't or won't use, because if that happens the customer will never return. "We always like to do things the right way. We've always kept things above board and do things correctly. There's a right and wrong way of doing everything, and it's not rocket science. It is very obvious what is right and wrong. So the important thing is to assess the customer and make sure they go away happy. Then if they do – and they can do the magic trick- then they come back. The internet will never compete with that."

Roy goes on to explain why brick and mortar shops will weather internet magic sales. "Do you know the joke about the thumb tip –the magician and the thumb tip? He (the magician) gets his first catalog of magic and he looks through the catalog, and he sees the vanishing handkerchief. So he writes his order for two pounds fifty, for a handkerchief and a special gimmick and the instructions. He spends a couple of weeks practicing, and a couple of

weeks later 'Ooh I'll get something different!' So it's the cigarette in handkerchief. It's two pounds fifty, he sends out the order and back comes...A THUMB TIP! and a bit of foil. Two weeks later 'Oh I'll get another trick!' and he sees the sawing a woman in half trick. He writes the order form, two and half thousand pounds and he is just about to post it when he goes 'no, no it'll only be another thumb tip.' The youth of today expect –even with being able to see the trick – that they will be able to use one trick in ten. The expectancy is that a lot of it will be rubbish and not work." This is not the case, Roy says, with a magic shop - especially a reputable magic shop.

While his brother works to run the London based Davenports Magic Shop, Roy is moving the Davenport tradition forward by digging up the past - literally.

Over the last several decades the Davenport family has acquired magic props, illusions and even entire magic shows. Through the decades most of these items have been in storage, tucked away collecting dust. For the past several years Roy has been looking for a place to showcase these magic treasures. This year the Davenports opened what is fittingly called The

Davenport's Magic Kingdom. (And yes, they did get permission from Disney to use the name.) Located in Norfolk, about two hours from London, the DMK is a magic museum, theatre, restaurant and magic shop – all under one roof. The magic shop at the DMK does not replace the London location, but is an addition to it.

"Our London shop is for anyone from amateur to professional. The very nature of it is you get people arriving who've got the basic tricks. They've got their Svengali Decks; you know the basic – working to progress.... We're getting people already into magic, who want their specialist DVD's, books or a bit of advice...and so that's what we get there. Now the museum– there are a lot of elements to the museum – you've got all ages. And you're getting people who have no interest in magic, because they're just going out for a day trip. We have them for two hours- and by the end of it if they're not interested in magic than we've really failed (laughs). And then we sell our Svengali Decks and all that. But equally, because of the nature of the attraction, we've attracted magicians from all over the country. Hundreds of them, hundreds – you know it's amazing how many – and people are driving past and going 'oh yes we have





a local Davenports in Norfolk, it's like my local Davenports. It's great! What's happening is we're getting people interested in magic in Norfolk who were maybe finding stuff on the internet, and now they've got somewhere to go to and talk to people about it. And then they go on a trip to London and go into the London shop, and they've got a bigger range. So it's symbiotic with the London shop, in that we can work with each other. But also I am more into the history of the family, and my brother is more about running a modern magic shop. Being into history I'm interested in the old jokes and novelties - 'Disguise Yourself as the Kaiser Outfit' – fun for all the family."

By the 1920's Lewis Davenport was playing the top theatres in London and between the wars he moved on to playing the top German theatres. At that time Germany was a leading country for manufacturing and Lewis made deals with over 250 German suppliers for novelties, puzzles and magic. Hence the Disguise Yourself as Keizer Outfit I would imagine. "We've still got thousands of certain items, because they were dealing in such large quantities. And tricks would go out of fashion, or their method would change. We've got hundreds of Chinese

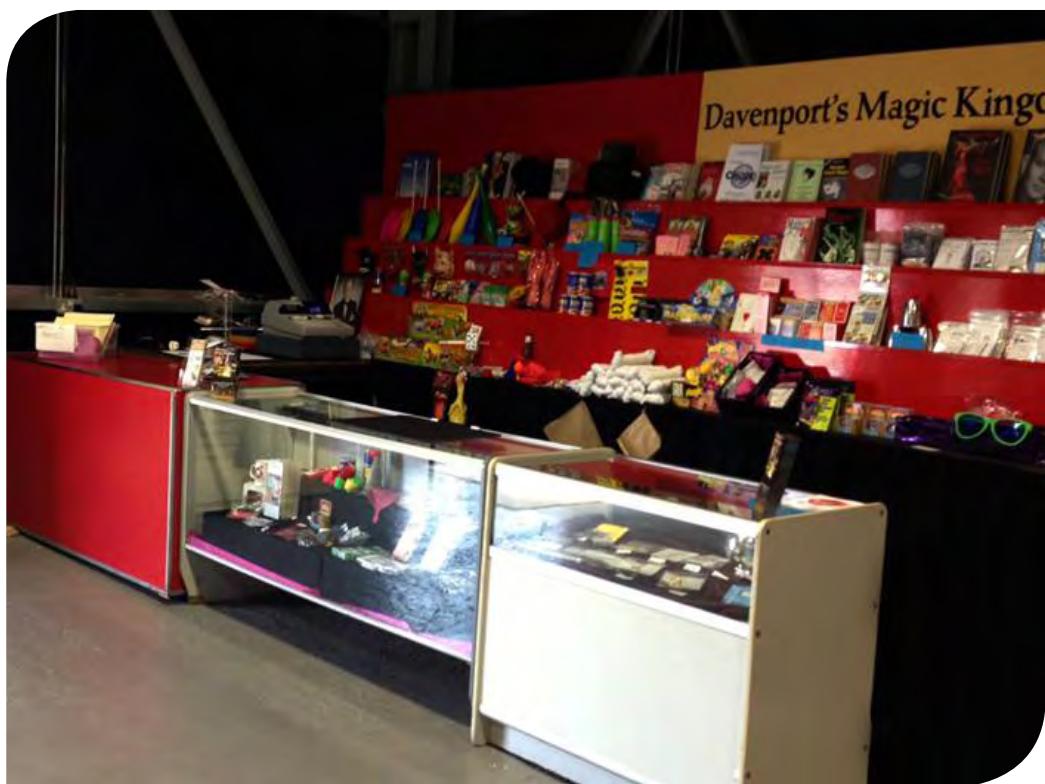
Sticks where the cord goes through a hole and up. Before the weight. (Roy pantomimes the cord running down one Chinese Stick out the end and into the second Chinese stick). So what we have are hundreds of things from the 1920's and earlier. So that means we've been able to stock a full magic shop from the 1920's of unsold stock."

As if all of this is not exciting enough, Roy has plans to expand the DMK. The current building is 15,000 square feet. However, there is 70,000 square feet of space that has yet to be developed. And you

can be sure Roy has plans for using it. This winter they are creating an optical illusion corridor. He also has planned a House of Spirits where séances will be held, using the original apparatus. The list goes on. However he is still keeping some things a secret. "The very last section I'm not going to tell you about. No one can believe I'm so nuts to do such a thing."

*Nickle Van Wormer is a magic enthusiast living in Rochester NY. Follow him on twitter <http://twitter.com/nicklemagic> and on Facebook <http://facebook.com/Nickle.Magic>*

Note: We came across the following interview on youtube with Bill Davenport and is well worth watching.





# 7 WAYS TO THANK YOUR CLIENT **LEIF DAVID**

It's important to send a thank you letter after every show. Taking a moment to show your appreciation will go a long way to impress your client and hopefully generate future business with them.

In this article I'm going to share with you seven ways to thank your clients:

## 1. Thank-you Email

This is the most common method that I use. After each show I sent the client a thank-you email thanking them for inviting me to perform at their event. A standard thank-you email would look something like this:

Thank you for inviting me to performing at (the event name). I had a great time and (include something person-

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TWO THREE FOUR FIVE SIX SEVEN CLUBS HEARTS SPADES DIAMONDS CLUBS  
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alized about the performance here). I hope everyone enjoyed the show.

Please keep me in mind for future events, and if you know of anybody that could benefit from some magical entertainment, please don't hesitate to pass along my contact information. (If this person/venue could benefit from other specific shows/services that you offer, include those here).

Thanks again,

If I took any photo's at the event I try and include the photo's in the email as well. I wrote more about this in

this article: Using photo's of children in your promotional material, and I also talked about getting high quality photo's in this article: Automatic Amazing Show Photos.

Personalizing each thank-you letter is really important so that you really do take a moment to reflect and really thank them. You don't want your thank-you letters to look and feel like just another marketing piece. One time I performed at a party with a spy theme so in that thank-you letter I included the following message.

[ Use a ROT-13 cipher to decode ]

"Bapr rkcbfrq, n frperg ybfrf nyy vgf  
cjre." --Naa Nthveer

If you'd like to solve my secret spy message use a ROT-13 decrypt. My point is you don't have to always write something that's heartfelt. You can write something that's fun, quirky, or just plain silly. Anything that matches your show and your branding.

## 2. Thank-you Letter

You can also send out a physical letter with snailmail. (Groundbreaking

idea... I know). Personally I've found sending letters to be too much of a hassle. You have to print it out, address the envelopes, make sure you have stamps, drop it off in the mailbox. It's so.much.work. But in this digital age sending out a thank-you letter will help you stand out from your competition and build a stronger relationship with your clients.

When sending a thank you letter by mail I always used the formal letter writing template.

Dear (Client),

Thank you for inviting me to performing at (their event). I had a great time and (something personalized about the show). I hope everyone enjoyed the show.

I've included several business cards for you to pass on if you know of anyone that has an event coming up that could benefit from some magical entertainment.

If you'd like to stay in touch you can sign up for my newsletter by filling out the short form on my website at <http://www.bcmagician.com/information/newsletter-sign-up/>. You'll receive exclusive bonus offers, contests for cool prizes, tips for organizing the perfect event, upcoming public performance dates, and magical news. You may unsubscribe at anytime.

As a free gift to you I've included your very own lifetime supply of Invisible Magic Dust. Warning! Please read through the entire booklet before attempting to use any of your Invisible Magic Dust. I gave some to my girlfriend and she made all my money disappear!

I look forward to working together again in the future.

Sincerely,

I never tried it myself, but some performers will send a physical copy of their evaluation form to their client and include a self-addressed return envelope that's prepaid. I wrote about my technique for evaluation forms in the post [How to get amazing client testimonials](#).

When I do mail out items to clients I use one of my custom designed envelopes.

One advantage to sending out hard-copy letters is that you can include other items as well such a "Million Dollar Bills" and "Invisible Magic Dust".

### 3. Million Dollar Bills

Either at the event after the show is over, or included with your thank-you letter, you can include extra items as well. One item that I played around with for a while was a novelty "Million Dollar Bill". I would paperclip the bill to the letter and attach a post it note that said "Thanks A Million!"

I custom designed these myself but there are some on the market that are available for purchase. If you are interested in your own customized "Million Dollar Bill" project, let me know by email and I will send you a quote.

### 4. Invisible Magic Dust

Before I created the Million Dollar Bills for myself I would



send out Dean Hankey's "Invisible Magic Dust". From your home computer you print out a small little booklet. The booklet includes a story of the history of "Invisible Magic Dust" that magicians use. Along with the booklet you include a small baggie "filled" with the elusive "invisible magic dust". (But really it's just an empty little baggie— but shhh— don't tell anyone!) The great thing about this give-away is that you can print it out on your home computer and the small baggies are like \$1 for 100 from the dollar store. They take a little bit of effort to make but they're totally unique.

You can find out more information and buy IMD (Invisible Magic Dust) directly from Dean's website. <http://www.invisiblémagicdust.com/>

## 5. Sendoutcards – Thank you Cards

I always found it a hassle to send out physical thank-you cards after each show. Sending out an email is easier for me because I could do it all from my computer. Well, if you're like me but you'd still like to send out a physical card you should check out SendOutCards.

About Send Out Cards: In less than 60 seconds, you can choose your custom card, add a personal photo, write your heartfelt, inspirational, or cheerful message and click send. We print, stuff, stamp and mail your personalized greeting cards to any postal address anywhere in the world, all for less than the average price of a greeting card at the store. Our gift selection is icing on the cake to this great service and allows you to go the extra mile to bring about another smile.

The huge advantage with Sendoutcards is that you can set it up to automatically mail the client again, either on a specific date such as their birthday, or another time such as 9 months later to follow-up about next years event. You can also include gifts with the letter, but they severely overcharge for the items. I really liked that you could include a photo from the event as well directly into the card.

I created a custom image for the front of my thank-you cards.

## 6. Photo Book

Another idea is to take photo's from the show and compile them into a photo book. I recently performed at a resort all summer long, so I took the best 25 photo's from those shows and have them printed and bound into a little book at London Drugs. From my home computer I printed a little label sticker and attached it to the front of the book. I made up several of them for different clients.

The great thing about including a souvenir like this is that it's

going to stick around for a long time. I included a sticker on the front cover explaining when and where the photo's were taken and I also included my contact information.

## 7. Back of Room Promotional Items

If you have any "back of room" items you can also use those as promotional items. I sell my "Magic Academy: How to be a Magician" DVD & Official Magicians Wand and I will occasionally use these as promotional thank-you items as well.

I hope this has given you some ideas on how to go about thanking your clients in a consistent and unique way. If you've tried any of the above techniques, or tried something different, please let me know in the comments below. Don't forget to 'like' and share this post with your friends as well.



# DON'T TRUST ANDREW MAYNE

By Paul Romhany

Want to get even with someone who has wronged you? Did you think you could do it with magic? Neither did the television production company A&E until they met Andrew Mayne, a master illusionist who reinvents revenge using magic. Andrew's new television series "Don't Trust Andrew Mayne" will be coming to A&E in January 2014.

Wildly innovative, mischief-loving magician Andrew Mayne, is out to re-invent revenge. His powers are eye-popping and his tricks are mind-blowing, but what he loves most is helping people get even. From explosions, to disappearing cars and slight-of-hand tricks, Andrew's charm and wit leave unsuspecting men and women in disbelief. Andrew Mayne has worked behind the scenes for some of the world's top magicians and now it's his turn to show viewers what he's got. On his mission to help people teach a lesson to those who've wronged them, he sets his mark for mischief and uses in-your-face street magic and large-scale "knock your socks off" illusions with each assignment. With one large illusion and five smaller illusions per episode, Andrew shows us why he is one of the most prolific magic creators of the last decade.

Andrew has a lot of achievements under his belt and his latest project with A&E is the culmination of years of hard work and creative thinking. I for one am glad to see him with his own television series.

Wildly innovative, highly visual with a little bit of mischief thrown in, Andrew Mayne is at the forefront of the next generation of magic. He has performed his unique brand of illusion on five continents, his YouTube videos have millions of views and he has





ANDREW  
MAYNE IN HIS NEW  
TELEVISION SERIES

cultivated thousands of fans for his magic, books and podcasts; they call themselves 'Mayniacs'.

Taking magic in a new direction, Andrew created his own style of magic called "Shock Magic"; combining the impact of large scale illusion with the in-your-face approach of street magic. It's fun, it's irreverent and it's the next evolution in magic. Andrew's effects range from making ghosts appear on cell phones, shrinking himself to one foot tall and making a town think it was besieged by UFOs. His magic has even been performed for astronauts on the International Space Station.

Andrew has invented over 400 magic effects and published 45 books and videos on the art of illusion. On the leading edge of magic and pop culture, he was among the first to invent magic for the iPhone (even before there were apps) via his website iPhoneTrick.com – that has since been performed on millions of people.

He has worked behind the scenes for David Copperfield, Penn & Teller and David Blaine. In 2011 Andrew was invited to China on behalf of the legendary Beijing Circus to share with Asia's leading magicians his modern approach to illusion. His 2012 tour brought him to Europe and the Middle East.

Andrew started his first world illusion tour while he was a teenager and was soon headlining in resorts and casinos around the world. With the support of talk show host and amateur magician Johnny Carson, Andrew Mayne started a program to use magic to teach critical thinking skills in public schools for the James Randi Educational Foundation. Andrew's Wizard School segments, teaching magic and science to children, aired nationwide on Public Television.

Born in Opelika, Alabama, to a family of practical jokers, Andrew inherited his penchant for showmanship from his father, a Federal agent who paid his way through college by working as an acrobat. When his family moved to Portland, Oregon, Andrew became fascinated with magic after watching a David Copperfield television special. Andrew's older brother became his reoccurring victim, never knowing what to expect; from finding Andrew levitating in his bedroom to sawing himself in half on the kitchen table. The practical joking wasn't always one-sided. When Andrew's brother became a police officer, Andrew would frequently get pulled over by squad cars on dates and thrown into a pair of handcuffs from which he was expected to escape (and did). A skill he'd use later on to impress Scotland Yard detectives. Andrew and his brother, now with the FBI, have since negotiated a truce.

Beyond magic, Andrew Mayne is also the author of five bestselling mystery and thriller books. His recent thriller, Angel Killer, the story of a female FBI agent with a background in magic, was the fifth best-selling indepen-

dent novel in the United Kingdom in 2012. His podcast, Weird Things is also one of the top science and nature podcasts on iTunes

I was fortunate to get a preview of the first episode from A&E to review for VANISH. The episode I saw is filled with a mixture of street style magic, or as we older magicians call it, close-up magic, to a great illusion involving the explosion of a motor bike. What makes this different than all the other street style shows on at the moment is the premise. While Andrew is a magician, he is playing the part of somebody who is a little mischievous and plays tricks on unsuspecting passers by. One scene for example takes place outside a restaurant. Andrew is enjoying a coffee outside a shop while inside we see two people sitting at a table. All of a sudden he pushes his arm through the window and takes their phone!! It really freaks them out and they can't find any holes in the window. Imagine Candid Camera but using magic to get those candid moments.

Andrew has the skill and ability to pull all this off, but more importantly he has a likability to do a show like this. There is a danger with this format to come off as a smart arse (a smart arse is somebody who can sit on an ice-cream and tell you the flavor), but Andrew's charm helps make the show work and so it's a perfect fit for him.

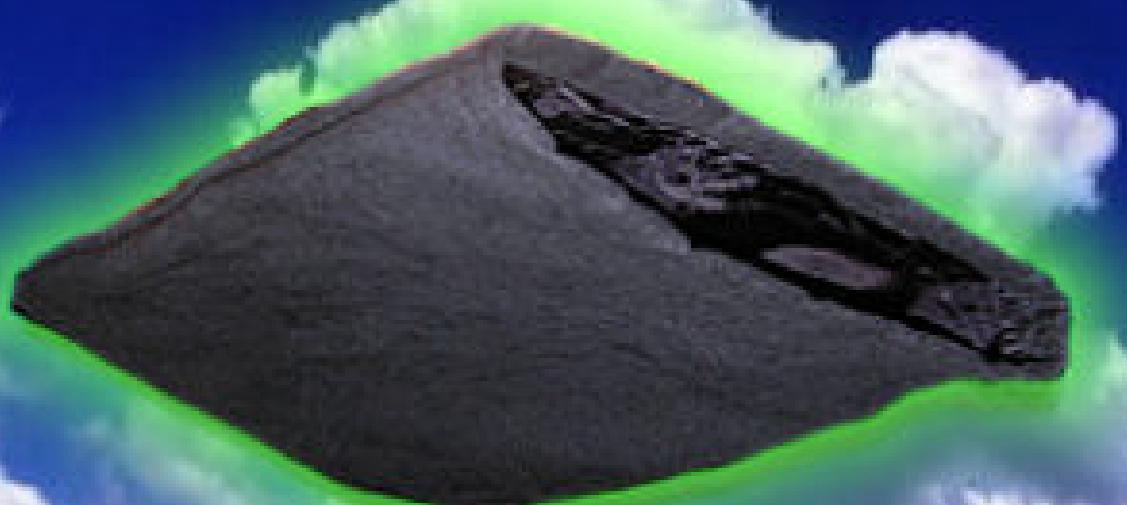
From a magician's point of view the show is filled with great magic and Andrew and his team have really put a lot of thought and work in to creating new and fresh ideas. My favorite was walking up to a person who had just locked their bikes to up and linking the wheel to the actual frame of the bike stand, then he would just walk away. The moments created afterwards are funny especially when one guy chases him all the way down the street. With a show like this it's the people's reactions to the magic that really make it work.

Be sure to check out the A&E schedule for January 2014 and enjoy watching Andrew combine magic with a little bit of mischievous in the new show titled, "Don't Trust Andrew Mayne."



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## **By Tony Chris**



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# TEAM WORKING: CHARACTERS & CONTRAST



A NOVEL  
ROUTINE BY  
THE COMEDY  
MINDS OF REY  
BEN & QUIQUE  
MARDUK.

People often tell Quique Marduk: \_  
“Do not mistreat him in that way!  
poor Ben!”

Or tell Rey Ben: \_ “You’re very funny,  
but how serious is Marduk”  
Possibly one of the best made aspects  
of the duo are the characters.  
Seeing them acting individually  
you can see that their personalities  
change in the duo and they both take  
very contrasting characters, which  
makes the duo a success.

When we started, one of our objectives  
or focuses was to define a style  
of comedy.

Gradually our characters were located  
near Abbott and Costello, Laurel and  
Hardy, and in some cases, Penn &  
Teller.

If both characters were clownish, or  
if both were clumsy or if both were  
serious, we would not have the same  
effect on the audience.

The visual contrast that is seen with  
the naked eye on the difference in

height, is also evident in the characters:

Rey Ben is very funny and his comedy win over the audience, he is silly, submissive, and even at times try to reveal how Marduk do his tricks.

Marduk, however, is introduced as a serious, focused, intelligent and dominant. He knows that Ben is silly, but it is his scene partner and thus tolerate, however, at times shows that it's really not as smart as it seems.

The contrast in magic is an important tool.

In some routines, One & a Half duo uses the device of "reversing roles ", as in the case of the routine of "The Bodyguard", a creation of both to the effect of Collectors Workshop "Side Kick table", and here we differ from duos like Abbott and Costello or Penn & Teller, is a resource because they do not normally do, but that gives us very good results.

Watch a video of "The bodyguard" in Spanish by clicking here:

**WATCH BONUS VIDEO**

Rey Ben and Marduk are always creating new effects, not only for the duo but for their individual performances too. They have many different lectures for magicians, one of them is "Ups & Downs" a lecture performed by the duo explaining some of their magic effects plus creativity, team working, etc.

## Russian Roulette with Firecrackers

The last time that Marko, the amusing Panamanian magician, was in Buenos Aires we had the chance to talk about many magic topics. I told him that I was working on a lecture about Russian roulette and he immediately mentioned that he had an idea but didn't know how to solve it.

Fortunately, I thought about an easy solution and Marko generously allowed me to publish it here.

### Effect:

The magician shows a piece of wood or a stand with five big firecrackers and explains that one is not only false, but also has a prize

He asks four members of the audience to take one firecracker each, leaving the last one to the magician.

Before starting, the magician asks the four spectators if they want to change their firecracker with the magician's one.

Finally, the performer gives out four lighters and puts the remaining firecracker in his ear or mouth.

The spectators light the firecrackers and they explode. The magician lights the one in his ear and nothing occurs. He opens it and a real 100 dollar note is inside.

### Props needed:

A wood stand with five holes to put the firecrackers. Glitter paper (fire-resistant). Five fireworks of little power (known as "little matches"). Five lighters. Firework fuse.

### Preparation:

Take the five fireworks and, with a toothpick, make a hole in the tip that is to be lightened. In the hole, put 5 cm of firework fuse which you can take from a real firecracker. Then, put a drop of magic glue so that the fuse sticks to it



Take a square piece of glitter paper (metallic paper used to wrap up presents) of approximately 7 cm x 7 cm to roll up the firework and stick it with a strong adhesive. Leave the fuse protrude from one ending. Stick it so that it doesn't unroll..



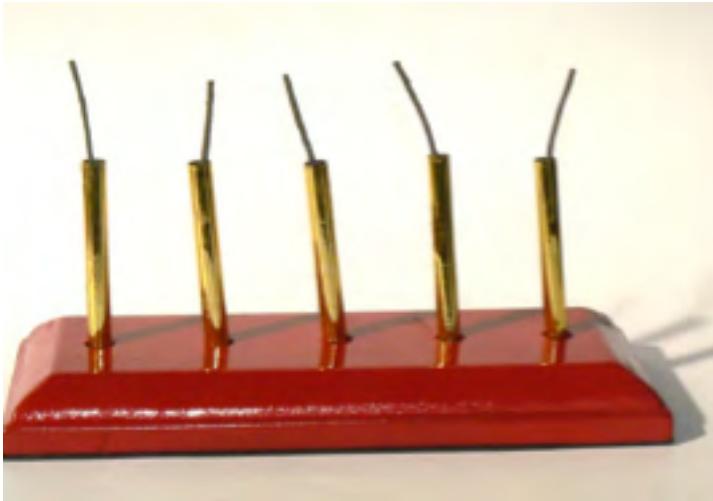
This way, it will look like a real firecracker and its size will be the same as the note you will prepare, as it will be explained below.

Roll up a note by its width, with the same thickness that you rolled up the firecrackers. Then, roll it up over a piece of glitter paper. Now, take a 5 cm length fuse and stick it to the interior edge with a drop of magic glue so that it is similar to the real firecrackers.

Put the five real firecrackers in the wood stand.

The "firecracker-note" will be in your jacket right pocket and the five lighters in the left pocket.

Now you are ready to make the presentation.



### **Presentation:**

Show the firecrackers and explain that one is false and that it also has a prize. Follow the instructions explained in the Effect section and, at the end, when you put your hands in the pockets to take out the lighters, your right hand holds the "firecracker-note" as a cigarette (thumb palm) and takes one lighter. Your left hand takes only three lighters that will be given to the spectators.



Take out your right hand from your pocket with the firecracker hidden, while you take the remaining firecracker in the stand with your left hand. You pretend to put it in your right hand, but you actually keep it hidden in your left hand. You immediately put your left hand in your pocket, leave the real firecracker and take out a lighter.

Show the "firecracker-note" in your right hand and put it in your left ear, while you take out your left hand with the lighter from your pocket. (I prefer to put it on my mouth like a cigarette).

Now, the spectators should light their fuses and the firecrackers will explode. I use a metal bucket to let the firecrackers explode safe and with a big sound too.

Then the magician should light his; as it won't explode, he should open it showing the note. But Teller (Penn & Teller) suggested me to change the ending: First, the magician lights his fuse, the firecracker (still in his ear) don't explode. Then, the spectators light theirs and they explode. As an ending, the magician takes the firecracker out of his ear, opens it and shows the note. I think could be better to do it this way.

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# THE STRAIGHT SWEATER

## EVAN REYNOLDS



Evan Reynolds shares what could very well be funniest escape from a straight jacket routine ever devised.

The straitsweater is an idea I had that came from thinking about two completely unrelated topics at the same time. I was thinking about straitjackets – I wanted to do something funny with one. And then my wife asked me to look at a knitting pattern. It wasn't long before she was knitting a straitjacket for me.

The straitsweater looks roughly like a straitjacket. It was knit from yarn in about the right color for canvas, with different colored yard for the straps on the ends of the arms. And instead of straps on the back it has big friendly blue but-

tons. It's loose, stretchy, and nice and warm.

It took a while to actually come up with a routine to use it. The gag comes quickly – you show the straitsweater. But then what do you do with it? I'll share my routine and please feel free to use it, but it's worth trying to come up with your own routine for this. And my routine is still evolving – there still isn't a particularly good finish to it, and it's more of a humor routine than magic. But it's fun, it gets lots of laughs, and it's just a blast to play with!

The key to this routine is picking the character, and having a reason to be standing on a stage trying to escape from what is essentially a nice stretchy sweater. I decided early on to play it relatively straight – I did not want to pretend I was actually fastened into something confining. It was just too obvious that I wasn't. So then why would I even do this? The answer I came up with is that my grandmother offered to make me a straitjacket and made me promise that if she made it, I would use it. I just didn't realize she was going to knit it! And now I have to keep my promise.

# THE CRAZIEST ESCAPE EVER

To prepare to perform this routine, I put a playing card in my shirt pocket. There is an expanding 8 foot pole tucked somewhere out of sight - I just put it inside my belt at the small of my back, under my vest. Finally I put the miniature straitsweater in my left rear pocket.

The straitsweater should be folded up, out of sight if possible, if not that's OK – no one knows what it is. Just have it on stage so that only a bit of the back shows – so that all that you see is a bit of knitted fabric. Ideally it'll be out of sight, though – but make sure the neck is easily reached, and that when you pick it up the buttons will be to the back.

#### Presentation:

*"I wanted to present a classic of magic. You know – cups and balls, linking rings ... but the one I finally picked was a Straitjacket escape! I began by researching how to do this, as it's not an easy thing to do. It's not even easy to find one – you can't exactly go to Target and pick one up! I told my grandmother what I was doing, and she offered*

The theme of my act is "I have to make an act out of this, I promised Grandma. I just don't know how." My goal in the routine is then to make everything in the act actually follow this – a guy on stage keeping a promise as best as he can, and trying to do things that make sense given that character. One thing I added was a miniature straitsweater – one that supposedly shrank in the dryer. It's about six inches across. Mine is the same color as the straitsweater, though I've started wondering if it should be in a contrasting color to show up better when displayed.



*to make me a straitjacket, which I thought was really sweet. She just made me promise that if she made it, I'd actually USE it. I agreed. What she didn't tell me ... was that she KNITTED it."*

At this point I pick up the straitsweater and display it. As above, make sure the buttons are towards the rear of the stage and out of sight so they are not seen. This generates a surprisingly strong laugh. I've been asked if lay audiences actually find this funny – they very much do.

Note the two words bolded – make sure you speak those clearly. I pull the jacket out right when I say the word knitted. That word then tends to get drowned out by the laugh. So now I try to say that word very clearly.

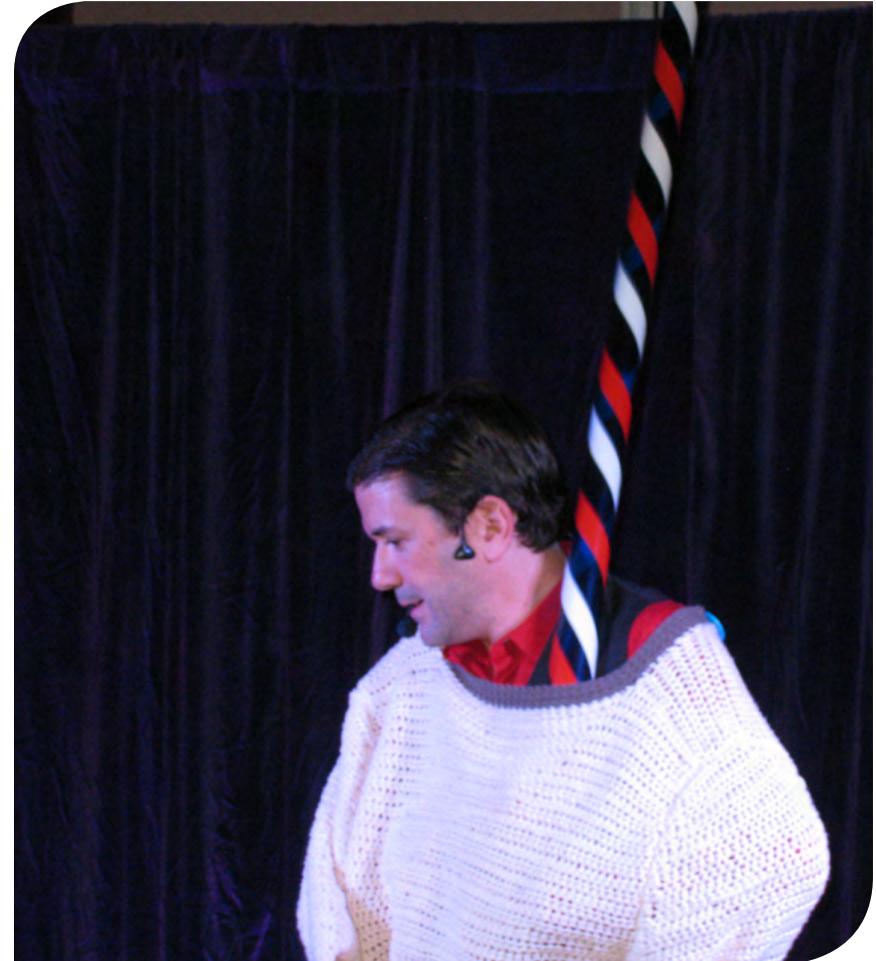
*"But I promised her I'd use it...so I'm going to."*

Character set, and plot explained! *"Now most straitjackets have straps across the back ... grandma didn't do that. She used these big blue buttons."*

At this point, turn the jacket around to show the buttons. This generates another surprisingly strong laugh. When that dies down, invite a volunteer up to button you into the straitsweater. Being buttoned in created a dead spot, so I came up with these lines to fill that up.

*"Not sure WHY Grandma thought knitting this was a good idea ... she said this was odd to make though. Everyone else was knitting hats and sweaters ... she was knitting a strait-jacket. She thought she was the rebel in the group until Lady Gaga's grandmother joined. I hear they started a trend ... their circle is rather interesting these days."*

Hopefully at this point they have you buttoned in. If not, my



script just has me asking them if they've ever tied someone into a knitted straitjacket before? No? How about a real one? And just engaging them in conversation until they're done.

But so far the script lines above have been plenty long enough.

*"I'm in? Great! Now the sleeves have straps that tie around back as you can see – "*

At this point I do the standard display everyone does, and swing the arms side to side to make the straps swing. Look up earnestly.

*"By the way, if you have cats don't practice this part at home. Now there is a buckle but don't bother with it, just tie a knot in the straps – not too tight, I have to take it out again later!"* The cat line always gets a surprisingly good laugh. And the buckle warning is a real one – the straps have a buckle and do work, but it takes too long to buckle it up – and it just doesn't work well anyway. It

turns out that knitted straps aren't very functional! But having a loose knot tied in them seems to be working out perfectly.

But that does give you some more dead time to fill while the volunteer is tying the sleeves behind your back! So I came up with this:

*"Grandma started doing more interesting projects after doing this one ... Grandpa fishes for rainbow trout so she knitted him some rainbow waders. Grandpa went fishing and ended up in a Gay Pride parade. He said it was fantastic. He's going back next year. I think he's building a float. Grandma has orders for about twenty more waders."*

They should be done before you make it through that – I usually don't get to the line about grandma having more orders.

*"OK, I'm fastened in ... thank you! I'd shake your hand but ... you understand. Give him a hand!"*

I originally just thanked the volunteer and let him off stage, but what I found was at this point audiences WANTED to applaud. So I put in the applause line and it's been working well.

"Aaaand now ... the ESCAPE!"  
And here I just thrash back and forth for a few seconds. Not very long. And then I straighten up and look at the audience. This next bit is delivered pretty deadpan ...

"You guys buying this? It just seems anticlimactic to do it without some struggling ... the struggling is kind of the point. Hang on ..."

At this point, I just pull my arms out of the straitsweater sleeves. Trust me, this is pretty easy.

"This is supposed to be confining! I'm really not sure what to do now ... I tried putting the first one Grandma made in the dryer to make it a little more confining ... didn't work."

Remember that miniature straitsweater in the back pocket? At this point my arms are free in the sweater. While saying the I just reach into my back pocket and grab the miniature straitsweater. When I say "didn't work", I flip it out of the neck and display it.

"Grandma was PISSED ... but this one, I could do the whole show in this thing. It's big enough to hold stuff, look!"

Here I put the miniature straitsweater back in my rear pocket. Remember that 8 foot expanding pole tucked into my waistband? Once the miniature straitsweater is put away, I just grab it, and let it expand right out the neck of the straitsweater.

"Maybe if I combined it with a card trick? Do me a favor."

Look around, and pick someone.

I bring my hand out of the straitsweater's neck, and point to them.

"YOU! Think of a card! Just think of one! Don't tell me what it is..."  
While saying that, I pull the card from my shirt pocket. This is an old gag that was shown to me in another form, I just changed it a bit for this. I use my thumbs to let the card rise out of the neck of the jacket, with the back to the audience.

"We haven't worked together on this, have we? What's your card?" I look down at the card and lose my smile.  
"Crap."

I use my thumbs to retract the card down back into the straitsweater, and tuck it back into my shirt pocket.

"Don't tell grandma about that one, OK? Just tell her about ... THE STRAIT JACKET ESCAPE!"

And with that, I whip the jacket off over my head and throw it to the stage, and strike an applause pose.

There are two videos to go with this. I performed this in November 2013 at the Three of Clubs convention. I put a video of that up on YouTube here:

**WATCH BONUS VIDEO**

And I have a video I like of just the gag with the playing card here:

**WATCH BONUS VIDEO**

If you decide to try this routine, I'd LOVE to trade ideas and chat about it with you. I was thinking about that so I created a facebook page here:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Evans-Routines/221154591388849>  
I'd love to talk about the routine there!





# BAMBOOZLERS

## DIAMOND JIM TYLER

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### NEWSPAPER NUMBERS

**TRICK:** The magician asks someone to choose any section from a random newspaper (i.e. Editorials, Front Page Section, International News, Sports, Entertainment, Classified Ads, etc.). He then asks them to remove any four page spread and to add up the four page numbers. The magician then divines the number they are thinking of.

**SECRET:** This is a great routine that can be done impromptu. The only thing you need is access to a newspaper that has the traditional four page layout. After the spectator chooses a section take hold of it and explain what you would like them to do next. Your instructions will be to remove any page from that section and add up the four page numbers. Pantomime this action to be clear. The numbers to add up are the inside page numbers and the two found on the back of that same sheet.

As soon as you have the section in your hands it is easy to divine what their number will add up to be. Simply add the numbers on the front and back of the first page. For example, the front page number might



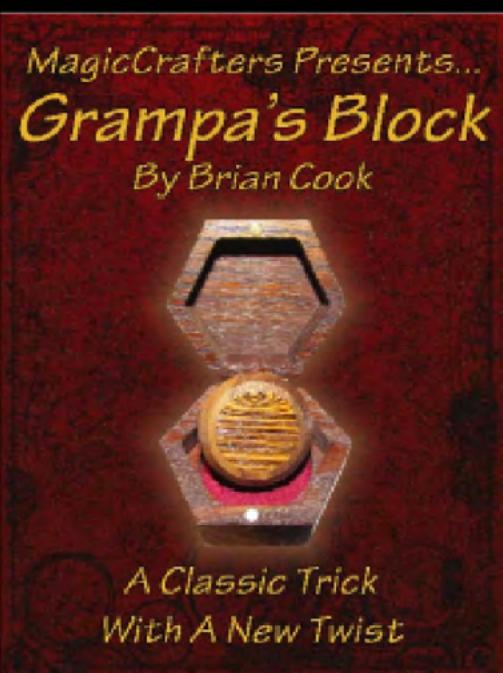
be page one while the back page number is page forty. Adding those two numbers together gives you forty-one. Now multiply that number by two and you'll have your final result which is eighty-two. Think about it. If the front and back pages are 40 and 1 which totals 41 added together, then on the backside of those pages will be the numbers 2 and 39 which is 41 again. Forty-one multiplied by two is eighty-two. Every four-page spread in that section will add up to be eighty-two.

It only takes a quick moment to glance at the back page numbers and do the math. This could also be done with a book. The problem with a bound book is that one cannot easily remove a four page spread. However, if you were to remove the staples from a saddle-stitched book, you could perform the same miraculous effect. Once upon a time a good friend of mine gave me a beautiful antique dictionary. The binding came undone over time and several pages fell out and were lost. Incidentally, I couldn't find the words to thank him.

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# SANTA'S COSTUME CHANGE

LEE ALEX shares a costume change designed just for the Christmas holiday season.

**Effect:** A character dressed as Father Christmas/ Santa Claus makes his entrance to the stage. Hot on his tail is the trusty helper, an assistant dressed as an Elf. Father Christmas has a sack slung across one shoulder and in the other hand holds a brass bell which he rings. Complete with Hat, beard and glasses up top and buckled boots below, Father Christmas stands centre stage. He announces that Christmas is a time of magic and he would like to bring a gift to all the audience, a truly magical gift. With this the Elf helper briefly raises a curtain tube around Father Christmas. The tube is in fact square and is made from brick patterned fabric – this represents the chimney through which Father Christmas traditionally enters every house.



The chimney curtain is lowered. Father Christmas has disappeared and in his place now stands the magician in his own costume ready to start a very magical Christmas themed show. This quick change is intended to be the opening of a festive magic show. The change links in particularly well if the magician has been asked to produce Father Christmas at the end of the show, although this is only an option.

**Requirements:** The costume I have is made from scratch, that is to say I bought the fabrics and had them sewn into the complete costume. It is possible and may even be more economical to make the whole outfit from an off the peg Father Christmas costume bought from a fancy dress store. The number of options on line is limitless and there are costumes to suit every budget. Whichever way you decide to go however, ensure that the costume is not flimsy or transparent as this will need to hide the costume worn underneath. I purposely chose Father Christmas as he is a naturally large character and allows for a full normal costume to be hidden underneath without suspicion of

Father Christmas costume from behind



looking over sized. The complete outfit consists of a jacket, trousers (pants), cushion for the belly - most costumes are sold with their own cushion already, belt, beard, cap, and boots which are specially constructed out of leatherette.

All the elements of the Father Christmas costume will eventually be one complete piece. First wear the trousers and jacket to determine the level at which the trousers sit under the jacket. Mark this point inside the jacket with pins. The trousers will be sewn to the jacket at this level on the inside. The cushion that represents the belly must also be worn at this stage as the level of the trousers will alter without the cushion. A cushion can be made out of a light satin fabric and filled with fiber stuffing - avoid over filling the cushion; it should not be a hard belly!

The jacket is fastened at the front permanently with buttons. The cushion is sewn permanently in place at the correct position inside the jacket. The jacket is cut down the whole length of the back at the centre. This means that it will be worn from front to back, with the arms going into the sleeves, rather like wearing a hospital gown. The opening at the back of the jacket can be fastened at the neck with one large press stud. The remaining opening can be closed with a magnetic seam (Magna Seams) or more press studs. Avoid using Velcro at all costs to close the opening. Place the belt in position using belt loops. Traditionally the belt is not worn at the waist on the trousers, but on the outside of the jacket at waist level. If there are no belt loops available, then the belt is sewn in position onto the jacket.

The belt is respectively cut in line with the opening at the back of the jacket. Sew the belt to the jacket on each side of the central opening. In order to give shape to the costume and to allow the costume to sit firmly in place before the change I use a single clip buckle, the type of plastic fastening that is used widely to close bags. The clip buckle is extremely strong and yet can be opened with two fingers. Once released the clip buckle springs open allowing easy removal of the costume. The seat of the trousers is removed since the length of the jacket hides the whole seat area.

The legs of the trousers are cut down the centre at the back. The edge of each opening is closed with a magnetic seam (Magna Seams) or press studs. Once the trouser legs have been prepared, the trousers can be sewn in position on to the jacket at the point previously marked. The belt on the outside of the jacket camouflages this line of sewing.

The length of the trousers is of course determined by the height of the boots you choose to wear with this costume. The top of the boots are decorated with a white fur trim, whilst the remainder of the boot is sewn

from a suitable black leatherette or similar fabric. The boots are sewn to the bottom edge of the trouser legs on either side and likewise are open along the entire length to correspond with the openings of the trouser legs. Either side of the boot opening is sewn with a magnetic seam (Magna Seam) or press studs. The sole of the boot covers only the toe area, the remainder of the sole is missing. This allows for the boot covers to be slipped over your normal shoes; you are able to walk normally without the boot covers coming loose.

The fabric for the boots should be pliable yet sturdy so that the fabric takes the form of the boot as required. The costume is complete with a wig, beard and cap. I mounted the wig on to a brimless bowler hat. These are available in felt from the fancy dress store. Cut the brim away so that you are left with just the head form.

Likewise I attached the beard permanently to the wig - this can be sewn or stuck in place with a hot silicone gun. Finally on top of the wig I attached the cap. This means the whole head piece is again just one complete unit which can be removed in a single movement. My Italian friend who lives in Lativa, Enrico Pezzoli added an old man mask to the head piece. This actually gives a completely different effect of having one person vanish and another person appearing - a slightly different take on the quick change. If you wish you can also add fancy dress glasses. This all depends on how you wish to go with the costume change. To prepare for the change first wear your normal stage costume. The Santa Claus costume is worn at the last minute on top of this. The Christmas costume is worn from front to back. Close the press stud at the neck and this keeps everything in place. Put on the shoe covers and close the seams of the boots and legs at the back. Finally close the clip buckle of the belt and any magnetic seam or press studs which you have sewn down the length of the back of the costume.

The costume may be worn comfortably and surrounded before the change takes place. Once you are ready for the change step into the curtain cover which is open flat on your performing area. The curtain is raised by your assistant from the outside upward. Once covered the first thing we need to release is the clip buckle and press stud located at the neck. The clip buckle can be snapped open with one hand even before the cover has been totally raised. As these are released bend down and grab the boot covers from the front. These are removed by standing momentarily on your heels. In the process of bending down, the natural weight of the costume means that already it is falling away from the body. With the boot covers removed the hands now pull the top of the costume off of the body and the arms are removed from the sleeves. If you wish the assistant could do a double take and slightly lower the chimney to show the beard/cap in place. The curtain is

raised again at which point the head piece is removed and dropped inside the curtain. Once you are free of the costume you can grab the rods either side from the inside and bring the curtain down to show the dramatic change. As you step out of the curtain make sure that the front edge is folded toward the back, effectively hiding the disposed costume inside.

The curtain cover: Keeping in theme I decided that a square "hoop" made from brick decorated fabric to represent a chimney would be the best cover for this quick change. Different fabrics can be found on line, and I ordered from an English company as the fabric is used for stage backdrops and is fire retardant. If you are really adventurous it is possible to paint your own brick fabric. Use a stiff linen material in a dark color (preferably grey) and the bricks are painted on with a sponge block. Add a thick strip of stone colored fabric around the top edge of the chimney to make the representation as real as possible. The bottom of the "chimney" is closed to form a bag so that the costume remains hidden inside. There are two rods in the left and right top hems which are

used by your assistant to raise the curtain once you step inside to make the change. It is not necessary to have a frame all the way around the top of the square. In this way the chimney itself can be stored in a much smaller space than if the whole top were a permanent square. The rods could be wood or aluminum.

Lee Alex, Istanbul, November 2013  
<http://magic2wear.myshopify.com/>

**WATCH BONUS VIDEO**



## Quique Marduk & Rey Ben are **One & a Half**

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Contact: [quique@marduk.com.ar](mailto:quique@marduk.com.ar)  
[reyben@hotmail.com](mailto:reyben@hotmail.com)

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**"Sharing the road to success"**

# GIVE THE BAND A BREAK BY WAYNE ROGERS

An “accidental” deck switch for the Tossed-Out Deck .

**THE TOSSED-OUT DECK** by David Hoy is a true classic of mentalism. A deck of cards is bound with rubber bands and tossed to several members of the audience. They each peek at a card and the mentalist successfully names the cards.

There are several commercially available decks to achieve this effect. The following routine I use with three spectators when I want to know exactly which person has peeked a particular card. It is particularly useful when performing for a small group of people who know each other and will compare notes after the show. If they find they all looked at the same card, your secret will be discovered.

**METHOD:** I use a Three-Way Forcing Deck and a matching regular deck. The regular deck is shuffled then switched during the performance for the forcing deck.

**SETUP:** The forcing deck consists of three blocks of 17 duplicate cards. If a spectator peeks anywhere in the top third of the deck, they see one of the cards. A different card is seen if they peek anywhere in the centre section or in the bottom third. Complete the deck by placing a single different card on the bottom. The regular deck in its case lies in your open briefcase on the main table.

Bind the forcing deck with one rubber band. PHOTO 1 Tuck another rubber band under the first so that most of the second band hangs free. PHOTO 2 Open a gap in the bound deck and push it onto the edge of a suitable divider inside the briefcase, or into one of the pockets. PHOTO 3 Finally place the regular deck plus a couple of rubber bands next to the briefcase. One band is broken, but lies so that the gap is not visible to the audience. PHOTO 4

**PERFORMANCE:** Have the regular deck shuffled and spread the cards to show they are well mixed. Locate the card that matches the one on the bottom of the forcing deck and cut it to the bottom.

Take the unbroken rubber band and bind the deck. Pick up the second band, PHOTO 5 taking care to pinch the broken ends together so it appears whole. As you start to bind the deck with the second band, let go one end and it appears that the band simply snaps. PHOTO 6 While all eyes are directed to this “accident” YOU SWITCH DECKS.

This is the situation. You have the regular deck in one hand bound with a rubber band, and a broken rubber band dangling from the fingers of the other hand. Make some remark such as “Now that’s something I did not predict.”

PHOTO 7 As you say this, the hand holding the deck goes into the briefcase, drops the regular deck and collects the forcing deck (plus the spare rubber band you tucked under the band binding the deck. It looks like you simply reached into the briefcase and picked up a spare rubber band with the hand holding the deck. Immediately take that spare band and wrap it around the forcing deck.

Before throwing the force deck out, it is important to explain to the spectators, how you want them to peek at the cards. They are to make a single break and peek at one card. Emphasise they are not to flick through the cards and see them all rushing by. They must peek at and remember only one card. (This is all standard Tossed-Out deck procedure.) Toss the deck to the first spectator who is asked to peek “Somewhere near the centre of the deck.”

# GIVE THE BAND A BREAK 1



## WAYNE ROGERS



The cards are then tossed to a second person who peeks somewhere in the top quarter, "So you cannot accidentally see the first person's card."

The third person peeks in the bottom quarter, and the cards are tossed back to the performer. The three spectators are asked to remain standing. As long as you the performer have been firm and clear with your instructions, there should be nothing for the audience to suspect. Cards have been peeked at in a shuffled deck that was bound by rubber bands and tossed to 3 different people.

Proceed by saying you are receiving impressions of three cards. Name the cards from your forcing deck in your best "Mentalist" delivery and the spectators will sit and lead the applause.

Using a One-Way Deck, this same setup can be used for just one person to force, say, a card for an effect such as Mental Epic.

If you work one venue on a regular basis, it would pay to alternate this method with a different type of switch or staff may pick up on the "accident" with the rubber band that happens at every performance. Having said that, this is a natural and very disarming way to switch decks in full view.

**ALTERNATIVE PRESENTATION:** I often combine two effects together as a way of explaining the difference between "Magic" and "Mentalism". The Magic trick I use is my variation on the Sketch Pad Rising card, or Cardiograph by Martin Lewis. My routine uses a Clipboard and can be reset in about 30 seconds. Paul Romhany wrote up my method in his book "Switchboard Clipboard the Rising Card" (Pro Series 10) <https://www.murphysmagic.com/Search.aspx?q=clipboard>

The card I force and use for the card rise is the Ace of Spades. At the end the Ace is returned to the face of the deck and I go into the Tossed-Out Deck which is the Mentalism segment. Instead of the 3-way forcing deck, I often use a Koran Deck with banks of 5 cards repeating throughout the deck.

I have 4 spectators peek at cards, anywhere in the deck, and for the reveal I call out just 4 cards from the known banks of 5. If one person is left standing after I name the cards, then I know they must have peeked the one card I did not call out. Now I can finish on an even stronger note by naming aloud the card they are thinking of.

Wayne Rogers  
chicane@nzmagic.com



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# *Christmas Color Change Vest by Lee Alex*



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# FIRST KISS

## RICHARD WEBSTER



**Richard Webster explains a routine that is a simple effect using business cards that he has performed for many years.**

### Effect:

"Do you remember the name of the first boy you ever kissed?" the magician asks a woman. "Yes, of course," is the likely response. The magician hands her one of his business cards and asks her to write the boy's first name on the back of the card. He turns away while she does this. Once she's placed it face down on the table, he hands her four more business cards and asks her to write on them names of boys she has never kissed. Again, the magician turns away while she does this. The magician asks her to mix the cards until she no longer knows where the card containing the boy she kissed is. She passes the cards to the magician behind his back. "Obviously, there was some emotion attached to the

boy you kissed, and hopefully some of that energy has been transferred to the card," the magician says. "If so, I should be able to separate that card from the others." The magician immediately puts one card on the table. "What was the name of the first boy you ever kissed?" he asks. "Andrew," might be the reply. "Turn the card over." The lady does, and - lo and behold - it's the card with the Andrew written on it.

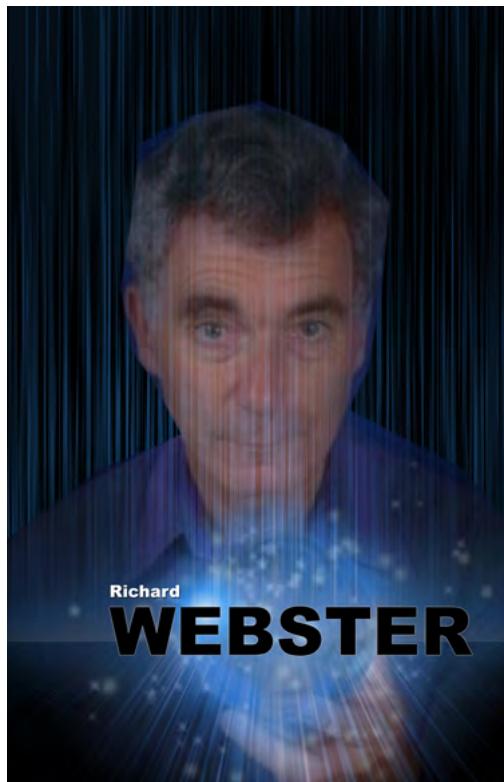
### Method:

There are a number of ways this effect can be done. I used to use an emery board to file the center portion of

the long sides of the four cards that did not contain the person's name. This made it a simple matter of stripping out the correct card when it was behind my back. I've also used a pin to make two pricks, one on each side of the card.

For the last thirty years I've been using a much easier version. Business cards are usually printed with the grain running lengthwise along the card. Whenever I need business cards, I ask for 80% of them to be printed with the grain running lengthwise, and for the other 20% to be run width wise (80% horizontally and 20% vertically). As long as the business cards are printed on reasonably heavy card stock (230 gsm or more), you can detect the difference easily with your fingers, but all the cards will look identical. I use this mainly for a completely different effect, but this is a convenient one to carry in my wallet, as I need to carry business cards with me anyway.

Sometimes, I'll claim that it's proving a bit too hard to determine the correct card. I'll bring the cards out with the named card on the bottom. I'm able to glimpse this as I hand the cards to the lady to mix again. I then suggest that she holds the named card between her hands for a few seconds, and then mix them again. This time, after producing the correct card, I ask her to concentrate on the name, and manage to divulge it.



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# \$25 Flea Circus

## by Louie Foxx



### Effect

This is a flea circus that isn't built into a suitcase and all the animations use larger props. It begins with fleas jumping around in a box, then a flea pushes over a wooden block and dives off your finger into a cup of water with a splash! Finally a flea unties a handkerchief of a selected color that's knotted to a rope.

I called this the Twenty Five Dollar Flea Circus because the whole thing can be put together for about \$25, however when I made mine I already had everything around the house, so for me this is the Free Flea Circus! Here's the routine:

*The first paycheck I ever got for doing my show I was opening act for "Mister Fredheim and His Performing K-9's". Mister Fredheim was an old German guy and his*

*performing K-9's were trained dogs. I never learned to train dogs because I'm allergic...but I did learn to train dog's fleas.*

*If you don't know what a flea is, they are little tiny bugs that live on a dog or cat that makes them itch and scratch. Fleas go by different names depending on where you are in the country. Back east they are bed bugs, up north they are lice at the Motel 6 they are complimentary!*

*I currently have the only German Style Flea Circus that's working west of the Mississippi that's presented by a guy that looks like a chubby, Asian Buddy Holly.*

*There are two fleas in my show, their names are Roky and Henry. Roky is the world's strongest flea and Henry is the world's smartest flea. They are in this box and to get them ready for the show I'm going to tap on the box and they'll*

*get excited and jump up and down inside bonking their heads on the inside of the box. When they stop jumping that means they are ready to work...or they are dead.*

Tap box and fleas tap back.

*Ok they are ready to work. We're going to start the flea circus in the American Circus tradition by playing the national anthem and raising the flag.*

Play anthem and raise flag (do this fairly quickly) then stop the music.

*It's a short show.  
We're going to use Roky.*

Remove flea with giant tweezers and look at it with magnifying glass and put it back.  
*Sorry, wrong flea.*

Remove flea with giant tweezers and set it on the table. Then set block on table leaned up against something.

*Ok, Roky, the World's Strongest Flea. He's going push this block over. To give you an idea of how hard this is, because a flea is so small and in comparison this block is so huge, it'd be like anyone of you pushing a this whole building down the street.*

Look at flea with magnifying glass.

*Pushing...pushing...*

Block falls over, triumphantly pick up flea and show it!

*Give Roky a big round of applause!*

*For his next trick he's going to dive off my finger into this cup of water.*

Display the cup of water.

*In a moment I'm going to ask for a drum roll, then I'll count to three. When I get to three you stop, he'll dive off my hand doing three flips in the air and landing in the cup of water. Ready...Drum roll...one...two...Three.*

Eyes start to follow dive, at the top of the arch, you lose sight of the flea. Look around then go to the audience and start digging in kid's hair. Pick up flea, he jumps to a second kids hair. Pick up flea look at it.

*That's not Roky!*

Put back into kids hair and grab another flea.

*Ok, drum roll....One...two...three!*

Play Chariots of Fire, just the "hook" of the song. Follow flea's dive with eyes, when he hits the cup

trigger the water to splash out! Stick your fingers in the cup grab the flea and set the cup down quickly

*Give Roky a big round of applause!*

Clap your hands and accidentally smash Roky. Stop, look and react! Play the song *Taps*. Lower flag to half staff. Look at smashed flea...then slowly and ceremoniously eat him!

*They call that the burial at sea!*

Grab hanks on rope, and remove flea from box

*Henry is the World's Smartest Flea, he's the only flea in the world that knows his colors, which is a more amazing feat once you realize the fact that fleas are colorblind.*

Put flea on the rope

*What's your favorite color?*

If they say one of the two colors on the rope use the magician's choice force to force the color that will untie. If they say any other color, say, "It's multiple choice not fill in the blanks...what's your favorite color" then proceed with the magician's choice force to the desired color.

*Great we'll use the orange. Henry's going to walk across the rope like a tight rope in the circus and untie the orange.*

Orange unties by itself.

*Big round of applause for Henry!*

Put flea away.

THE END

## PROPS

### Flea Box \$2

You need a metal box. With a lid that is separate. The box I use originally held a watch. Take a piece of cardboard and cut it out so that it's slightly taller than the box and tape it in place about a quarter of the way to one end. PHOTO ONE

For the lid you will take a piece of string and hot glue it to the end of the inside of the lid. Tie a bead at the other end of the string. PHOTO TWO

The exact length of this will vary a bit depending on your box, but the bead should dangle about halfway down the back of the box when the lid is attached. PHOTO THREE

Put a piece of tape on the top of the cardboard and bend it at a right angle. You will stick the lid to this piece of tape. PHOTO FOUR

To work the box simply hold in your hand with your

thumb and the side of the box with the bead away from the audience. Pull down on the bead slightly and let go to make the go up and down. PHOTO FIVE

You can still slightly open the lid when to reach in with tweezers to remove the fleas.

Note: The tapping box was inspired by Bruce Kalver's Knock Knock Flea Circus which is available at: <http://www.tophatprod.com/store/product.php?productid=16166&cat=253&page=1> I currently use Bruce's box, and it's awesome, however this is the method that I came up with and used for about a year before I invested in his box.

### Flag \$5

My flag pole is made of a steel rod that's 12 inches long. At the bottom is velcro and there's another piece of Velcro on my case. The flag simply velcro's to my case for the flea circus. The flag is made out of a paper mailing label. I put three magnets on the inside of it and folded the label on itself, trapping the magnets inside. I cut this to roughly flag proportions and drew a flag on it. The magnets will stick to the steel rod, and slide up and down it, so I can raise and lower the flag.

### Block \$3

I always thought that the Bob Koch's Telekenetic Timber would be an awesome animation for a flea to do. Here's my simple solution.

The falling over block is simply a thread that has a knot in one end and a piece of wax on the other. The block has a tiny notch cut in it. You put the knotted end of the thread into the notch, this end is towards the bottom of the block (end towards the table) and runs under the whatever it's leaned against. While picking up the block and leaning it you steal the wax. Simply move away from the block to make it fall.

### High Dive \$2

One of the highlights of any flea circus is when the flea dives off the diving board and splashes into the water. In traditional suitcase flea circuses you need some sort of compressed air, my solutions is very simple. You'll need a cup with a hole in the bottom and a syringe (squirt kid medicine type, not stabby heroine type). The hole in the cup should hold the syringe which can be glued in place. This doesn't need to be water tight, since the cup doesn't hold water.

Put about  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch of water into the syringe. Hold the bottle of the cup so your hand covers the part of the syringe that sticks out the bottom. When the flea lands in the cup push up with your pinkie on the syringe to have water splash out!

### Untying hank \$10

For the untying hank you will need a piece of rope

(without core), a blunt sewing needle that's at least 2 inches long, strong fishing line and two handkerchiefs of different colors.

Tie a knot in each end of the rope. Next thread the fishing line onto the needle. Stab the needle into one of the knots and run the needle inside the rope to about 3-4 inches from the opposite end, then push it through to the so just the tip barely pokes through to the outside. Tie the loose end securely to the knot that you initially stabbed the needle through. PHOTO SIX

Tie one of the silks to the end farthest away from the needle, and about 3 inches from the knot. Slide the needle a little bit out of the rope and then wrap the other silk you will one full revolution around the rope next to the needle then inch out the needle until it crosses the "double" layer of the silk. Then stab the needle back into the rope and keep inching out the needle until the eye is almost poking out of the rope. PHOTO SEVEN, EIGHT and NINE

To work it simply use the magician's choice force to have them pick the color that is secured by the needle. Then to make the silk untie hold each end of the rope by the knots and pull your hands apart. This will pull the needle back into the rope, releasing the silk, which will look like it unties.

This was inspired by the Knots off Hanger trick.

### Music \$3

For music I use circus music in the background. For the flag raising I play the Star Spangled Banner. When I smash the flea I play Taps. When I the flea is diving I play the "hook" of the song Chariots of Fire. I use a remote control to work my music.

### NOTES:

Because this uses larger props most of the tricks in this flea circus can be seen by larger crowds...even in a theater without using a video screen!

One way to use this to fit themes of events or seasons is simply matching the colors to the event. So for example for Halloween shows, I use an orange cup for the high dive and black and orange silks for the untying knot.







# JEFF McBRIDE'S WONDERGROUND

magic \* variety \* dancing \* live dj \* performance art

Happy Anniversary  
to the Wonderground Players  
& Support Crew!



My heartfelt gratitude to all the friends and performers who have helped the Wonderground become the astonishing success that it is! - Jeff McBride

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(And hey, if we missed you... let us know! You'll be in the next ad!)

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Carl Andrews has been performing professionally for 33 years. He is also an iPhone developer of over 20 Apps including No Freakin' Way, Magic Draw, True Lies and Show Cues (sound control system).

[www.mojosoftwareonline.com](http://www.mojosoftwareonline.com)



**One Blank Card**  
*'create the impossible'  
 from your Iphone or Ipod Touch*

# TECH TALK

## CARL ANDREWS

Two items this issue for iPhones and Androids reviewed by our regular Tech Guru Carl Andrews

### "Instinct" by Alex Ward & Myke Phillips.

The price is £30 via paypal to:

mykephillips@mac.com or alexwardmagic@gmail.com.!

There will be only 250 copies released in PDF form along with links to video performances ! and explanations.

Developer's Description: Here is the basic effect below.

You switch phones with a spectator and send yourself a text message from their phone. You ask the spectator to read what the text says on your phone. They open the text and it reads "Test". You then switch back

phones and ask them to think of any word/name and text it to you whilst your phone is face down on your hand. You then tell the spectator to place their hand on top of your phone and with the other hand slowly touch the back of their hand. As soon as their finger touches the back of their hand, the text message comes through. You now show them the unopened text message to confirm that its really their number. Without ever opening the text message, you reveal what the word/name is.

Points:

The spectators actually jump when they hear and feel their text message come through.

They are really blown away by how you could have possibly know what word/name they are thinking of.

When the text comes through, it is the actual text message they sent. They can take as long as they like to touch the back of their hand but as soon as they touch it, the text comes through.

The text message really is unopened and they can check everything.

You can do this with two borrowed phones.

No helpers.

You only have one phone.

No earpiece.

No Bluetooth.

No Application required.

Instant reset.

Bonus Routines.

### **My Thoughts:**

"Instinct" is a brilliant mobile effect, it is not an App. It comes with a 43 page instruction PDF file with full color step by step instructions on the set up on iOS6 or iOS7.

Several routines are explained and you will be able to come up with your own ideas once you understand the principle. The effect requires an easy one time set up. The PDF also explains how you can combine their "iUnlockYourMind" App with "Instinct" for a double whammy, even though it is an amazing effect by itself.

Included is a Facebook support page which is also very helpful. I am not going into more detail because this is a limited release. "Instinct" is most highly recommended if you can get a copy!

**"One Blank Card"** is a new iPhone card prediction effect by thesmalappcompany.

It sells for \$14.99 and is designed for both the iPhone and iPad, available in the App Store! [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Bxuq8\\_oxHY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Bxuq8_oxHY)

Developer's Description:  
- Learn to perform a brand new

magic trick as a professional or beginner

- Create the 'impossible' using a 'fake' camera from your iPhone or iPod Touch

- Setup takes less than 5 seconds , your spectator wont suspect anything as you show a working camera

- Choose from one of a selection of playing cards or things such as 'look in my pocket' to have appear on a 'blank card'

- ESP Symbols and Special 'Force' numbers included

- Use the flash if the lighting requires ( on iPhone4 and iPhone5)

- Post your comments and suggestions to twitter or facebook directly from the app

- Beginners to magic can learn to 'force' a card on a spectator and perform this trick in minutes.

You will also need a pack of cards and a 'blank' card which you can make from card or buy from the links in the App.

Have a spectator think of a playing card. Then have them hold a blank piece of card. Take a photo of them using your iPhone camera. Then reveal the impossible by having their thought of card appear on the card in the photo. Then can then keep the photo as a souvenir if you wish?

Easy to do.

Learn in seconds

An impossible souvenir.

Endorsed and devised by Lee Smith - Elite Magician.

Credits

Justin Miller

and Paul Gertner

### **My Thoughts:**

I really like this App although I did find the instructions a bit more difficult to read than I would like. However once you learn to use it, the effect is great! A spectator selects a playing card. You then hand them a blank face card or a blank backed business card or a

napkin. You take a photo with your iPhone of them holding the blank object. The spectator reveals his selected card and you have them open your iPhone camera

roll. They discover the photo of them holding the blank card is now a photo of them holding their previously selected card! If you don't get a great reaction with that, ! check their pulse.

A nice feature is that it does not have to be a card trick. The App comes with various settings you can use to show ESP symbols, words or phrases. I can see the possibilities expand in future updates.

t is easy to perform and appears that you are simply using your camera App to take a photo. It's very clean, nothing for the spectator to find.

"One Blank Card" is well worth the price for the effect and to keep it out of the hands of the merely curious. I am surprised I had not heard more buzz about this App. I Highly recommend it!



# YOUNG MAGICIANS CORNER

## COLLIN STOVER

### SIX TIPS FOR TACKING NERVES (for Pros and Novices)

We've all been there. The butterflies in your stomach that feel more like worms, churning out feelings of distress. The sweaty palms, that only get sweatier as you think about how difficult it's going to be to do that sleight with these clammy hands. The feeling of a dry mouth and tongue that you just can't moisten no matter how hard you try. We've all been there. Performance can be nervewracking.

Whether it's for your family, friends, or a room full of strangers, all of these unpleasant sensations associated with nervousness make it almost impossible to focus on entertaining.

There are two types of entertainers. Those who get nervous before a performance, and those who lie about it. Everyone experiences nerves before a performance. From the small child with his first magic kit to David Copperfield, everyone experiences nervousness. Here are six tried and true tips that the pros use to tackle performance nerves.

#### 6. Practice!

This seems like a nobrainer, but it's true that the more you practice, the less nervous you'll be. You should practice until you can perform the tricks in your sleep. If you can't do it in your sleep, then don't do it when you're nervous, or it's likely you'll make a mistake.

Practicing takes the extra element of conscious memory out of performing. It's all in your automatic and muscle memory. Nervousness does a number on your conscious memory, so making those moves and that patter as automatic as possible is a surefire way to give yourself confidence while performing. Practice each move for 20 minutes a day until you are confident you could perform it in any condition.

#### 5. Talk Yourself Up

On the drive to any performance, I repeat to myself "I am the best. I am the best entertainer, I am the best magician, I am the best person for this job. I am the

best." over, and over, and over again. It may seem silly to some, but it really helps! This is a technique I learned in a sales course; The idea is to positively reinforce your subconscious, effectively telling you to stop being nervous and to be the best.

Just try it. It won't get rid of all of the nerves, but it certainly helps you calm down (for me, the car ride there has always been the worst part, so this is especially helpful).

#### #4. Relax

"Easier said than done, Collin." I know, I know. Saying relax might seem ineffective, but a lot of entertainers forget to do this. We get so trapped inside of our own heads that we forget to breath.

That's all you need to do. Take a deep breath. In through the nose, out through the mouth (take a breathmint, too). Do that deeply and slowly, ten times, and tell me you don't feel calmer. According to several researchers, breathing exercises actually



change your body. Believe it or not, breathing slower and deeper and focussing on your breath actually shifts your body away from sympathetic mode to parasympathetic mode, a more relaxed and healthy state which rids your body of stresscausing hormones. Breath in, breath out.

## #3. Stop Taking Yourself So Seriously... Have Fun!

This is arguably the most important item on the list, and we can all use it. Magicians, by nature, are usually introverts. It's not until we begin performing that we break out of our shells and become extroverted. Because of this, we put even more importance on our performances. For magicians, it may feel as though this performance is the most important thing in the world.

People need to take you seriously, and because of that, you need to take yourself seriously. This isn't true, and you need to remember why you started doing magic in the first place. Most of us began doing magic, not because we wanted to be taken seriously, but because we wanted to have fun and deliver that fun to others. So do that. Have fun! It's a fact (some view it as a negative, I view it as a positive) that most people don't care how good you are. All they want is some entertainment, whether it's good or bad. Sure, if they paid to see you specifically, that's a little different, but in novice situations, people don't care whether you get everything perfect, and they're sympathetic if you make a mistake. They aren't worried about it, so why should you be?

## #2. Just Dive In!

When positive reinforcement, reathing exercises, and seasoned hands fail you, you just need to dive in. The first table is always the hardest, is something I like to say when I'm doing strolling magic.

*"Believe it or not, breathing slower and deeper and focussing on your breath actually shifts your body away from sympathetic mode to parasympathetic mode..."*



After that, it's smooth sailing. That first trick is always going to be the most difficult of the night. After you get over that first trick and hear your audience react favorably, you get over your nerves. You might still have shaky hands, but that's just adrenaline from your fight or flight response.

## #1. Take Importance Away from your Mess-Ups

What happens if you do mess up or make a fool of yourself? As I said before, your audience doesn't care. Just play it off and move on to something else. I make at least one mistake a night, usually when I get really comfortable with a group and stop using my brain so much (I need to work on that). Usually, my audience doesn't realize I've made the mistake. How would they? They don't know my tricks. They don't know what I was going to do next or how the trick was going to end. Just take the trick in a differ-

ent direction! This is where some improv classes could come in handy (the pros recommend it!). If they do realize I messed up (like there's some major inconsistency like I put a red card in their hand when it was supposed to be a black card), I don't make a big deal out of it. I come clean and usually tell them they witnessed me mess up. It's funny, because these are usually my best groups of the night. Something about seeing me make a mistake and come clean with it makes them respect me more. I just move on to the next trick and they forget all about it.

*Collin Stover is a professional corporate magician and mentalist from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. You can stalk him on Twitter @stovermagic, or read his blog at [www.collinstover.com](http://www.collinstover.com)*



# CREATIVITY

## AND THE RIGHT WAY TO BE INSPIRED



**Maximilian Draco** shares his ideas on creativity with the focus on grand illusion. With thanks to Jim Steinmeyer for inspiration on this first illusion.

We all watch wonderful effects presented by great performers. It's our nature to be driven, even unconsciously, to do something similar, because we want the same recognition, we want the same respect, we want to be like that person. But while there is nothing wrong with being inspired, to copy is a different matter. We don't need to copy, when we set our minds to it and practice the right way to do things.

The first thing one should know is:

There are millions of possibilities, so, don't get trapped by the look of the prop or the method of the effect you are inspired by. I'll give you an example. I was inspired by Jim Steinmeyer's wonderful "Origami," and wanted to do something similar. I didn't have the money to buy an original from John Gaughan or Wellington Enterprises, and for ethical reasons, as it should be, to buy or build a non-authorized prop was out of the question. So, what did I do? I took the concept of shrinking or folding the sword box, and applied it to the Victorian Sword Box, also known as the Sword Cabinet (the one in which the assistant vanishes) which is based upon the Cabinet of Protheus. Now the box is the same height as the assistant, which makes the audience relate the size of both. When he\she enters the box, it is folded or shrunk to half its size( and at this point, after the folding or shrinking, the box is the same size as the regular Sword Cabinet). The box is then pierced by swords, and the front door opened to reveal the assistant has vanished. This illusion accomplishes four effects. First, the box is reduced to half its size, and therefore confines the assistant into a tight place from which she can't escape, and inside which she can't move.

Second, swords are put through the box, apparently passing through the girl. Given the fact you reduced the size of the box and emphasized the entrapment of the assistant, this action of stabbing through the box is much more powerful, especially if the assistant's hand can be seen outside, to prove

he\she is indeed inside the box during this action, and if the hand contorts and twitches from the pain caused to the assistant. Third, you make a dramatic gesture to the box and open the front door to show the girl has vanished. Given the fact of the reduced size (which gives the idea the box is very small and impossible to escape from) and the fact the assistant had his\her hand protruding from the box a few seconds earlier, the effect on the audience will be very powerful. Fourth, the front door is closed, the swords removed, the front door opened again and the assistant reappears. This is the illusion. Of course, there should be showmanship and charisma. If you don't have any of this, you shouldn't be doing magic. Magic is supposed to engage people, but this must come first and foremost from the performer. Be funny, charming, dynamic or mysterious to captivate their attention and their interest.

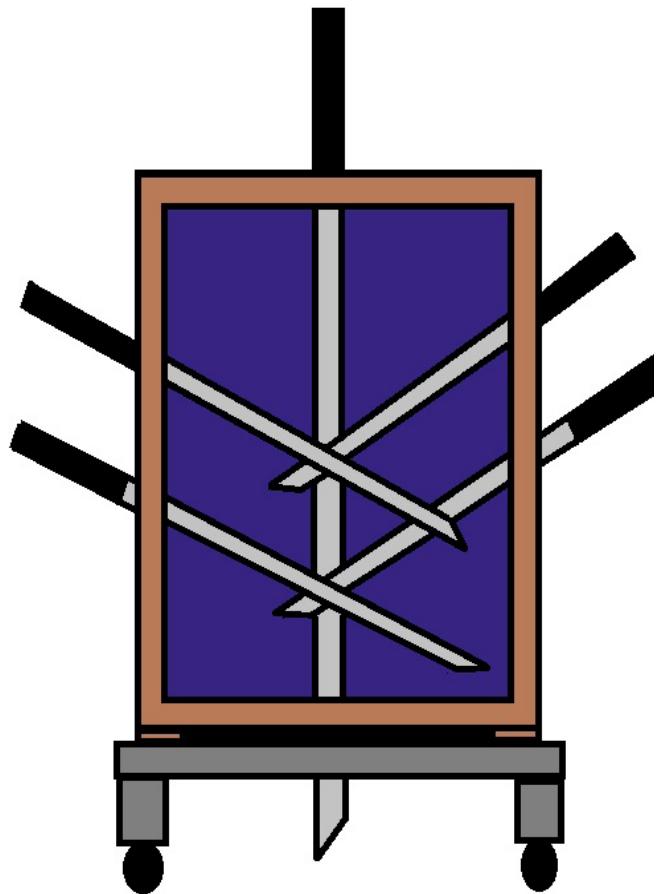
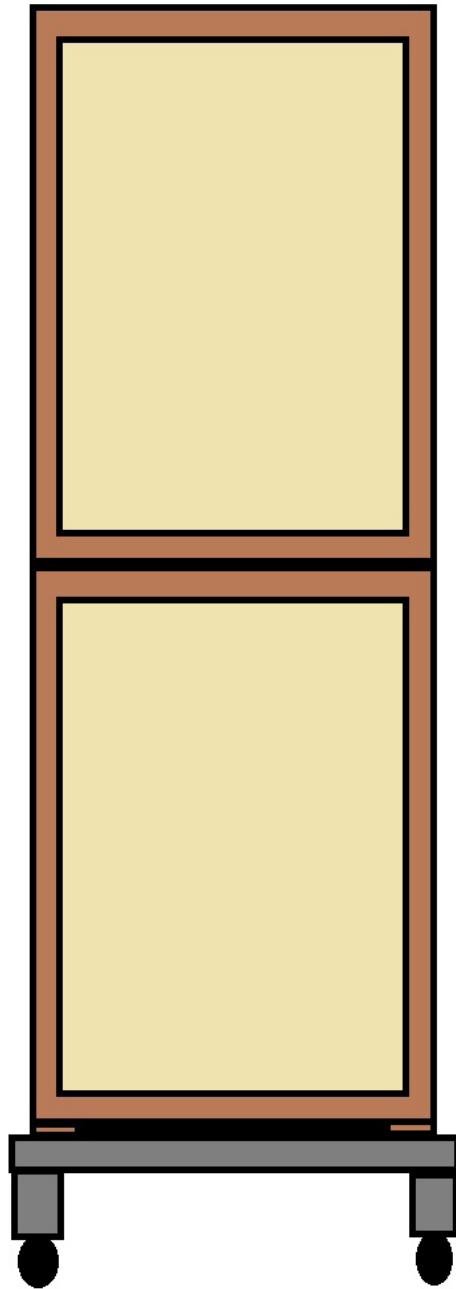
Now, back to the subject of the creative process. As



DRACO THE  
ILLUSIONIST IS BASED  
IN PORTUGAL

soon as you created a design and decided (or created) the method for the illusion (I say illusion, because I see every magic effect as an illusion, no matter its size. Is it real? No. If not, then it's an illusion. A trick is something we teach to a dog. Magic is much more than "roll over" and "play dead"... Magic is theatre, and in my opinion, should be seen and performed as such). Contact the person who created the illusion that inspired you. From my experience, if you contact someone, tell them your idea (preferably with some designs, so they can see the look of the prop will be different), show respect for their work and let them know you will not build or perform the effect if they see any conflict with their creations, they will be kind and tell you there is no problem. Usually, they'll show interest in seeing the completed piece. If they say no, even if you don't agree with their point of view, respect their wishes. I find it better to have an idea turned down, but to make a new friend, or at least to be on their good side, than to do what I want regard-

less of their will. You can always ask them what they would consider different enough. I never did this, and never needed to. But it doesn't hurt to try, right? If you have any questions or comments, please let me know at [Draco.vanish@gmail.com](mailto:Draco.vanish@gmail.com). I'll be glad to hear from you and to help.







# ASTRAL PROJECTION

## (Out of Body Experience)

**A simple yet powerful routine by Luca Volpe**

I LOVE this routine, it is so simple but SO strong and your audience will remember it for a long, long time! I am a great fan of the nail writer (thumb writer, boon writer etc...) and I was looking at creating a routine in which I could use "my friend NW" in an emotional sense. After some researching and experimentation, the Astral Projection was born! A simple idea, direct, to the point and easy to do with just a NW and a notepad BUT with a great script which will help sell the effect/routine!

### EFFECT

Call a spectator on stage and tell him that you are going to do an experiment of Astral Projection, better known as an

Out of Body Experience, in which he will be able to separate his conscious from his physical body and look for a specific target that you prepare for him. You proceed to relax the spectator with light hypnotic suggestion and tell him that he can open the "gateway of the other dimension". Once he has become relaxed, you start to draw something on a notepad, paying attention that nobody can see it so as to avoid your spectator receiving any help from the audience. You ask him to imagine separating his conscious mind from his body and to look all around him, paying extra attention to what is drawn on the notepad and to try to see it with his "mind's eyes". Once the process has

finished, you proceed to wake him and he will discover that what he saw with his "mind's eyes" is exactly the same as what you drew before!

## **EXPLANATION AND PROPS**

Ok, I am sure that you know how this works BUT what makes this routine so different is the atmosphere that you can create in the act. The idea that the spectator will see with his "mind's eyes" goes beyond any other routine with NW. Here we are not dealing with "intuitive feelings", "predictions" or "psychic powers", this is travel into another dimension, which makes sense with what you do in this routine. The other consideration is that the focal point will NOT be you but the spectator, he does everything and you are just a "guide" for his astral projection experience. The most important factor is that you need to be CREDIBLE in what you do. For this reason, these kind of presentations are JUST for psychic performers and specific types of shows (psychic parties, mentalism/hypnosis shows etc..), you don't want to do an egg bag and follow it with this routine! The only items you need for this routine are; a Nail Writer (I use the Grease Marker Thumb Writer by Vernet as it is visible from a distance), which you prepare in your right jacket pocket along with a pencil which writes in the same way as the NW (I use the pencil PITT PASTEL by FABER CASTELL 1122-199 which writes identically to my thumb writer, you can find this kind of pencil in art or stationary shops), you also need a spiral bound notepad and a chair.

## **ROUTINE**

Call the spectator on stage, ask him to take a seat and

make himself comfortable. Usually, before choosing the spectator, I use a tip from my good friend Jerome Finley and I ASK the audience who believes in this kind of experience or if anyone has ever had an out of body experience during sleep.

This tip is very important as the spectator that you choose will already be prepared and receptive for the experiment. Once the spectator is seated on the chair, proceed with the first part of the script "THE BEGINNING" (the sleep/hypnotic process). Take the notepad from your table and the pencil from your pocket and, paying attention that nobody can see what is written on the pad, start to fake draw something (using your nail to make a noise). Usually I do a LOT of lines in different positions on the page as it is important to cover any type of drawing that he can say. Using the famous principle of the "universal drawing" draw straight lines, circles and waves, so that even if the audience are watching the movements of your hand, they will not be able to understand what has been drawn.

Once you have finished the fake drawing, put the pencil back in your right jacket pocket and in the same time wear the NW so that you are ready to draw what he is about to tell you. Proceed with the second part of the script, "THE MIND VISION", ask him to see with his "mind's eyes" what you drew on the pad and TELL him that you drew a simple shape with some OTHER shapes around it.

The way in which I ask him what shapes he sees is always "piece by piece", I NEVER directly ask him "what drawing did you see?". I pretend to make this process

REAL by telling him to BELIEVE that he really is seeing something, to make the shapes "fade in" slowly on the pad and as the shapes appear in front of his "mind's eyes", he will need to tell me one shape at a time. This method has two important features; firstly it makes it more realistic and it creates a great atmosphere, secondly it allows you to draw, one shape at a time enabling you to control the thumb movements.

If you were to ask him directly, what he sees, the movement of your thumb would be rushed and exaggerated, you would be making the drawing in a matter of seconds and it would also destroying the "timing" of the routine in the process. Keep the level of "suspense" high and do not rush, this is the key to making this simple routine a piece of art!

Once you have finished the thumb writing, leave the notepad closed on the table and proceed with the final part of the script, "THE COMING BACK". When he has awoken, ask him what he saw during his out of body experience. Tell him to take the pad from the table and open it, with great surprise he will see that the drawing he saw with his "mind's eyes" corresponds with what you drew! Put your right hand in your right jacket pocket, remove the NW and take the pencil which you use to sign the piece of paper and give to your helper.

## THE SCRIPT

I have divided the main "spectator script" into three sections so that it is easier to follow. This is a fully tested performance script that will NEVER go wrong! So, please read and study it carefully.

*Ladies and gentlemen, I am sure that some of you have*

*heard of an "out of body experience" before and I'm also quite sure that at least one person here tonight has had some kind of experience of this type, am I right? Good, I knew that! How many of you believe in "astral travels"? Wow, several of you! That's great! Tonight, I will give one of you the chance to open the "gateway of the other dimension", travel through time and space and learn the secret of the higher dimension!*

*Sounds great doesn't it? Before we start, I want to say that you don't need to be worry about this process, it will not affect you negatively and there will be no collateral effects, it is just a guided relaxation process which will enable you to see with your "mind's eyes", without being hypnotized at all. It is a deep and incredible experience that will also empower you! I see that this gentleman here looks interested, can you come on stage please? Let's make a big round of applause. What's your name? Gary, please sit comfortably on this chair and relax your muscles.*

### FIRST PART: THE BEGINNING

*Gary, you are about to experience something wonderful and I promise that at the end of it, you will feel more relaxed and empowered, are you ready to start? Very good... Gary, I want that you look into my eyes, please don't move your attention from my eyes, keep looking. The more you look into my eyes the more you will feel your eyes getting heavy and the more you feel your eyes getting heavy the more you will feel relaxed. Let go of all your thoughts, good... like that... slowly, slowly, take a deep breath... good... take another deep breath and close your eyes and relax, perfect.*

*Keep relaxed Gary and just listen to my voice... Gary I'm drawing something on a piece of paper, something that*

*you will not be able to see right now but in a moment  
(I start to fake draw) you will be able to see it with you  
"mind's eyes" (while I speak, I fake draw), Gary take  
another deep breath and relax more and more....perfect  
Gary, you are doing great!*

#### SECOND PART: THE MIND VISION

*Gary I want you to feel your body becoming lighter,  
concentrate all your attention on your mind and imagine  
that your body starts to become lighter and lighter...almost  
as if your body is sleeping but your mind is still awake  
and ready to move from your body. Your body is lighter  
now, more and more...your body is ever so light now, you  
feel that deep relaxation and a great sense of peace....  
please keep relaxing and let your body become lighter and  
lighter. In a moment Gary, I want you to imagine moving  
from your body, imagine leaving your physical body on  
the chair and to stand up, just with your ethereal body.  
Imagine this: you are moving, you see yourself moving  
around this room, you see yourself sat on the chair, you  
can see me speaking with you, your physical body is on the  
chair but you can move around, you can see everything  
around us with your "mind's eyes". I want you to imagine  
coming close to me and to see what I drew on the pad...  
you are moving close to me, you see yourself close to me...  
here you are...the pad is in front of you Gary.*

*You can see something on this piece of paper, please  
imagine seeing it, believe that you are seeing the simple  
lines that form the drawing...you can see it clearly now...  
imagine one shape at a time, fading into your mind now,  
try to see the drawing line by line...piece by piece....what  
are you seeing now Gary? A long vertical line?*

*Perfect...keep looking at the pad Gary, what do you see  
other than the line, is there something around it? A few  
circles around the line? That's great Gary! Do you see  
something else on the paper?*

*No, ok (I close the pad and put it on the table). You did  
perfectly Gary, now please take a deep breath for me...  
perfect... like that.*

#### THIRD PART: THE COMING BACK

*Gary, I want you to imagine coming back to your physical  
body, slowly, slowly, move back to the chair and feel  
yourself going back to your body... perfect like that... take  
a deep breath, feel your body again, your hands, your feet  
on the floor... Ok, Gary... please take another deep breath,  
in a moment you will open your eyes and feel full of energy  
and with an increased sense of empowerment from this  
wonderful experience. Feel waves of energy that start from  
your feet and slowly move through your body, feel the  
energy flowing through you...now very slowly open your  
eyes...*

*Hi Gary! Welcome back! How do you feel? Great! Gary,  
I know that for some of the people here, it may seem  
impossible what has just happened to you, so I would  
like you tell everyone how you felt during this experience  
(usually they say that it has been really strange and that  
they felt an "empty" and very light head). Now Gary, I  
asked you to see a drawing with your "mind's eyes", a  
drawing that I made while you had your eyes closed. I  
know that this should be impossible but you really did  
imagine to see a drawing on the pad, right? You really  
felt to be close to me and see what was on the pad, right?  
So you said you saw a long vertical line with some circles  
around it, right? Well, I know that in a moment when you*

*open that pad you will see something a little strange...  
please open the pad... (when they open the pad they are completely shocked to see the same image that they saw in their imagination!) This is what you saw during your astral projection Gary, so, sometimes when we are asleep we can still live and feel real experiences, it could be that we are traveling with our astral body, into the higher dimension! Please let me sign the drawing for you and you can keep it as a memento of your experience! Thank you!*

## **TO CONCLUDE**

This is the classic routine which bridges the line of what is real and what is not. The fact that he sees the drawing on the pad which he has previously seen on his "astral travel" will create a strange sensation as he will not realize if he has really been out of his body. Don't underestimate this routine, even if the method is really very simple. The effect, for everyone present, is very strong and powerful, but if you still want to take it a step further you could use a deeper hypnotic induction.

## **A LITTLE TIP**

If you want to "risk it", you can even do this routine without the use of a NW but you need to influence the spectator verbally as to what he sees. The use of the script and the correct words would be vital for this to work. As you can see in the script, I say "believe that you are seeing the simple lines that form the drawing", the use of the words simple lines is used because it is related and connected to straight lines. Then I say "imagine one shape at a time, fading into your mind now, try to see the drawing line by line", I use the words SHAPE and LINE BY LINE, again to reinforce the image of straight lines. Towards the end of this section I also

say "Perfect...keep looking at the pad Gary, what do you see other than the line, is there something around it?" which I use to force the participant to think of circular images by using the word AROUND. To conclude, I ask him if he sees something else in the drawing and for the majority of the time (this is a psychological concept) they say that they don't see anything else. I have personally tested the routine in this way for small performances and small groups of people and it works 65% of the time. Obviously, you always want to have your NW ready in case something happens!

## **NOTE:**

*The above routine comes from the first volume of Emotional Mentalism. This volume can be purchased from your favorite magic dealer.*





# THE MAGIC ASSISTANT

## INTERVIEW WITH JANINE RUSSELL

Janine's love of dance began at the age of three, when she enrolled in her local dance school in Surrey, England. At fourteen, Janine became a member of the National Youth Ballet, performing in many prestigious events, on the television, at the Royal Opera House, the Royal Albert Hall, and the Guildhall London in the presence of HRH Princess Anne. Janine was a Senior Associate with the Royal Ballet School until 1998, when she was given the opportunity to train at the Central School of Ballet, London. She graduated in July 2002. Janine then worked for 9 years with the Jean Ann Ryan Production Company as a dancer, Dance Captain, Company Manager, and Stager, teaching production

shows to new casts. It was whilst working for Jean Ann Ryan Productions onboard the Norwegian Cruise Line ship 'MS Dawn' that Janine met and worked as a magician's assistant for Greg Gleason. Janine and Greg worked together for 4 years onboard ships, until Janine decided to leave ships and to return to her roots in England. Janine continues to join Greg on his magical adventures whenever she can.

### How did you and Greg Gleason meet?

Greg and I met on cruise ships. I was on board performing as a dancer/dance captain in the production shows, and Greg was on board as a guest entertainer. He hired

BY  
**Gwyn Auger**

Gwyn continues this series with an interview with Joelle Righetti who was a Burton Babe



"JANINE AND GREG GLEASON WORKED TOGETHER FOR FOUR YEARS ONBOARD SHIPS, UNTIL JANINE DECIDED TO LEAVE SHIP AND RETURN TO HER ROOTS IN ENGLAND"



me (along with other female dancers) to be in his show, as well as performing in the production shows. We started working together in 2008 and have had a great working relationship, and friendship, ever since.

#### **Did you have an interest in magic before you got involved with it?**

I've always loved magic. I had a 'Paul Daniels' magic kit as a child and used to try to learn the tricks to perform them for my family! The big illusions have always amazed me. I was thrilled when Greg Gleason first gave me the opportunity to be part of his show.

#### **Was it difficult to start learning?**

Greg is one of the calmest people I have ever worked with. He eased me in to being his assistant, starting with simple parts in his show, and gradually introducing the more challenging roles. I love it every time Greg unveils a new illusion to perform. I find the whole experience thrilling, from working through the small details in rehearsals, to performing the magic on stage for a live audience and hearing their reactions.

#### **Were there any illusions you found particularly difficult to master?**

I can't think of any particular illusion that I found hard to master. I think my biggest personal obstacle to overcome when performing illusions that are new to me is to keep calm! I have to remember a saying my Mum always told me as a child. 'Less haste, more speed!'

#### **How was it moving into the main role as Greg's assistant - and onto The Table Of Death?**

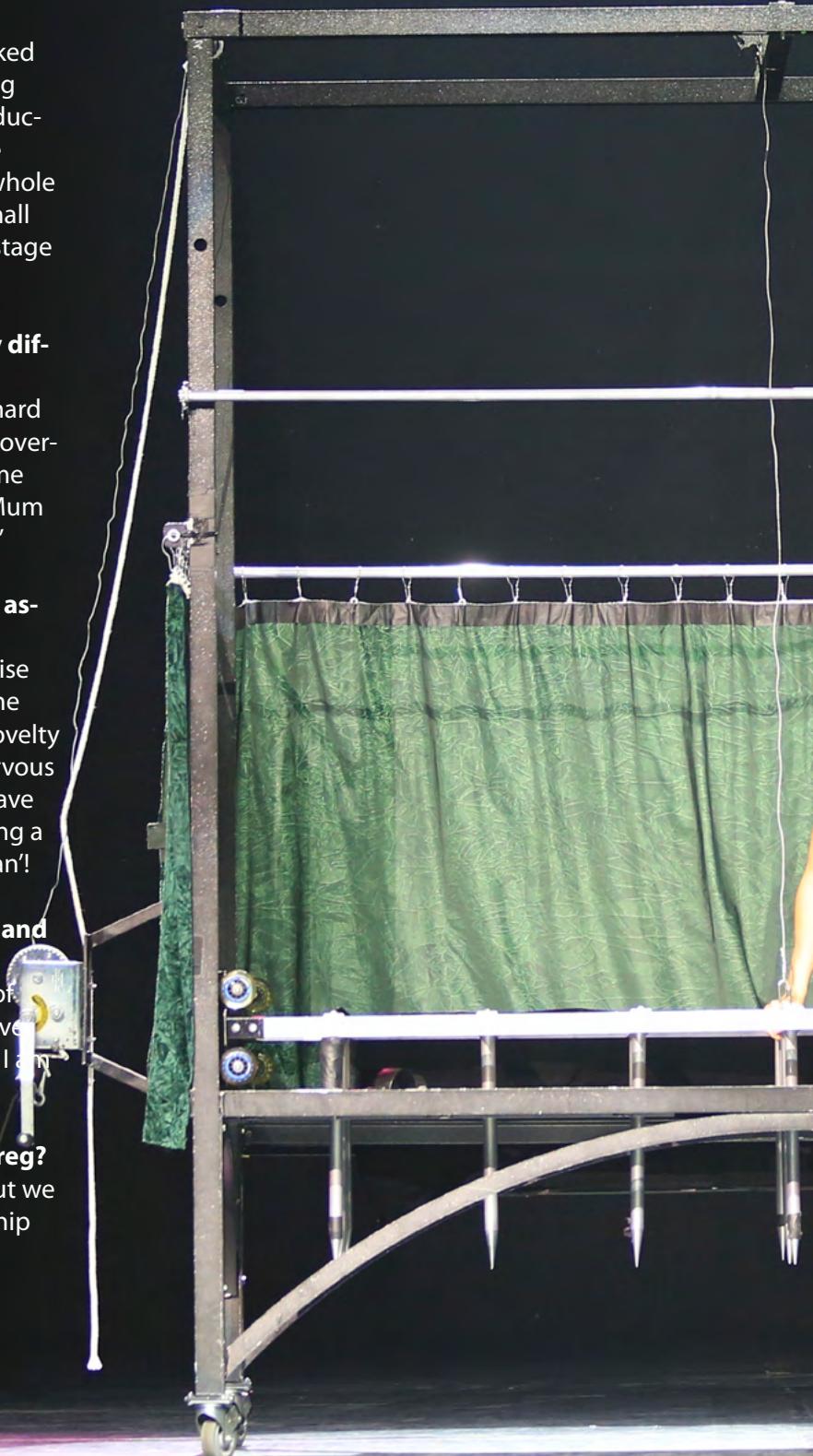
Greg added The Table of Death to his show on cruise ships. I was very lucky that he asked me to learn the part of presenting the illusion. I think it was the novelty of my English accent! Hahaha! I was extremely nervous the first few times I performed the illusion, but I have since performed it many times and now love having a 'speaking role' and playing the part of 'the magician'!

#### **How does it work now with him living in Vegas and you in England?**

I retired from dancing for a profession at the end of 2011 and returned back to England. Greg and I have stayed in contact, and whenever he has a gig that I am able to do, I fly out to join him.

#### **Have you worked for other magicians or just Greg?**

I have worked with other magicians in the past, but we didn't form the same enjoyable working relationship that I have with Greg.





**What is your favourite illusion to watch, and also to perform?**

My favourite illusion to watch (and perform) is the water levitation. I think it is so incredibly beautiful, and mystifying. The way that Greg sets the scene with the lights and music is stunning. Plus, had I not performed it myself, I never would have understood the magic behind it!

**What has been your favourite place magic has taken you to?**

I'm incredibly lucky to have travelled to many different countries whilst performing on cruise ships, but I have to say that my best memories of performing with Greg have been in China. For the past two years he has been invited to perform in a big Magic Festival in China. The first year we performed in Shenzhen, and the second year was in Chengdu. Both were such incredible experiences.

**With your background in dance do you get to help with the choreography of the show?**

During my career as a dancer I did stage production shows, so do like to help Greg whenever he needs me to with choreography for his shows. He always hires very talented dancers/assistants, so I'm mostly needed as an extra pair of eyes just to clean things up.

**What else do you do besides magic?**

After retiring from dancing, I trained to be a fitness instructor. I now teach Body Pump, Zumba, Aqua aerobics and Exercise to Music for many gyms in my local area. I also work as a Personal Assistant at an architecture, urbanism and design practise in Surrey, England.

**Any advice to future assistants or magicians working with assistants?**

I don't think you ever stop learning in life. The moment you think you know it all is the moment you are likely to fail. There is always something that can be improved. As a magician's assistant I would have to repeat what I said earlier, and that is to keep calm, and to make sure you are always aware of what is going on backstage and on stage throughout a show. You never know when the show order might change or the magician's microphone stops working!

**And as always I have to ask what is your favorite type of cupcake?**

I actually have Coeliac Disease so am unable to eat gluten! Cup cakes are tricky for me as they are usually made with wheat flour. I'm a self-confessed chocoholic, so anything chocolate-y would make me happy!



# MAGIC REVIEWS

**PAUL ROMHANY & FRIENDS**

Based upon top selling products from magic retailers and wholesalers, as well as consulting with over a dozen professional magicians, Paul Romhany reviews tricks, DVDs, books and Apps.

If you would like to have your product reviewed in Vanish, then post it to the Magic Review team.

With an audience of over 100,000 readers your product will reach a wider audience than any other trade magazine.

NOTE: We get sent A LOT of magic to review and ONLY CHOOSE the products we feel deserve the space. Not ALL products will make the review column.

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# 1 MIB By Scott Alexander and Puck



## AD COPY:

Scott Alexander and Puck have broken the solo mind reader's glass ceiling by creating an out of this world, impossible, one-man, prediction effect for the real working pros.

**Effect:** A sealed glass bottle containing a rolled up message is given to a volunteer in the audience to hold onto for safe keeping. Four audience members are randomly chosen with a beach ball and asked to help complete a story about being stranded on a deserted island. Their answers are recorded on a small dry erase board.

The person with the bottle is asked to bring it on stage and drop it into a paper bag where it is broken with a small hammer. The rolled up message is removed and then slowly unrolled between the performer and volunteer stretching across the stage. As it's unrolled, the story is read aloud and matches all of the information given by the audience just moments before, including the name of your volunteer helping to unroll the message!

For example -"I'm line-dancing on the island and getting sick of eating tomatoes. Got chased by a cheetah, but luckily Elvis rescued me...wish you were here Jerry!"

This is eight minutes of solid comedy mentalism, full of excitement and impossibility. The most amazing part is that this is a completely self contained, one man effect. Everything is under your control at all times, requiring no off stage assistants.

## Special Points:

The method used to accomplish the "Confabulation" effect is original and new.

This is a one man prediction using no offstage assistants. You never leave the stage or go behind and tables or coverings.

The prediction is under your control at all times.

The predicted words are written within a story and not placed consecutively one after the other.

The entire prediction is written in large print and can be stretched up to 15' across the stage.

The method and apparatus can be used as a utility to easily customize your presentation.

The entire unit will fit comfortably in a standard sized carry on suitcase.

Comes complete with: M.I.B. Special Dry Erase Board and Stand, Markers, Small Hammer & Tongs, Bags, Paper, and Magicians Wax. (Unit Requires 6 AA batteries, not included)

## MY THOUGHTS:

The only way to test something like this out was to put in my act and perform it. In my show I would finish with the Zinnerman Prediction Chest made by Doug Malloy. This has meant having somebody off stage write the final prediction down, and then load it in to the gimmick table. It is an incredibly strong effect and a great way to finish any show. Both Derren Brown and Chris Angel used this in their television and theatre shows. The downside of it though was having the space to hide a person off stage AND actually hiring a person to do the writing. Having said all that we come to M.I.B ... I have now performed MIB several times in both a theatre setting and corporate shows .... if anybody would like to BUY a Malloy Prediction Chest I have one for sale!!!

MIB really IS THE ULTIMATE solo performers dream for any type of 'confabulation' style routine where audience members call out things and they have all been predicted prior to the show. You could do lottery numbers, dream date type routine, you are limited only by your imagination. The great thing about this version is that it fills up the stage at the end. The final prediction is held by a spectator and rolled out on stage making a great finish to an act. The main highlights for me include not relying on another person and this packs flat and plays big. No more carrying the heavy Malloy prediction chest around with the table.

## THE PROPS:

You receive everything you need from a gimmick pen to the most incredible electronic white board I've ever seen. You will need to get 6 AA batteries and I would recommend replacing them every third or fourth show. The board does all the work as it's electronic, and getting the prediction from the board to wherever you want it to happen with the press of a button.

My ONLY concern when I had it up and running in rehearsal was the noise the board made. However, the first time I performed it was at a small banquet with 45 people who were very close to me. To make matters worse I was also wearing a head-set microphone so I was worried the noise might be picked up on that. My fears were soon to put rest once the routine started because the noise from the audience throwing the ball around the room and calling things out meant there was nothing heard, and even I didn't hear it ... so that issue was very soon to put rest.

Puck and Scott have made sure everything is included from a large roll of pre-cut fax paper to special pens and even a pen you can switch should you want to. They show you how to cut your own prediction paper, or as I will be doing buying it direct from them all pre-cut. You are supplied with enough for several shows. I'm lazy so would rather buy it in bulk from them pre-cut.

I showed a close friend this recently who also owns a Zinnerman style prediction chest, and upon seeing it put his chest up for sale and is now a proud owner of MIB. This is the impact I believe MIB will have on those who love this type of routine.

The White Board - this looks a little larger than a regular white board but it's nothing too out of the ordinary. You don't draw attention to it other than to use it to write the items called out down. Scott and Puck have come up with clever ideas for doing the 'double writing' if you want to show the board at the end. The board is completely clean once the trick is over, and the nice thing is the dirty work has been done long before anybody would suspect anything.

INSTRUCTIONS: I highly recommend watching the entire DVD before playing around with the board. You will need some time to digest everything, but once you open up the whiteboard and try it out you'll have no problems. Also included is an extra 'gimmick' so if you are doing two shows a night you can have two gimmicks ready to go cutting down the set-up time. This is great if working on cruise ships for example. If you are doing more shows then contact your magic dealer and they can get you more gimmicks which would help out in pre-show set ups.

They go in to a lot of detail from the board itself to routines and extra ideas. You can perform this using their routine with a message sealed in a bottle, or, as Scott does have the message appear inside a sealed box that was hanging above the audience. In other words, it's the Zinnerman Chest but performed SOLO. At NO time do you leave the stage and everything happens out in the open. You don't have to hide to load anything or do anything suspicious. It's very clean and easy to do.

The best thing I can say about this is that I now close my show with it. My prediction chest is now in storage and MIB has taken it's place. It has also saved me having to hire or rely on another person to do any off stage writing and loading. Without a doubt this is the greatest one person prediction routine on the market. It is ideal for corporate shows, banquets, stage and platform style show.

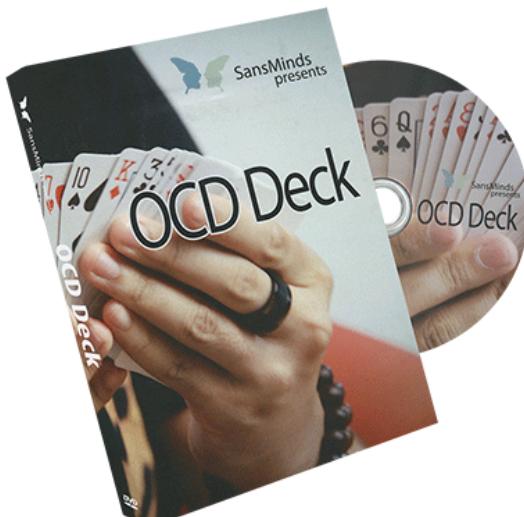
EXCLUSIVE from <http://www.hocus-pocus.com>  
PRICE: \$1850.00

**WATCH DEMO**



# 2 OCD DECK

## By Andrew Gerard and Will Tsai



### AD COPY:

This deck does everything for you and you can even perform it surrounded. Imagine having the spectator holding a shuffled deck of playing cards along with their signed card somewhere in the deck. They shake the deck, and the entire deck, including their signed card, rearranges itself back into new deck order; Ace to king. It's a jaw dropping miracle that you and your audience are going to have a lot of fun with.

### MY THOUGHTS:

There is a reason Gerard is in demand as a creative consultant for people like Blaine, Chris Angel, Keith Barry and others. His thinking is outside the box and he has the ability to come up some incredibly strong magic. Combining his talents with Will Tsai together they have created an extremely powerful routine with a deck of cards.

The effect is a signed card is placed back in to a shuffled deck, and with a snap the entire deck is in new order with the signed card also being in the correct place within the deck. The thinking behind this is very clever and the deck is custom made with Bicycle cards. You can then hand out the signed card for the spectator to keep as a souvenir. This is such a strong effect that I now use it as a closer to my walk-about performances, and this for me is where the strength of the routine lies. You leave the audience with an impossible impression in their mind. You are immediately set up to perform it again. Place the deck back in the card case, add an extra card and you are set.

Keep in mind that the entire deck is gimmicked so you

can't hand it out afterwards or before, however it is easy to switch decks during a walkabout or close-up performance. If you finish with this then you can just put the deck away as you move on. You could do this as a one off effect, however I prefer to use it where I perform one or two card routines then put the deck away to show a coin trick then bring it out saying, "I will show you one more." I don't make big deal out of it and nobody picks up any switch. In strolling situations this is very easy to do. At the end there is no heat on the cards and you can simply put them back in the pack ready to go again.

This deck can make a novice magician look like they have spent a very long time practicing a miracle. This is draw dropping magic at its finest and it's EASY to do.

After each performance you only need to replace one card, which will be the signed card that is given away at the end, so the reset is instant.

Included is a custom card case that is very subtle but makes life easy if you are switching decks or have this in your case and want easy access to it without guessing which case is for which trick.

There are other subtleties that help sell the illusion such as having the two black twos as regular cards so you can show the deck casually at certain places showing full faced cards, including the card chosen and the one above it. This really helps sell the illusion of a regular deck back in new working order.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Will Tsai is producing first class teaching DVDs, making everything extremely clear and easy to understand. The quality of production is also first rate. There are a few bonus ideas and moves taught from forcing a card to a visual change of a shuffled deck to a new order deck.

A very practical effect complete with everything you need to perform this in a very short time. Recommended for both the magician starting out and the seasoned professional.

This would be a great effect if you had to perform a television segment and needed something that made you look like a world-class card magician.

PRICE: \$35.00

AVAILABLE from all magic retailers world wide  
WHOLESALE from [www.murphysmagic.com](http://www.murphysmagic.com)

**WATCH DEMO**

# 3 UNWRITTEN by Lyndon Jugalbot



**AD COPY:** Simply drop the deck into your spectator's hands and let the spectator feel the ink appear on the edge of the deck in their own hands!

Customize your own message at moment's notice. Make it personal and leave people with a souvenir of your magic that they will never forget!

"Unwritten is visual, easy to perform explainable, and fully customizable. It's my top go-to effect. And I know it'll be yours too!"

-Lyndon Jugalbot

**THOUGHTS:** This is an extremely visual effect where a hand written message appears instantly on a deck of cards. You could if you wanted give the deck away once the message appears. The method is very simple and easy to do and doesn't require too much handling. It is so visual that it looks like camera trickery.

What I like about this is that you can customize this with any deck of cards, so if working trade shows it makes the perfect effect to get any message across to your audience.

The gimmick is very easy to get out of play once the effect has happened and Will Tsai teaches several methods to do this. There is a palming version and a non-palming version. Personally the non-palming

method is extremely easy and he has come up with a great reason to put the gimmick away in plain sight. Very clever indeed. The gimmick is very well made and if it breaks or wears out you can get replacements from your magic dealer. With proper care it should last many performances but I highly recommend getting a few of them to have on hand if performing this on a regular basis. It would have been nice to include a few extra of the necessary parts of the gimmick should they break.

The routine taught has a card selected and placed on the table. The deck is either shaken or dropped in to the spectator's hand and the chosen card's name instantly appears written in ink on the side of the deck. It's a very straight forward revelation but I think the strength of this lies in having the message personalised. If you had prior information to a name while doing strolling magic, and it was their birthday you could have a birthday message written on the side of the deck for them. It is certainly something they would never forget and keep the deck forever.

This is a specialised effect, so in other words you couldn't use the deck prior to performance or let the spectator handle it, but you could do a deck switch if needed, switching a regular deck for the gimmick deck. This is easy to do if you are familiar with working close-up or strolling magic.

The method is different than similar routines on the market in that you can cleanly show BOTH sides of the deck prior to the revelation AND you can hand the deck out afterwards. These two elements give this effect the advantage over other methods out there.

Once you own this and understand the mechanics you could, with a little work, make a set up for your own business cards - this would certainly be very different and offer other presentational ideas.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** This comes with a DVD with very clear instructions. Will Tsai is producing quality DVDs that are some of the best instructional DVDs I've seen. It's well within the reach of most magicians from amateurs to professionals. I can certainly see many professionals using this because they understand the impact of personalising a message for a routine.

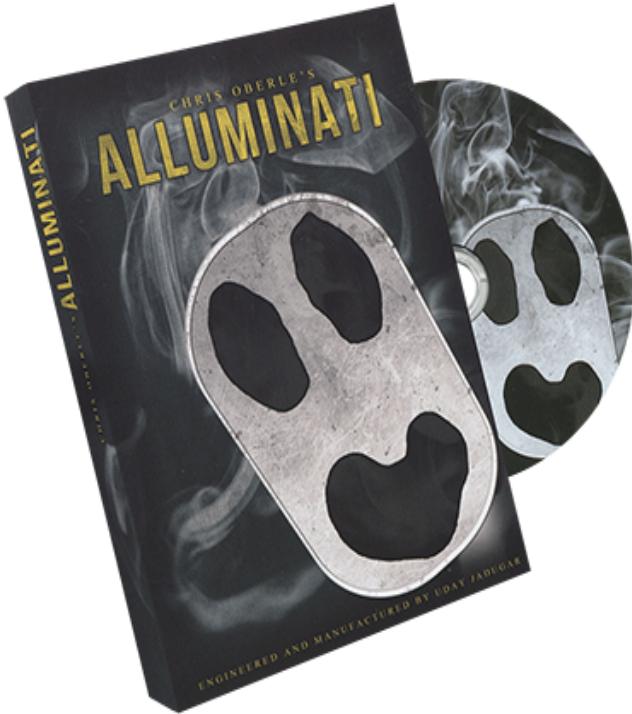
**PRICE:** \$30.00 US

**AVAILABLE:** Magic dealers worldwide

**WHOLESALE:** [www.murphysmagic.com](http://www.murphysmagic.com)

**WATCH DEMO**

# 4 ALLUMINATI by Chris Oberle



**AD COPY:** Your empty hands grab a can of soda and tear off it's aluminium pop tab (that cute little metal thingy with the two holes in it).

Your lovely spectator focuses her attention on one of the tab holes....allowing her secret thoughts about you to flow into the metallic circular space. You wait a moment..but it's still just your basic soda tab hole.

You and your potential new friend apply a little bit of warmth and tender thoughts to the tab..and then WITH THE SAME TAB, The EDGES of the hole are seen to have melted into a DIFFERENT shape...the rough shape of a MELTED HEART!

It's a little embarrassing...But her secret thoughts about you have now been permanently sculpted in aluminum for all time!

She can immediately examine the melted heart tab. And if you are truly fond of her, you can let her keep the sacred object as a one-of a kind earring or lucky charm. You can try to write your phone number on the tab with a sharpie...but yes, there are better ways. Of course ..this is just one of the MANY presentations and ideas possible with ALLUMINATI.

YOU CAN EVEN USE YOUR ALLUMINATI TAB TO REVEAL A CHOSEN CARD!

IN THIS VERSION BOTH HOLES IN THE SODA TAB RE-SHAPE

THEMSELVES. ONE HOLE TURNS INTO AN 8 AND THE OTHER INTO A HEART!

Put one in your pocket and you are always ready to make new friends.

- You can even put the tab in the spectators fingers so she can make the change happen herself.

- ALLUMINATI includes elegant, heart-meltingly easy handling's along with Six ALLUMINATI hearts tabs and Six ALLUMINATI 8 of hearts tabs.

Each ALLUMINATI Tab is HAND MADE using FIVE DIFFERENT STEPS to insure a perfect, natural-looking tab every time!

## MY THOUGHTS:

This is what I refer to as organic magic. In other words it is something that can happen with an ordinary object which often has more impact than a magic looking prop. While this was created by Chris Oberle it is produced by Bro Gilbert and Andrew Gerard. Both of these guys know all about organic magic as they have worked with Chris Angel as consultants and have created a lot of this type of magic for him.

In performance I have found that the spectator's want to keep the tab afterwards, and I think this is part of the impact, so you would need to buy a lot of refills. You are only given six of each gimmick, it would have been nice to get some more but they are available from all magic dealers.

Andrew Gerard teaches the effect and shares a lot of tips and advice on how to get the most from this. There are variations on this effect from picking up a can and taking the tab off and having the spectator think of a loved one, suddenly the whole in the tab changes in to a heart shape. This for me is the strongest presentation. Andrew's performance gives this a real emotional hook. There is also a second tab that can change in to a forced card. Andrew teaches a great method for switching a real tab for this one right in your hands that is never seen by the audience. The moment the switch happens is such a natural occurrence that it is completely undetected.

If you love organic magic that is a little out of the ordinary and leaves a lasting impression then this is definitely for you. It is ideal to have on hand and at the right moment perform anytime you see a can. Well within the reach of all levels of performers.

PRICE: \$34.95

AVAILABLE FROM ALL MAGIC DEALERS

WHOLESALE: <http://www.murphysmagic.com>

**WATCH DEMO**

# 5 VANISHING PEN by SandsMinds



**AD COPY:** It's this simple:

You vanish a pen WHILE THE SPECTATOR HOLDS IT.

Doing magic with pens has built-in appeal, since everyone carries them, you can borrow them anywhere, and they are uniformly recognized. How AMAZING it is, then, when you can take a pen and wrap it in a napkin. The spectator holds the napkin with the pen VISIBLY dangling beneath. You clap your hands together and... instantly...the pen disappears. This is a practical, astounding illusion with the simplest of objects.

#### MY THOUGHTS:

This is Will Tsai's answer to The Vanishing Bottle. The basic effect is you can use the pen to write during your close-up show, and whenever you want to vanish it, you can make it disappear. In the routine on the DVD it is placed between a napkin and instantly squashed, then ends up in his pocket. It's a very basic routine but has impact.

The pen is made from durable material that will last, and will bounce back to its original shape. You are supplied with two pens. One is a regular pen that you can use throughout the performance and switch, or use to produce once the pen has vanished. You also get the gimmick pen which can also write. This is a strong feature because moments before the vanish you can actually write with it.

The DVD teaches some simple methods to vanish the pen but with a little thinking you could create some strong routines. One idea would be to use it for some kind of 'smashed' routine where the pen is in a stand

and you place a small envelope or bag over it. You also show three or four other bags on the table. The spectator can choose any bag and you 'smash' it proving the pen is not in there. The last bag standing is the bag with the pen inside.

There are lots of potential routines waiting to be discovered with this gimmick. If you need to replace the pen nib then that is easy to do with a bit of rubber cement. This should last a very long time and something you could carry with you at all times.

PRICE: \$29.99

AVAILABLE FROM all magic retailers

WHOLESALE from [www.murphysmagic.com](http://www.murphysmagic.com)

**WATCH DEMO**



# 6 CHANGE by Will Tsai



**AD COPY:** Change allows everything to happen in your spectator's hands. And the best part is, you end completely clean. Your spectator gets to keep all the cards. This is a modern packet effect that will always be ready in your wallet. It's portable, examinable, and best of all, angle-proof. It's perfect for your close-up and stroll around routine.

**MY THOUGHTS:** This is a strong little packet trick that can be carried around and ready to perform at any time. I remember reading something similar in a Brother John Hammond book, although this has a different outcome.

You receive a special card and several regular playing cards. It doesn't take up any room and the effect is very straight forward for the audience to follow. You end clean and the magic happens in their hands, which always makes for stronger reactions. This is the sort of trick that might be good as a follow up to your regular working repertoire if asked to do one more.

The gimmick is made from Bicycle stock and you receive everything you need to perform it. The effect is that you show six indifferent cards and they are placed behind the spectator's back. THEY then take out one card and look at it and replace it. The cards are then handed to you and you are able to tell them the card they are thinking of. The kicker is that ALL of the cards now in their hands change to the thought of card. From an audience's perspective this is a very strong routine. You couldn't perform it again as the outcome will be the same, unless you make up another set, which you might choose to do. Perfect for the strolling magician.

**PRICE:** \$25.00

**AVAILABLE** from all magic dealers worldwide.

**WHOLESALE** from [www.murphsymagic.com](http://www.murphsymagic.com)

# 7 TWISTED QUEENS By SansMinds



**AD COPY:** If you were to tear apart a lady limb from limb, how would it look? It's quite a gruesome image, but imagine she were to put herself back together. Would she look the same afterwards?

Twisted Queens is a much simpler and direct approach to the classic torn and restored card effect. You focus on the idea of ripping apart the queens to really sink into the spectators hear, and their imagination is what restores the queen, in their own hands. It's easy to do and you'll get unbelievable reactions.

**MY THOUGHTS:**

This is a very straight forward torn and restored card. The card is torn and placed in the spectator's hand, then when it is opened it is fully restored, however the picture of the queen is completely twisted with arms and legs all over the place.

The actual restoration technique isn't new, however, the kicker is when they turn the card over and see the picture of the queen. The handling is very easy and well within the reach of all levels of performers. Having tested this out in several shows I can attest to the strong reaction not only when the card is restored but the kicker of the queen. From a workers point of view this is a very strong card trick. The focus is actually on the appearance of the queen rather than actual restoration. This is not a piece by piece restoration but a full card restoration in the person's hand. You are supplied with 10 cards and would need to buy more should you choose to perform this on a regular basis, and chances are you will. For the price I would have liked to have seen at least 20 cards supplied with this. The DVD instructions are precise and teach everything you need to perform this in a short time. A little bit of handling is needed but well worth learning.

**PRICE:** \$29.00

**AVAILABLE** from all magic shops worldwide

**WHOLESALE:** [www.murphsymagic.com](http://www.murphsymagic.com)

**WATCH DEMO**

# 8 PORTHOLE By Darryl Vanamburg



## AD COPY:

Stop what you're doing right now and WATCH THE TRAILER. You'll see a punched hole MOVE, BY ITSELF, from one end of a card to another. The card is signed and given away after the effect. Never, EVER, has a moving hole effect looked so visual.

Porthole comes with the precision-made prop you need to perform the effect, and it will last a lifetime. The apparatus takes care of everything for you--no sleights required at all.

Some more things to consider:

You start and finish completely clean

You can perform "Porthole" surrounded.

Easy To Do

No Threads - No Wires

You can perform this with playing cards, business cards or Similar.

No forces - No Switch

Performance and explanation footage included in DVD. We shy away from using words like "ultimate" or "definitive" but it's hard to imagine a cleaner version of the moving hole plot. This looks as close to real magic as you can get!

## MY THOUGHTS:

Darryl has put a lot of thought in to this routine, and it is certainly a very visual addition to the entire moving hole movement that is out there. This has pros and cons, although I would say once you take care of the cons then you will have something that is ready to go at

a moments notice.

The effect is VERY visual as the hole visibly moves from one side of the card to the other, and you can have the spectator sign the card prior to the moving. You can use ANY card from your deck as the cards are not gimped in any way.

The gimmick that does the necessary dirty work is actually in full view and is easy to access and ditch at the appropriate times in the routine. There is a 'gag' which Darryl uses to do a necessary 'move', however with a little work you should be able to come up with your own timing without doing the gag if you feel it doesn't fit your style.

You are not restricted to playing cards as you can make this up to use on your business card, which would make a fantastic give-a-way.

The con for some might be that you have to make part of the gimmick yourself. You are given all necessary equipment to make what you need to perform. It will take a little patience but should be well within the reach of everybody. Everything is explained in detail on the DVD, the most important point is to wait 10 minutes for glue to dry as mentioned by Darryl. The good thing though is you can make the gimmick to match the decks of cards you like to use, or your business cards. You are supplied with enough material to make three gimmicks so you could make this using three different types of decks including your business cards. You only need to make the gimmick once and you are set forever.

To get this working smoothly you will need a little bit of practice, but once mastered you will have something you can perform anytime and anywhere. You are supplied with everything including a bullet to make the holes and a pull so you don't lose it.

This is ideal for walk about performances and can be performed surrounded which is a strong point, as well as being reset instantly for repeat performances. The effect is extremely visual and best viewed when looking down on the card.

While there are no 'sleight's involved there is a little bit of handling that you will need to work on. It is well worth the effort as the impact is very strong. For those who like to take an item and make it their own this has a lot of potential.

PRICE:\$39.99

AVAILABLE FROM ALL MAGIC DEALERS WORLDWIDE  
WHOLESALE [www.murphysmagic.com](http://www.murphysmagic.com)

**WATCH DEMO**

# 9 Her MAJESTY'S Spell By Dani DaOrtiz



## AD COPY:

An incredible routine from one of the world's leading card workers.

Super strong card magic, full of surprises and with a mind blowing climax.

Imagine this: 3 spectators select cards, they are lost in the deck and they appear when you "call them". Yes, you can spell the first card, each card for letter, and it appears. You repeat the experience with the second card. Then you say that this is so magical that the spectator can lie and can name the opposite of his card and IT APPEARS. When the audience is still trying to recover from the astonishment, you finish with a mind blowing climax.

## Includes:

One hour DVD featuring Dani DaOrtiz

Complete in-depth explanation

Plus a live close-up show filmed in Vernet featuring some of his strongest card effects (no explanation).

Bonus: Extensive interview that includes extraordinaire effect with explanation. Only this effect plays the entire DVD.

Special deck included.

## MY THOUGHTS:

This is what I would call a performance piece, in other

words it would be perfect for a formal close-up show, magic competition or when you have the space and time to do a routine that requires a little more time and you can be relaxed in your performance. This is an incredibly strong multi-phase spelling trick that has an incredible punch at the end.

What I really like about this product is that Dani does way more than teach a trick, he explains his reasons and theories behind the moves and why they shouldn't be considered 'moves' at all. There is a naturalness about his performance which makes anything he does look so natural and almost 'off the cuff'. This is something that he tries to convey when teaching the method behind this wonderful routine. His technique on the classic force is a great example of how to be natural and get a hit every time. It is his almost don't care attitude that makes this such a powerful effect.

He made a really great comment when talking about performing magic for lay people vs. magic for magicians. He gave the response Juan Tamariz gave him and said it should be the same. This is why I enjoy Dani's work so much because not only does he entertain and fool magicians, but he does exactly the same for lay people.

This is MORE than just a DVD that teaches a trick, it is a mini-workshop on so many levels that should be of interest to those who love great card magic as well as those who just love good solid magic. His reasoning can be applied to all areas of magic.

You are supplied with a deck of cards that has all the necessary cards, which saves you time and money should you want to put this together yourself. The only thing you need is practice, and again Dani shares his thoughts on practicing and what great advice it is. Dani himself says that the best way to practice this routine is to perform it over and over on people. For a routine like this performing it on people is the only way to really get this working. You couldn't hand the deck out prior to performance so a switch would need to be made.

If you are looking for a very strong performance piece for a sit down type show then this is something that you should seriously consider. There is minimal skill required, and if you follow all the advice Dani offers on how present this to get maximum impact then you will have a piece that you will want to perform all the time.

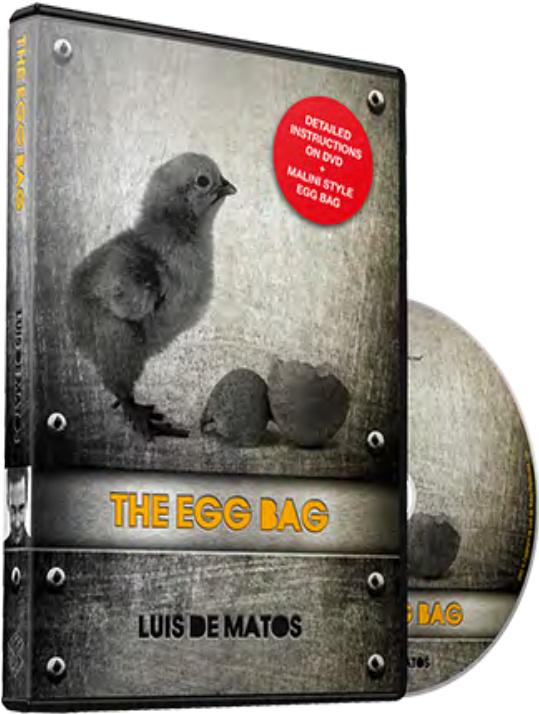
PRICE: \$39.00

AVAILABLE FROM all magic dealers worldwide.

WHOLESALE from [www.murphysmagic.com](http://www.murphysmagic.com)

**WATCH DEMO**

# 10 THE EGG BAG By Luis De Matos



**AD COPY:** Luis de Matos performs and explains his professional routine for the Malini Egg Bag. In this classic effect an egg vanishes and reappears inside a little black bag. What makes this version so strong is the finale in which a live chick is produced and given to the astonished child volunteer.

This effect has been a highlight of Luis de Matos' shows for over a decade. A Malini Style Egg Bag is included in the DVD. Full instructions are given for the handling of the egg bag, the presentation and the final load. Also includes full details about handling the livestock and presenting it as a gift to your volunteer. This is an effect that will be remembered by your audiences for years to come.

English language.

DVD Tutorial (1h 04m) + Malini Style Egg Bag

## MY THOUGHTS:

This is Luis' three-phase Egg Bag routine with a surprise ending with the production of live baby chick. This is direct from his act and every move and nuance has been honed after years of performances.

There is a gentleness about this routine that I really like, and it helps in the overall performance of showing the egg bag empty at certain points, without having to over

prove anything. He mentions in the instructions about 'respecting' the egg bag, and I think this has a lot to do with the charm of this routine.

You are supplied with an egg bag made of the best material and my only comment is that it would have also been a good idea to supply the secret pocket needed to conceal the baby chick, even if it meant paying more for the product. Luis does go into detail about the bag and how he hooks it on the chair, but most magicians I would think would rather pay to have it included. Having said that, using a baby chick is a lot of work, and Luis explains in detail how he transports them and cares for them. The steal could also be used to get a glass filled with drink as it happens in the offbeat moment in the routine, rather than a baby chick.

This is a well structured routine that is easy to do once you have the handling down. It isn't over complicated with vanishes and appearances but is to the point and has that amazing climax. After seeing this performance I think many magicians will want to add the classic Egg Bag back in to their repertoire.

Luis is an excellent teacher and he explains everything in such fine detail making learning his routine easy and fun. You can follow along with an egg and the supplied bag and in no time have this working for you.

As Luis proves this routine is perfect for both adults and children so the appeal for this product is wide ranging. If you already perform an Egg Bag routine I think you'll find some very nice additions here, especially his reason for using an egg bag. It is not introduced as a bag at all, but rather a pocket. Again, Luis has lots of little subtleties that make it look like it comes from your pants pocket.

This routine offers moments of amazement and humor, done in a gentle way that makes this one of my favorite egg bag routines. This would appeal to both amateur and professional magicians and would work under a variety of different conditions. As I said, you could use his method for 'stealing' any object, but the ultimate would be producing a baby chick if you had access to them.

PRICE: \$35.00

AVAILABLE from all magic dealers worldwide  
WHOLESALE [www.murphysmagic.com](http://www.murphysmagic.com)

**WATCH DEMO**

# 11 TIGHTSPOT by Jay Sankey



The performer hands out an ordinary key to be examined and shows his hands undeniably empty (with his sleeves rolled up.) He then demonstrates a shocking series of optical illusions with the key, and finishes by somehow pushing his finger through the tiny hole in the key. A moment later, the key is handed back to the spectator's for close examination.

Instantly resets

Requires only basic sleight of hand

Custom gimmick fits all sizes of fingers

**BONUS TRICK:** RAINDANCE - Jay reveals the secrets to his extremely cool 'Raindance' effect where he causes a sip of water or liquor to appear inside the cap of an ordinary Sharpie marker.

## MY THOUGHTS:

Similar in some respect to Karate Coin, although this has a bit more credibility as the key already has a hole in it, so the idea of any kind of 'switch' isn't as obvious with this as it is perhaps with a Karate Coin routine.

The effect requires very minimal sleight of hand making this appeal to a wide range of performers. For the beginner this is a great routine to practice basic sleight of hand, and for the more advanced performer you can make this a much more advanced routine with a little thought. The structure of the routine takes away the 'heat of the moment' so the switch is virtually undetect-

able.

This routine is perfect for strolling gigs where you can easily flow in and out of the routine. It makes a nice visual break from doing card and sponge ball tricks. Due to the structure of this the effect isn't over and done with, it enables you to interact with your audience and then hit them between the eyes with a strong visual effect. You can do all or parts of the routine depending on your choice, however I like the optical illusions as it gets people on board with your performance and lets their guards down. It is a perfect psychological place for people to be because when your finger goes through the key it really shocks them.

Jay spends a lot of time explaining his thinking behind every thought and that has gone into structuring the routine, which is very important in understanding any part of an effect. If you listen to his advice then you will have a strong trick.

You receive two keys, one regular and one gimmick. The gimmick key is precision made and comes in one size. The shape of the key is square which makes a good contrast when you push your finger through the round hole.

A lot of the moves in here are based on coin moves, so if you are comfortable with coin work you'll have no problem learning this quickly.

This isn't a highly produced three camera shoot that many companies do today, but that can be forgiven because Jay does such a great job teaching his routine. The moment the key goes through the finger happens naturally and as Jay says, is a calm moment. The 'key' to performing this routine is not to rush anything. The clean up at the end is also very natural and easy to do. Richard Sanders has a nice little addition to taking the key off the finger and handing it out to the audience.

**BONUS ROUTINE** - Jay teaches an effect that is unlike anything else you probably have in your repertoire. It involves liquid and sharpie marker. It's easy to do and in the right moment could be worth having in your repertoire should the occasion arise. It's very easy to do and is all presentation but it's one of those tricks you want to have in the back of your mind, and in the right time at the right place this would be a great effect.

**PRICE:** \$30.00

**AVAILABLE** from all magic dealers worldwide

**WHOLESALE:** [www.murphysmagic.com](http://www.murphysmagic.com)

**WATCH DEMO**

# 12 PHOTO SHOCK by Jay Sankey



## AD COPY:

The performer introduces a photograph with a \$10 bill wrapped around it. A playing card is freely selected (and it really is a free choice - they can touch ANY card they want.) The card is left sticking out of the pack and the performer explains that in the photo, there's also one card sticking out of a deck of cards. And if the card in the photo doesn't match the spectator's selected card, they get to keep the money. But when the photo is revealed, everybody sees that the card in the photo is face down! So, while the spectator holds the photo, the magician performs a double impossibility. Not only does the card in the photo turn face up, it also matches the freely selected card. And the photo CAN be closely examined.

Only one photo is involved. No switches!

Extremely portable

Basic sleight-of-hand

Angle-Proof

10 second reset

Includes full-length DVD + special gimmicks for Bicycle brand cards.

## BONUS TRICK:

**PHOTO FINISH** - Jay includes the printed gimmicks, and the detailed explanation, for his 'Photo Finish' effect, featuring a show stopping revelation of 5 selected playing cards.

## MY THOUGHTS:

At first I was I'm in two minds about this. While the effect is very strong and plays well with an audience, I

wonder if it's one of those tricks that might have been more appropriate for a book or DVD with other effects. Having said that, after watching Jay go through this in such detail and share so many tips and hints about this and performance in general, I think this deserves to be on it's own.

You are supplied with two photos and you need to do a little bit of work on one of them to make the gimmick, but once it's done it will last you a while. Once you learn the method you can easily make this up so you can have different cards, and use different deck designs so you can easily replace the gimmick photos yourself.

This would be a great trick for the beginner because it's very easy to do. Jay teaches the Criss Cross Force to force a card, of course you can use any other force you like, and he shows two other methods including a great Frank Garcia move that is probably the best looking force and something you would want to learn for other tricks. This effect however works well with that force because of the time lapse.

I like the concept of this routine because it's a 'bet' type routine where the photo is brought out with a bill wrapped around it. Not only is a part of the routine but it also keeps the gimmick in place.

The 'move' happens when expectations are low, and the photo changes in the spectator's hand. Jay has gone in to detail with his teaching and shares tips and advice on how to get the most out of this effect. This is what makes this a step above most one trick DVDs because Jay shares much more than just the technical aspect of the effect. I find with Jay's products you are also getting loads of practical advice from a working performer. He has a deep understanding of what works in the real world.

This very well could be your go to effect as it has all the elements that make this a 'worker'. It packs small but can play big for a walk-around gig and is perfect for the strolling magician. You could very well close with this routine as it has a strong finish.

**BONUS** - The bonus trick uses another photo, which is supplied and is another card routine. Not so much for strolling but certainly good close-up magic for a bar or restaurant setting.

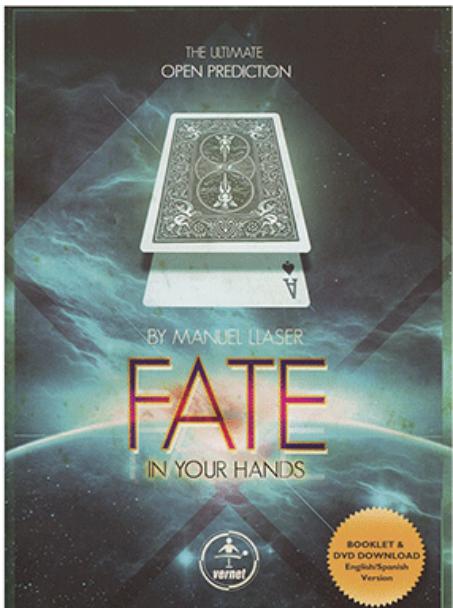
I'm not convinced this is a \$30 trick - perhaps a little chaper, however, like all magic if you end up performing it in your show and it's a hit then the value of \$30 is worth it!

**PRICE:** \$30.00

**AVAILABLE** from all magic dealers

**WHOLESALE:** [www.murphysmagic.com](http://www.murphysmagic.com)

# 13 FATE by Manuel LLaser



## AD COPY:

The Open Prediction is a premise that most of the great card magic titans have tackled. But NEVER has their been a version so clean, so practical, so perfect, than this one by Manuel Llaser. Joshua Jay and Juan Tamariz can be seen performing it, as well as many other top card men.

## Why? Here are three reasons:

It can be performed from a borrowed, shuffled pack. NO PREPARATION.

You see the demo video? Well, it looks JUST LIKE THAT in person. It always works, and it always looks that fair. The technique is not self-working, but it is also not difficult. With a minimum of practice, you will be ready to perform. Llaser teaches several variations, extensions, and other ideas with the same principle. Rarely does someone create a category "best" so definitively, but that is the case with Manuel Llaser's FATE.

## MY THOUGHTS:

You receive an 8 page booklet with access to download a performance and explanation. Unfortunately I tried to download it on my MAC and PC and neither seemed to work so sent an email to Vernet and never got a response. They are .rar files so unless you convert them they won't work. You can get enough of an idea from watching the promotional video of the effect.

Fortunately the instructions are clear enough to get a full understanding and handling of this effect.

If this was in a larger book I would think many magicians would perhaps overlook it and I think this is one of those tricks that deserves to be released as a solo item. This is such a clear routine and the 'move' is so natural that it goes completely undetected. Having performed it now I can tell you this is as clean and open as any prediction routine can get. What makes this such a great effect is you openly TELL the audience the exact card they will stop at. You then give them a chance to really choose ANY card and it is revealed to be the one you predicted - and course this can all be done with a shuffled and borrowed deck. It doesn't get any cleaner and more impressive than this.

This is an effect that once you practice will be with you forever, and you will use it as often as you can. If this trick can fool Juan Tamariz, Roberto Giobbi, Henry Evans and Joshua Jay amongst others, then you know that it has to be a killer trick.

It will take work to get to the point where it looks as clean as it should, but it is well within the reach of most magicians who can handle cards, and for those not all that comfortable with cards it would be well advised to take a bit of time just to master this. If you only had a few card tricks you perform you should seriously include this as one of them.

For professionals and those who are skilled with cards I can see this becoming a regular in their repertoire.

Out of ALL of the single trick effects this issue I would rate this as my favorite. Despite the download issue I feel this is a great product and hopefully they can fix that for those who are used to learning from watching rather than reading instructions.

PRICE: \$25.00

Available from all magic dealers worldwide  
WHOLESALE from [www.murphysmagic.com](http://www.murphysmagic.com)

**WATCH DEMO**

# 14 IMPRISONED By Jay Sankey



**AD COPY:** Borrow a coin and have it initiated with a marker. Then hand out a plastic drinking straw to be examined. Then, the magician impossibly inserts the coin INSIDE the straw, and even dragged down the entire length of the straw. And the spectator's initials can be seen through the stretched plastic of the straw the entire time. Best of all, everything can be handed out and closely examined.

Ingenious gimmick works with many sizes of borrowed coins including quarters, dimes, nickles and coins from around the world

Only basic sleight-of-hand

Instantly repeats

Straws are everywhere

**BONUS TRICK:**

**CAPPER** - Cause a borrowed coin and a bottle cap, to change places in the spectator's own hand, despite the very different shapes of the items!

## MY THOUGHTS:

This is a very different take on a signed coin in bottle effect and rather than the coin ending up inside a bottle it is squeezed down the length of a straw.

You are supplied with a gimmick that makes it look as though the coin actually slides down the straw. It's the kind of trick that you can easily take with you and have it ready to go at anytime. If you do any kind of walk-about or close-up magic then you will want to consider this. It plays well for both kids and adults and is visually very striking. You do have to be careful with angels but Jay teaches some techniques to help those issues.

This is very organic as everything can be borrowed and examined before and after. It's so simple and direct and could inspire you to feel like a real magician. Jay makes this way more than just a 'trick' but turns it in to a journey. It's a journey for the borrowed coin and he makes a great comment that by them giving you the coin they are purchasing something that will really astound them. It is this kind of thinking by Jay that can take something that some might pass over, and make it a miracle for the spectator.

This is best viewed straight on but can be done very close-up and the illusion looks perfect, thanks in part to the special gimmick and Jay's handling.

As with all of Jay's products reviewed in this issue you are getting way more than just technical advice. Jay offers years or experience and his handling and performance tips make this product a step above a lot of other single trick DVDs.

The gimmick is made so that it would work with foreign coins which is a huge bonus and of course a variety of coins from your own country. The fact that they see their signed coin and the signature as it passes down the white straw is what sells this effect to the audience.

Jay's structure of this routine has a clear beginning, middle and end which in my opinion makes this a good routine that people can follow. The clean up at the end is very easy and this is certainly well within the reach of most levels of performers.

**BONUS ROUTINE:** Here is a great little bonus using a borrowed coin and bottle cap. There is a little work to prepare the cap but it's worth it just to get this up and running. As with all of Jay's teaching he offers advice for the beginner to more advanced technician.

**FINAL THOUGHTS:** I have worked restaurants and strolling gigs for well over 25 years and I would say that more of Jay Sankey's magic has appeared in my working repertoire than any other creator. He has a deep understanding of what works, and how to take a routine and keep it simple, direct yet have maximum impact.

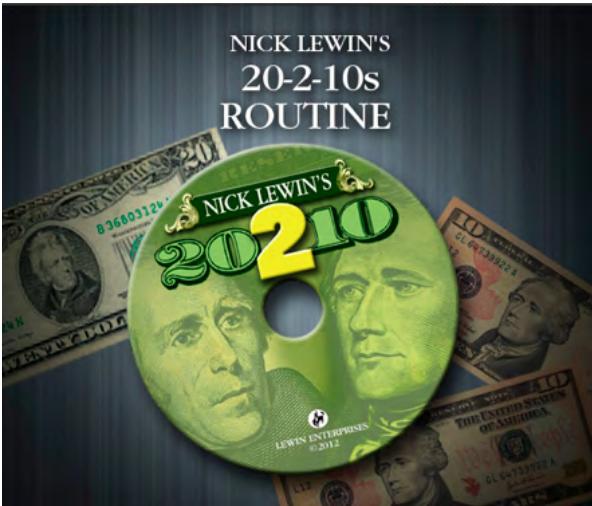
These are some of Jay's best DVDs and effects designed for the working magician as well as the hobbyist who likes to amuse family and friends. Everybody will get something from any one of these products.

**PRICE:** \$30.00 US

**AVAILABLE** worldwide from all magic dealers  
**WHOLESALE** from [www.murphysmagic.com](http://www.murphysmagic.com)

**WATCH DEMO**

# 15 20-2-10s By Nick Lewin



## AD COPY:

This is a powerful piece of comedy sleight of hand that can add a double 'kicker' to any magic show. It can be presented close-up or in a full sized theatre and is the rare trick that is just as effective in either environment. For many years this effect has been a highlight of Nick's lecture and now, by popular demand, has been expanded and released in this DVD.

The DVD contains a host of hints, tips and the handling for the '\$100 Bill Switch,' 'The Card in Wallet' and other effects that it touches upon. It gives very valuable insight into how to perform 'small' magic and cause it to play back in the last row of a theatre or performing arts centre. An interesting topic that is rarely touched upon in magic releases.

Shot in an informal and deceptively casual manner, this DVD will add a powerful effect to the repertoire of any performer. It gets two loud bursts of applause and two effects into a two minute playing time. Of course, you could play it longer--- but what most acts need to add to their show is the strength of the double punch described above.

## MY THOUGHTS:

Nick Lewin has had a career that many of us dream of and he is still at the top of his game wowing audiences the world over. He has worked every venue imaginable and has experience that all of us can learn from. This is his first release and is a great example of how he takes an effect and gives it his own twist and turns it in to a powerful stand-up routine. There is a saying that you can't teach comedy, but if anybody can teach how to

use comedy and magic then Nick is the person to show us the way. His timing is impeccable and every move and nuance in this routines has been worked out to give maximum impact. He discusses the use of humor and when to pause, when to change tone in your attitude which help take a trick and make it in to more of a miracle. It's about selling what you do to the audience, and nobody does it better than Nick Lewin.

He developed this routine for his 'B' show on cruise ships yet I can see how this could end up in most 'A' shows for many performers. This is a great stand-up effect that can be performed in a living room, in a theatre of 1500 or even in a close-up situation. Nick shares his secrets on how to make this play in a large venue, something that you can only get from working under these conditions.

It involves a few props that most people own and Nick goes through all the necessary moves. This routine is well structured so that you keep the audience off guard to the point where they think it is over and then you hit them with a killer climax.

This is recorded in an intimate setting which is great because it gives Nick a chance to be 'Nick' and the relaxed setting is all that is needed.

If you are looking for a great stand-up routine that is very powerful this is definitely worth learning. It contains the elements I like when looking for new material myself - minimum props with maximum impact!

PRICE \$24.00 including shipping domestic USA  
\$35.00 including shipping worldwide

AVAILABLE direct from:  
<http://lewinenterprises.weebly.com/nick-lewins-20-2-10s.html>

# 16 UNHARMED By Jay Sankey



## AD COPY:

The performer borrows a credit card, driver's license or almost any other plastic card. The card is wrapped in an examined paper napkin, and a spectator is invited to hold tightly to a corner of the wrapped card. Then a pencil, pen, toothpick, nail or even a chopstick is slowly pushed through the credit card. A moment later, the card is unwrapped and returned to the owner. Unharmed includes a very cool gimmick, and the full-length DVD features a wide variety of handlings for close-up and stand-up performances.

Special gimmick works with credit cards, drivers licenses, gift cards, loyalty cards and more

Requires only basic sleight of hand

Instantly resets

BONUS TRICK:

**STAIN** - Cause the ink to crawl down the length of your own Sharpie marker. One of Jay's most visual effects with a Sharpie marker to date.

## MY THOUGHTS:

Without a doubt my favorite Sankey effect in this issue of VANISH for review. Here is something I will carry with me at all time and it's always ready go. It would be the perfect effect for walk-around cocktail gigs. This uses any borrowed card, it doesn't have to be a credit card but can be a loyalty card, iTunes card, etc. For me this is the reason this is such a great effect because the gimmick works for every type of card. Visually this looks impossible and the strength is also the spectator is involved. Everybody carries some type of cards in their wallet, and it's harder to borrow money these days.

Jay has been working on this routine for years and the work shows. He has changed the gimmick a number of times until it's perfect for both close-up and stand-up. The beauty of this gimmick is that is can be in plain view the entire time and you are steps ahead of the audience once it is loaded on to the borrowed card.

Jay goes in to detail on the DVD and even talks about the type of napkins to use for an effect like this. The gimmick will work with any napkin but it's a bonus having him talk about the different types because you never know what will be available when you work.

What I like about Jay's thinking is he keeps everything as easy and as simple as possible. The loading for example of the gimmick couldn't be easier. He shows several ways to introduce the gimmick and both are undetectable and would work well in any working situation. If you are working a strolling gig then this is perfect for those conditions where people are eating and drinking. He also shows a sleight of hand technique to introduce the gimmick, however I think it's overkill and there is no need.

This is such a workhorse of an effect because it's practical and there aren't really any moves. The ditching of the gimmick is such a natural thing that again it goes unnoticed. This is such an organic effect. Everything can be borrowed, the spectator holds on to their card and you penetrate it with a pencil, pen or anything sharp.

Jay also shares some other effects that involve damaging borrowed cards. The credit card destroyed in envelope is a great example of his thinking as you are convinced that the card has been snapped in half. It is a combination of the visual and audio that really sells this effect. The method is so damn clever you'll want to try it as soon as you see it. There is also a killer version that does NOT use the gimmick! This is worth learning so you can do it anytime, anywhere.

For those who have a Pen Thru Anything gimmick you can ALSO combine the Unharmed gimmick and have a very visual stand-up routine.

The BONUS on here involves a Sharpie pen which is easy to make up and again, ideal for walk-about. You show a Sharpie and cause the black color on the top of the pen to run three quarters of the way down the pen. A very easy and deceptive effect that you can add in at anytime during your performance. Ideal for walk-about after somebody has written something on a card and hands the pen back.

PRICE: \$30.00

AVAILABLE from all magic dealers worldwide  
WHOLESALE from [www.murphysmagic.com](http://www.murphysmagic.com)

# DVD REVIEWS

## JUNGRY? by Mathieu Bich



### AD COPY:

Would you like to become more creative and invent tricks using your own methods?

The simplicity of the sandwich effect is precisely what makes it the ideal trick to help you understand, learn and develop a creative process for magic tricks.

Through twelve sandwich effects, Mathieu Bich will share with you a few of his tips to help you become more creative.

You will learn fun and amazing techniques and you will understand how to modify a basic effect, turning it into an exercise that will develop your imagination and your trick-inventing skills.

### MY THOUGHTS:

This DVD is definitely geared towards anybody who loves the card trick where a chosen card ends up sandwiched between two other cards such as the jokers.

If you love the 'sandwich' trick then you will definitely want to get this DVD. However, this goes beyond just showing different methods for one trick. It shows you the creative thinking Mathieu has put in to this plot, and how you can think out of the box to create so many different variations. This is something I highly recommend every magician doing as an exercise. It's how you come up with new routines and effects that will fool everybody and start your mind thinking in different ways.

I have done this exact same thing and ended up writing several books all based around one trick. My first was the Out To Lunch principle and ended up with a book and DVD containing over 60 variations. What Mathieu has done here is exactly the same, but with a card trick. There are methods here using both sleight of hand methods and gimmick cards. They all end up with the same results, but it's how you get there that is interesting.

You can apply this type of thinking for any single trick in magic from illusions to a kids trick. If magicians took the time and worked on each trick in their repertoire as much as Mathieu has here, then magic would be in a much different, and better place. There wouldn't be as many magic clones and people would have way more respect for the craft.

This DVD is important on so many levels. As I said, if you love the sandwich trick you'll want to buy this for the many different versions that are on here. Some are more practical than others, some require making a gimmick and some require technical sleight of hand.

If you want to be more creative in your magic and see how somebody else works at an effect then this is worth getting just for that reason. Mathieu shares his thought processes and how he comes to each different method. After watching all twelve versions you will never look at your magic the same again. Hopefully it will inspire you to take your own magic and work at it. It is this type of thinking that make us all better performers, creators and overall better magicians.

PRICE: \$29.00

AVAILABLE from all magic dealers worldwide  
WHOLESALE from [www.murphysmagic.com](http://www.murphysmagic.com)

**WATCH DEMO**

# LOOK NO HANDS

## by Wayne Dobson



**AD COPY:** Join your hosts Peter Nardi, Michael Sullivan & Gary Jones as they teach 10 amazingly easy to do, Hands Off routines from the devious mind of the brilliant Wayne Dobson. These are all tricks that can be performed almost completely hands free, leaving you to just stand back and take the applause!

Contents Include:

Out of my Hands - Wayne's truly hands off version of Out Of This World

The Sh#t Trick - It could be shot or shut. But it's actually Sh#!t!

Mc Dobson's Aces - There's nothing two faced about this trick!

Birthday Card - The practical DIY version of Wayne's classic

Lucky Card - The world's most stunning hands off card trick!

Mindray - Make your mind a blank... that was quick!

Sharpie 2 - The show stopping color prediction

Wayneman - Wayne's hands off version of the Joe Barry classic

Compatability - The regular deck Anniversary Waltz

Best Friends - Tossing coins has never been this much

fun!

Running time 1Hr 48 Minutes Worldwide Playback Shot in HD 1920x1080AD COPY

### MY THOUGHTS:

If you are looking for mostly card tricks that you can perform while not touching the cards this DVD has some great material on it. From a four ace routine to a wonderful mentalism effect using four different colored sharpies the material on here is designed for workers.

There are a few routines on here that really stick out, and one in particular that has made me go out and buy the props. It is the incredibly clever and devious routine called Sharpie 2. This is something you can do under any condition and is perfect for the strolling magician. You bring out a key chain with four different colored min-sharpies on them. While your back is turned the spectator chooses a color and writes that color on the back of your business card, and places the card in their pocket. They then put the pen back with the others. Instantly you are able to tell them the color they chose. This does NOT use any electronic gimmicks and is so clever that you'll want to include it straight away. If you use any sharpies in you close-up act then why not learn this very strong piece of mentalism.

Out Of My Hands is Wayne's approach to Out Of This World, quite possibly the strongest trick in card magic! This version happens without you ever touching the deck. There is a little preparation involved but it's well worth setting up. Under the right performing condition this is very strong.

The Birthday Card Trick is a great item to have should you find yourself performing at a birthday party or restaurant where a person is celebrating their birthday - it makes a card trick very personable.

All of the magic taught on here is easy to do, and can be used by both amateurs and professionals. The instructions are clear and precise so you can learn these in a very short time. It is a good mixture of magic that can be done sitting down at a bar or for strolling where you don't have a table.

If you are looking for a DVD that requires no sleight of hand and can be learnt quickly, yet produce strong effects then this could be for you.

PRICE: \$30.00

AVAILABLE from all magic dealers

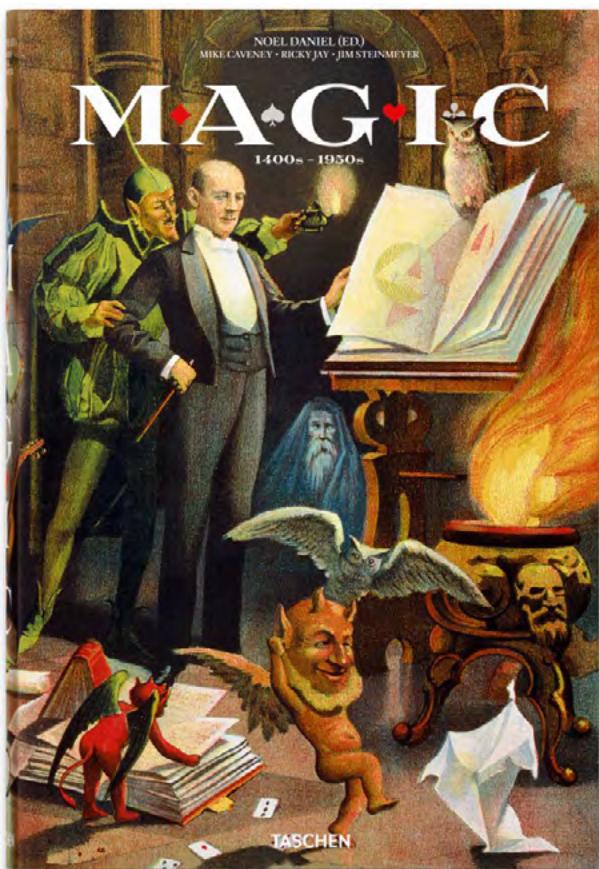
WHOLESALE from [www.murphysmagic.com](http://www.murphysmagic.com)

**WATCH DEMO**

# BOOK REVIEWS

## MAGIC 1400s-1950s

By Noel Daniel (Ed),  
Mike Caveney, Ricky  
Jay & Jim Steinmeyer



### AD COPY:

The world's greatest magicians from the Middle Ages through the 1950s Magic has enchanted humankind for millennia, evoking terror, laughter, shock, and amazement. Once persecuted as heretics and sorcerers, magicians have always been conduits to a parallel universe of limitless possibility—whether invoking spirits, reading minds, or inverting the laws of nature by sleight of hand. Long before science fiction, virtual realities, video games and the internet, the craft of magic was the most powerful fantasy world man had ever known. As the pioneers of special effects throughout history, magicians have never ceased to mystify us by making the impossible possible.

This book celebrates more than 500 years of the stunning visual culture of the world's greatest magicians. Featuring more than 850 rarely seen vintage posters, photographs, handbills, and engravings as well as paintings by Hieronymus Bosch and Caravaggio among others, *The Big Book of Magic* traces the history of magic as a performing art from the 1400s to the 1950s. Combining sensational images with incisive text, the book explores the evolution of the magician's craft, from medieval street performers to the brilliant stage magicians who gave rise to cinematic special effects; from the 19th century's Golden Age of Magic to groundbreaking daredevils like Houdini and the early 20th century's vaudevillians. The authors:

**Mike Caveney** is a writer, collector, professional magician, and the publisher of over 50 books on the theory, practice, and history of magic. His biographical works include *Kellar's Wonders* (2003) with Bill Miesel, and *Carter the Great* (1995). An avid collector and performer for over four decades, he has appeared onstage or on TV in more than 20 countries.

**Jim Steinmeyer** is the author of many books on magic history and practice, including *Los Angeles Times* bestseller *Hiding the Elephant* (2004) and *The Glorious Deception* (2006). He has created deceptions featured by magicians such as Doug Henning, David Copperfield, and Siegfried and Roy, and critically acclaimed illusions for Broadway hits *Mary Poppins*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and *Into the Woods*.

### The contributing author:

**Ricky Jay**, who has contributed the introduction to this book, is one of the world's great sleight of hand artists, and a distinguished actor, historian, and best-selling author. His *Learned Pigs & Fireproof Women* and *Jay's Journal of Anomalies* were both *New York Times* "Notable Books of the Year," and he defined the terms of his art for *The Cambridge Guide to American Theatre* and *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

### The editor:

TASCHEN editor **Noel Daniel** graduated from Princeton University and studied in Berlin on a Fulbright Scholarship. She earned a master's degree in London and served as director of a photography art gallery before becoming a book editor. Her TASCHEN books to date include *The Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm* (2011), *Magic 1400s-1950s* (2009), and *The Circus 1870s-1950s* (2008).

### MY THOUGHTS:

This book is without a doubt one of the finest books on magic history ever printed. The quality is outstanding and this is something you will definitely want to have on your coffee table so everybody who visits can look at it.

The original sold for over \$200 and this new release is still the same high quality hard cover book with slip case but only \$69.00 and is still a large book at 9.9 x 15.0 inches with 544 pages and over 1000 images! When I look at other books that are available on the market and the quality of this book then this is a real bargain. This would make the ideal gift for Christmas if you want somebody to buy you something very special that you will be very proud to own.

This makes the history of magic exciting and even my wife was interested in reading it! The images are outstanding and range from posters to photographs, hand bills and engravings. The history just jumps out of the pages and it's a very hard book to put down, although it's quite heavy so it's hard to pick up.

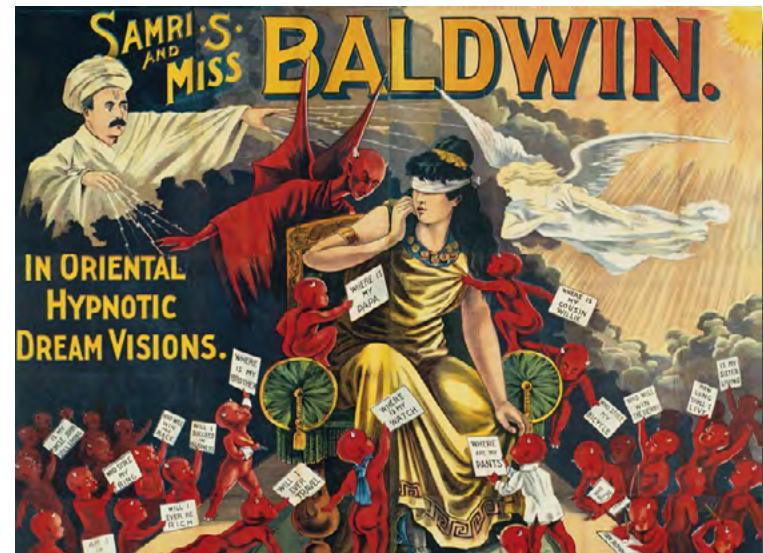
Each contributor has their own chapter. Ricky Jay's chapter is "To Please and Cheat The Sight" with posters and memorabilia from his own private collection.

Jim Steinmeyer's chapters include 'Conjuring Life and Death: The Essence of Illusion," and "Devilish Deception: The Origins of Wonder." This includes artwork of the famous Automaton. There are also some amazing posters of Kellar and Thurston. The color just leaps from the pages. It just shows you how important posters were in the years gone by for advertising. One of my favorite photos in this section is an illusion called Vivsection taken in 1932. I could only imagine how people would react to that illusion during those times, and even today it would evoke gasps from an audience.

Mike Caveney then looks at "From Black Magic to Modern Magic" and this includes some amazing photos and posters of the famous film maker/magician Georges Melies. In 1888 this budding magician had purchased the slightly run-down Theatre Robert-Houdin and completely refurbished the interior. There are two rare photographs show the stage in all its glory.

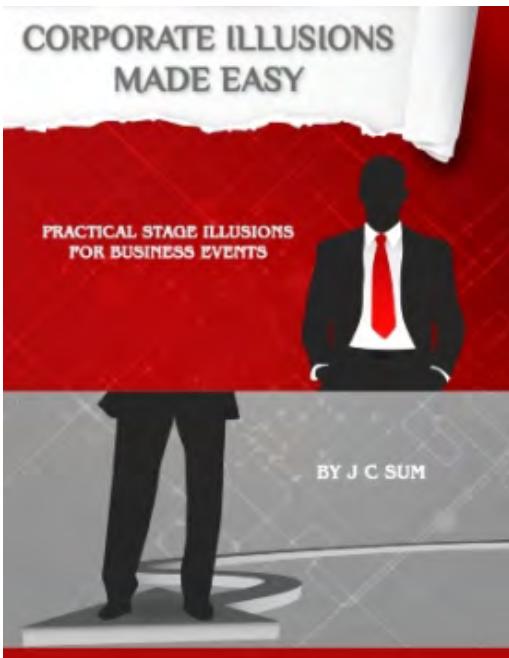
There are eight chapters in all and in each one you discover something incredible on every page. I can't think of any better way to get a deeper understanding of this craft we call magic. The section on the Vaudeville period is my favorite as there are never seen before posters and photos of performers I only read about. This book makes the history of magic come to life - and for me this makes it a book every single person who cares and respects magic should own and READ!

AVAILABLE FROM <http://www.taschen.com>  
PRICE \$69.00  
[http://www.taschen.com/pages/en/catalogue/popculture/all/44810/facts.magic\\_1400s1950s.htm](http://www.taschen.com/pages/en/catalogue/popculture/all/44810/facts.magic_1400s1950s.htm)



# CORPORATE ILLUSIONS MADE EASY

## By JC Sum



### AD COPY:

From making corporate executives appear, producing new products, launching corporate logos and staging motivational stunts, the illusions in the book are simple to build, effective in design and practical to stage in nontraditional performance environments.

All illusions are professional level effects and take into account realistic budgets, size, logistics, venue and staging constraints typical of corporate events. Best of all, no prior illusion knowledge is necessary to understand, build and execute the illusions.

If you book a launch, conference, awards dinner or tradeshow with just one idea from this book, you will recoup your investment in the book many times over with a single engagement.

Contents include:

Examining Illusions for Corporate Events  
The Role of the Corporate Magician/ Illusionist  
Different Types of Corporate Events & Venues  
How to Build the Illusions in this Book  
The Arrival  
A Self-Contained Surrounded VIP Appearance

Showcase  
An Elegant Production of a Product in a Clear Display

Case

Rising Identity

A Unique Way to Introduce a new Corporate Identity or Logo

Corporate Restraint

A Motivational Escape Illusion Performed by a CEO

Global Crossing

The Teleportation of a CEO

Executive Travel

A Magical Transformation of Corporate Executives

The Sword Box Metaphor

Incorporating Corporate Messaging with an Illusion

Jeweled Revelation

A Big Effect for a Small Item Production

The Conference

The Appearance of a Committee of People on Stage

A Big Reveal

The Magical Production of a Large Inanimate Product

"Corporate Illusions Made Easy" features 80 pages of detailed illusion construction plans, full illusion presentations and corporate messaging & customization.

### MY THOUGHTS:

If you find yourself being booked for a corporate show or product launch then you will definitely want to check this book out. By offering something special from producing the CEO or producing the product can make a huge difference in your fee and getting the job over others.

Some illusions are easier to make than others, and the production of the motorbike would take a professional builder to make. There are also illusions that could be used for team building or where the CEO wants to get a point across with his staff. There is also a routine combining snowstorm with the production of a jewellery launch.

As well as the illusions JC also shares his thoughts on how to approach and the role of the corporate magician/illusionist. The main focus on the illusions is either the production of a product or an illusion based around the CEO.

The real value of this book is showing how to incorporate magic and illusions with the companies theme or logo. JC offers some great advice and the book shows how the use of magic in a corporate event is an extension of entertainment in marketing. He also makes the great point that to be successful in the corporate field you need to have a wide technical knowledge across all genres of magic - and this is what takes years and years of study and work to achieve.

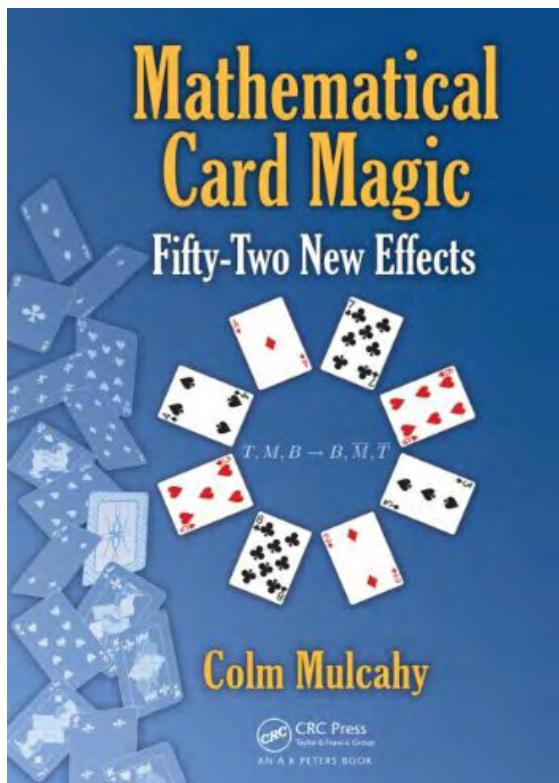
PRICE: \$60.00

AVAILABLE from all magic shops worldwide

WHOLESALE from [www.murphysmagic.com](http://www.murphysmagic.com)

# MATHEMATICAL CARD MAGIC Fifty-Two New Effects

## By Colin Mulcahy



### AD COPY:

Mathematical card effects offer both beginning and experienced magicians an opportunity to entertain with a minimum of props. Featuring mostly original creations, Mathematical Card Magic: Fifty-Two New Effects presents an entertaining look at new mathematically based card tricks.

Each chapter contains four card effects, generally starting with simple applications of a particular mathematical principle and ending with more complex ones. Practice a handful of the introductory effects and, in no time, you'll establish your reputation as a "mathemagician." Delve a little deeper into each chapter and the mathematics gets more interesting. The author explains the mathematics as needed in an easy-to-follow way. He also provides additional details, background, and suggestions for further explorations.

Suitable for recreational math buffs and amateur card lovers or as a text in a first-year seminar, this color book

offers a diverse collection of new mathemagic principles and effects.

Colm Mulcahy is a professor of mathematics at Spelman College. Over the last decade, he has been at the forefront of publishing new "mathemagical" principles and effects for cards, particularly in his long-running bi-monthly Card Colm for the Mathematical Association of America (MAA). He also blogs at the Aperiodical and the Huffington Post. Dr. Mulcahy has been a recipient of the MAA's Allendoerfer Award for excellence in expository writing. His interests are broad, ranging from algebra and number theory to geometry. He earned a B.Sc. and M.Sc. in mathematical science from University College Dublin and a PhD from Cornell University for research in the algebraic theory of quadratic forms.

### MY THOUGHTS:

The first thing you notice is the production quality of this book in hard cover, glossy paper and color photos throughout.

There are thirteen chapters with four effects in each and 52 new mathemagic principles. The majority of the work in this book is original math and card magic so those who love this field of work will get a lot of new methods and material from the book.

I love poker hand effects and this book has an entire chapter devoted to this as well as a few others throughout. In this Poker Powers chapter Colm looks at various ways that you can control which cards are dealt out and you can make someone get a winning or losing hand, your choice.

If you think math magic is about adding nine then dealing cards in to three piles you will be more than pleasantly surprised with the material in this book. Forget all the old boring card magic using math you have seen before, this offers more modern thinking and effects that are extremely strong.

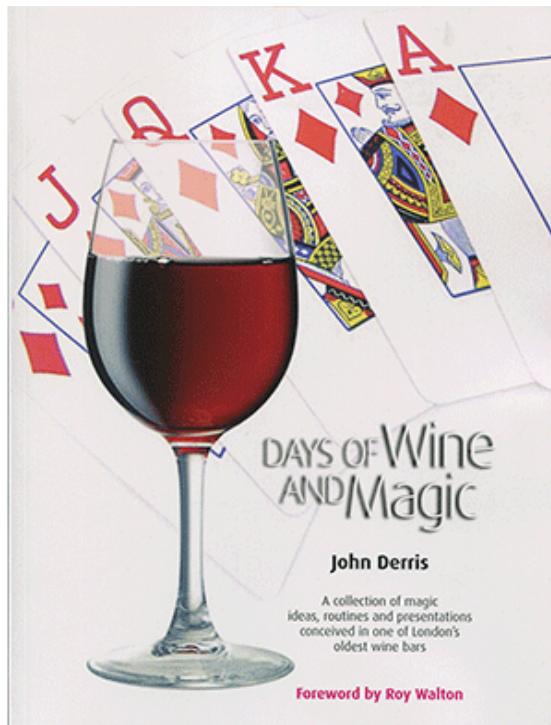
For those who love card magic then this book is a must. It offers some amazing thinking that will spark a host of creative ideas. In particular the work on the Gilbreath Principle is really well thought out.

While there is material in here for the hobbyist I would say that the more serious card magician will get the most out of the work in here. It will give you an arsenal of material and techniques other than sleight of hand that would enhance any performance. Those who love math and magic should DEFINITELY get this book as it shows how magic and math work so well together.

PRICE: \$29.95

AVAILABLE from Amazon as a hard cover book or as a download for Kindle.

# DAYS OF WINE AND MAGIC By John Derris



AD COPY: Fifty years of magic and ideas via Elmsley Avis, Page, Walton, Derris, Koran and others who met every week in bars and cafes.

Some of the stimulating items in the book:

A presentation of the folding note that Gordon Bruce said made it into a miracle.

Al Koran's brilliant finale to the Scarne Ball Routine

The routine with gemstones created for the Queen's own jewellers

A finale for the Okito Box routine where the spectator produces a pile of rice

A freely chosen card is the only different coloured back - an automatic dream method

Routine that echoes John Ramsay's Copper and Silver transposition

Paper packet penetrated by two hat pins - when removed packet is unfolded to reveal a 50p coin which can be examined

A Brainwave routine with Giant Cards

Jack Avis's last effect - Find the Lady with a Phantom Queen

Bending Glass with an illuminated dressing room mirror

Two coins trapped by a finger ring in a handkerchief - chosen coin visibly leaps through the ring without any cover and can be examined.

Hand out chocolates to your guests which turns into a sponge ball routine

Plus essays, articles and anecdotes from the magic world of the past.

A stimulating, unique publication about which top card man Steve Beam said "Just the type of book to read between all the heavy trick-only instruction books".

## MY THOUGHTS:

What a wonderful book on so many levels. It is filled with some real gems that are practical and any working performer would want to add in to their repertoire. Amongst the great magic are also great stories and tributes to some great magicians from Billy McComb to John Ramsey and Jack Avis. All people that the author has spent time with over the years and shared many secrets.

There are effects in here you will want to add straight away and in particular Executive Brainwave. This is such a great variation and something that would fool even the greatest thinkers of magic. It's a real worker.

What John has done is share some thoughts that were shared with him over fifty years sitting at a bar with some well known names. This book covers sponge balls, cards, coins and even some stage ideas. His thinking on The Bending Glass takes it from a standard item to something with meaning. The ideas on sponge balls are fun and offer a different presentation. As John says in the book, there are thousands of magicians performing sponge balls at functions every week, so why not do them a little differently.

This is a book that I would highly recommend to any magician who performs for paying customers. The material in here is practical and honed over a period of fifty years.

PRICE: \$40.00

85 pages, soft cover

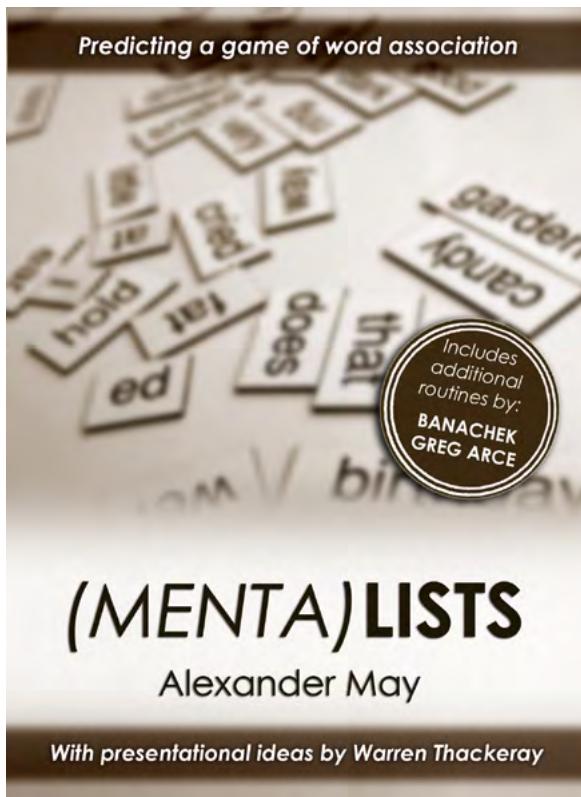
AVAILABLE from magic dealers worldwide

WHOLESALE from [www.murphysmagic.com](http://www.murphysmagic.com)

# E-BOOK REVIEW

## (MENTA)LISTS

### By Alexander May



REVIEWED BY WAYNE ROGERS

#### Predicting a Game of Word Association

The AD COPY (MENTA)LISTS is a revolutionary system that allows the mentalist to predict the outcome of a game of word association.

Everybody is familiar with the game of word association. One person thinks of a word, then the next person says another word that can somehow be associated with it, and so it continues. For example: Frog – Green – Apple – Tree – Squirrel etc.

(MENTA)LISTS gives you the power to accurately predict the final word that will be named!

With (MENTA)LISTS they can now select their own words! That's right – they can think of ANY random

words that come to mind... and you are able to correctly read their thoughts before they even had them! In fact, you can even have an audience member make the prediction!

- No progressive anagrams
- No fishing
- No pre-show
- No dual reality
- No instant stooging

Includes full routines and additional ideas.

**The Basic plot:** Several spectators are chosen at random. They each write 10 random words on the back of business cards. They can be ANY words. The cards are mixed by the performer and each participant is given a card. The first person in line chooses a word off their card and reads it aloud. The second person associates the word with one off their list, and reads their word out.

This continues down the line. The final person chooses a word from their card and that word matches the prediction.

Alexander May has taken an existing principle (all credits are given) dissected it, and turned it into a whole new word association miracle. Additional presentational ideas have been added by Warren Thackery.

The contents cover both Close-Up and Stage Presentations. There are full details on handling "The Prediction", "Volunteer as Mentalist", "Another Stage Routine", "Word Possibilities", etc ... and even something for the "Tech-no Heads".

Just when I thought Alexander had covered everything, along came an additional manuscript (now included) with 5 contributions from Banachek and Greg Arce. These include "Reverse Association", "Red and white", (very clever way to handle the word lists) "(Confabu) Lists", "Hoys Dictionary", and "The Chair Test." The total manuscript is over 100 pages long with no padding.

My personal preference from (MENTA)LISTS will be to use one of the stage routines with pre-printed lists of words. Having spectators write down the words during the routine could slow down proceedings. It will all depend on the style and pace of your show.

I also love the variation with coloured word cards where you not only predict the final word, but the order of the colours. Once you are familiar with the basic concept of (MENTA)LISTS I am sure you will add your own "layers of deception" to the ones Alexander has already included in his very detailed manuscript.

(MENTA)LISTS by Alexander May. Available as an instant download from <http://mentalunderground.com> £27.99

# APPS REVIEW

## MAGIC TUNES by Charles Bach



### AD COPY:

Perform an amazing magic trick with your music.

- Someone chooses any song from your playlist.
- They never tell you the name of the song!
- The songs are mixed up and the song they chose plays magically.

Remember, they never tell you the name of the song, but you make it magically play.

-Easy to do.

-Three different methods for performing the trick are included.

-Use up to 27 songs from your music library.

-Customize the final play screen with your own pictures from the gallery or camera.

-You can even perform this without touching the phone at all!

### MY THOUGHTS:

This is a fun routine that you can perform as soon as you read the instructions and upload your playlist. I still have no idea how it works but that's fine because it does work. What is great about this version is that you never touch the phone. The spectator just looks at your playlist and thinks of a song and the songs mixed up and

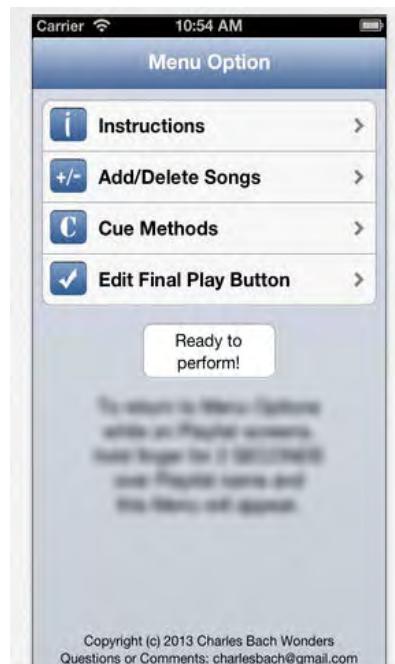
then your phone plays your song. It's THAT simple and very easy to do. It is ALSO available for Android phones.

You only need a put a bit of time aside to put your playlist together and it gives you the choice of setting this up for 9, 15, 21 or 27 songs. I set mine up for 27 songs as it gives the spectator more choice.

I like this App because it's not a card trick but uses something we all have on our phones, our music. This type of App has never been done before with music for a phone which makes this a great little App.

PRICE: \$2.99

Available on iTunes and Google for Android



# BONUS REVIEW

## NEW Premium MagicFlate® System By Pioneer® Balloon Company



### AD COPY:

No Moving Parts... No Electric Motors... No Batteries Needed... No Parts that Generate Heat!

The most Quiet unit available anywhere since it inflates with compressed air!

VERY fast....inflates 160 Q's and 260 Q's in about 3 seconds.

MagicFlate® System includes: Inflator head with regulator and compact, remote hand-actuator with 5-feet of hose, and with belt attachment; two aluminum high-pressure tanks, each with regulator and pressure gauge; two protective tank covers; detachable shoulder strap; belt clip and protective tank stand; all packed in a corrugated carrying case with handle.

Inflates with COOL AIRE® technology without overheating.

Can be operated continuously for maximum productivity!

Eliminates the use of noisy motors that require heavy, rechargeable batteries.

High Quality and Durable with no moving parts.

Easy-to-use Quik-Change bottles tanks. Comes with two 0.8-liter 200 bar or 3,000 psi aluminum tank.. Additional aluminum tanks sold separately.

### Carry-Case Box

High volume, composite tank, 1.6-liter-300 bar or 4,500 psi bottle available and sold separately.

Lightweight and Compact: Only weighs about 4-pounds and dimensions are 14" tall and 3.5" in diameter.

Easy-to-refill bottles can be refilled at any paintball or diving shop. Just use Google Maps to find a shop near you!

### Size Comparison

Carbon fiber tanks hold 4,500 psi of air; enough to inflate approximately 300-each of 260 Q's and approximately 600-each of 160 Q's.

MagicFlate® can be worn on your body with built in belt clip or by using the detachable shoulder strap, and also with the tank stand for table top operation.

Designed for single-handed operation, and can be invisible when hose is fed down shirt and "Hand-Held" nozzle is hidden in hand.

USA MagicFlate® System has DOT certified tanks.

Export MagicFlate® System has PI certified tanks for use within Europe.

Both the USA and Export MagicFlate® Systems come with Aluminum tanks.

For non-USA MagicFlate Systems, there is an optional Diving Bottle Adaptor that can be used at Diving Shops to fill your MagicFlate tanks.

For USA MagicFlate Systems, they can easily be filled at Paintball Centers, as well as Diving Shops.

Excellent One Year Warranty.





### *Tapered Nozzle to Fit 160 Q's and 260 Q's*



*Size Comparison*

#### MY THOUGHTS:

This is without a doubt the best self contained balloon inflator I have ever come across. I've used many over the years when doing a large number of balloons at a walk-around or fair gigs and always dreamed of having a product like this.

Here's what I LOVE about this from a working performers point of view:

The tanks can be filled up at any dive shop or paintball gun shop - you can also download a FREE APP that gives you all dive and paintball shops within a certain radius of your location! Now THAT is amazing service. For those who travel a lot having this type of APP is a real bonus. It takes the worry and hassle out of trying to find a shop that can fill the tanks.

One tank will inflate almost 300 260's balloons - that is a lot of balloons for a gig. You can get spare tanks if you feel you will do more balloons at your gig. I would suggest having two tanks ready to go. You are supplied with a stand to keep it upright. The tank can clip on your belt so it's hidden under your jacket should you not want people to see it. Additionally, they offer a special 'refill adaptor' that will allow the tanks to be refilled from a standard compressed nitrogen or helium tanks.

The speed of blowing up balloons is much faster and quieter than most other balloon inflators. This is great if you do shopping malls and want to sell balloons after a show or need to do a lot of balloons in a short time.

The actual nozzle is one of the best parts of this. It is designed to fit easily in your hand, and can actually be out of sight. It's almost magic in itself when you inflate



*Carry-Case Box*

the balloons without seeing anything. You can run the tube up your sleeve so nothing is seen.

Everything is made from the highest quality material so it is designed for real world workers. I've used mine since receiving it and it's proving to be a real work horse.

The trigger to blow the balloon is so easy to operate. There is a special button on the hand part and all you need to do is put the nozzle of the balloon on the nozzle of the gimmick and because of the design of the hand gimmick the hand triggers the on and off button. Your fingers are completely free so there is no way the balloon will slip off. It's extremely easy to use. It is designed for one hand use which means you can easily blow the balloon up using only one hand. - Now THAT'S magic!

**Set Up** - Once you have your tanks filled the actual set up takes seconds. You only have to screw the tube part on to the top of the tank and you are ready to go! Again for those who do a lot of balloons the speed of the set-up is an important point.

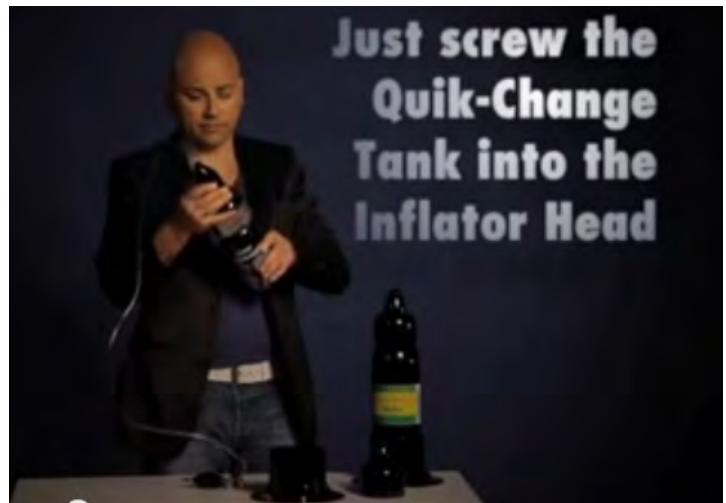
My first thought when I opened the box was that the unit looked heavy and awkward. However it looks heavier than it is and thanks to the high-volume fibre tanks the weight is kept to a minimum. Once you clip it on to your belt it doesn't get in the way at all and blowing up balloons couldn't be easier.

Who would use this? This is something both professional balloon artists as well as magicians would use. It's the perfect blower for walk-around work. You could easily continue to do your magic and then use the inflator to blow up balloons. If you do fairs, markets, shopping malls or sell balloons on the street this is something you definitely want to invest in. Even if you just do balloons at birthday parties this would definitely cut down on the time you spend blowing them up and making animals.

No matter where in the world you live you can get the right inflator for your country. You just need to contact your local Pioneer Balloon company.

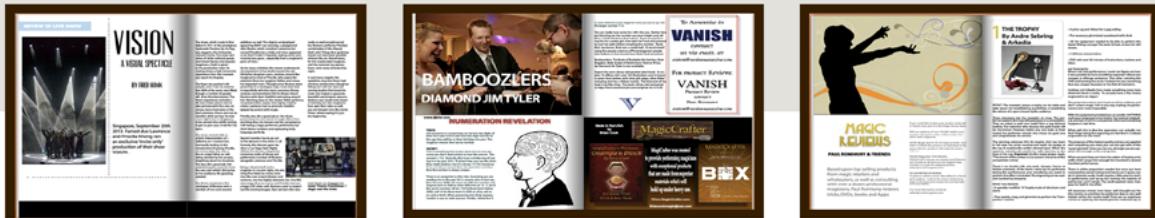
Finally there is **NOTHING** to charge, as long as your tanks are filled you can blow up your balloons. This is THE ULTIMATE balloon inflator and it's **VERY HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** for ALL working magicians and balloon artists.

PRICE: \$495.00 US



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Over the last year, two time Magic Castle Close up Magician of the Year and internationally known actor, Steve Valentine, has released a number of universally acclaimed pet effects.

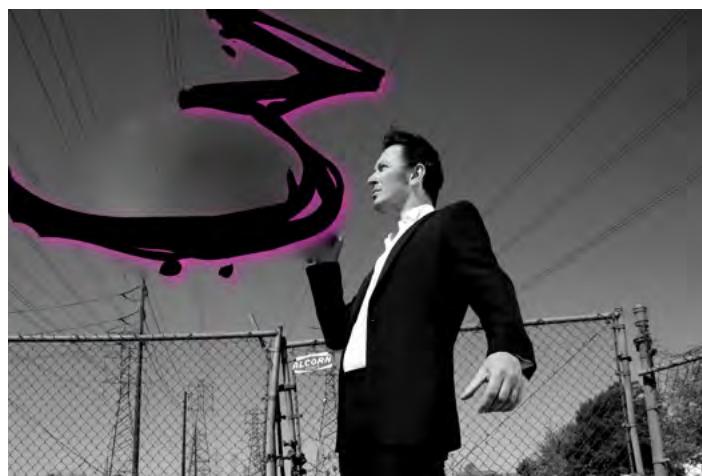
Magic that he uses to amaze the Hollywood elite has finally been made available worldwide.

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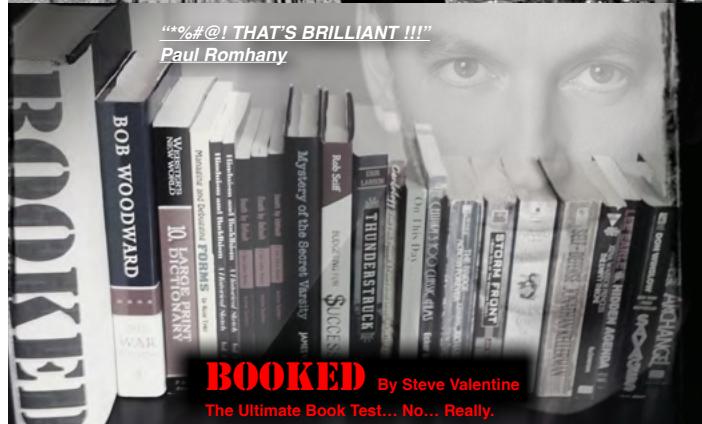


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Lee Delano, Magic Castle, Hollywood



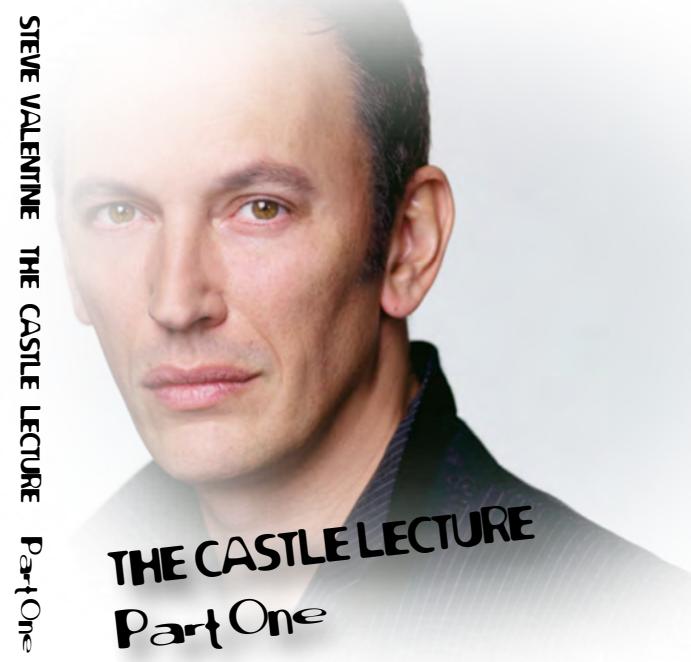
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"Murray Hatfield never fails to deliver and HEADLINE is another awesome example. Professional magic from a professional magician."

- Shawn Farquhar

"Extra, Extra, read all about it! Murray Hatfield's HEADLINE is one of the best things to hit the market in years."

- Stephen Bargatze

**HEADLINE** is a **KILLER** Close-up effect that is also an incredibly **POWERFUL** Stage routine.

#### A News-Worthy Performance!

More than just a card trick, HEADLINE is an entertaining routine that ends in a **memorable give-away** that will be talked about for years!

Direct from the working repertoire of Murray Hatfield, touring magician and illusionist. In both his close up work and his stage show, **HEADLINE** delivers a powerful magic punch. This is your rare chance to add an audience-tested blockbuster to your show. Let's hear what other top working pros are saying...

"I absolutely hate HEADLINE. It's one of the easiest things that I do in my show and yet one of the most talked about effects afterward. Why have I wasted all of these years practicing sleight of hand when I could have been using HEADLINE to wow my audiences?"

- Diamond Jim Tyler

"Best revelation anywhere. It will definitely keep you in the headlines. It is a must have for any serious performer."

- Oscar Munoz

#### A Complete Professional Package:

- DVD featuring detailed Instruction for performing in a Close-up and Walk-around setting as well as a 3 phase Platform or Stage routine that is strong enough to close your show.
- Live performance footage
- Special Newspapers
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"I've had great reaction and comments like; 'I have goose bumps and that's from a guy.' and 'I think I'm scared of you now.'

- George Franzen



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# **LUCA VOLPE**

## **"EMOTIONAL MENTALISM VOLUME TWO"**

### **DESCRIPTION**

After the worldwide success of "Emotional Mentalism", Luca Volpe is back with the second volume which contains brand new routines for the serious mentalist and psychic entertainer.

All of the routines have been tested hundreds of times, on people from all around the world, in his private and public performances. Each routine includes a full script that covers all the psychological nuances. Tarot cards, pendulums, crystals and much more, in a book that will change the way you perform mentalism. Entertain your audience, in a new and emotional way.

Also included in this book, you will find contributions from the greatest minds in psychic entertainment today.

Contributions from: Neal Scryer, Jerome Finley, Peter Turner, Pablo Amirà, Richard Tenace, Todd Landman, David Thiel, Bill Cushman, Dale Hildebrandt

### **Contents of the Book**

#### **1. PSY ACAAN**

A psychic plot on Any Card at Any Number with a multiple revelation finale, that involves all of the audience.

A Great start to any show! **2. MATCHING DREAMS** A very deep, emotional and powerful psychometry routine with a meaning. Very entertaining and empowering for your audience! **3. THE ENERGY WAVE** A new touch on the "which hand plot" with multiple revelations, a great way to energize your audience.

**4. MONEY ATTRACTS MONEY** A very entertaining routine in which you will be able to demonstrate the power that each of us has to attract money. A beautifully scripted routine with a serial number revelation, a wonderful way to use the pendulum and the haunted key too! **5. THE WHITE DOORS** This is my "emotional confabulation" routine that I have been performing for many years on cruise ships. A gift box will remain in full view and, through a relaxation and visualization process, a lady from the audience will give you some information which will be revealed in a prediction that has been in the box on the table. No assistant needed! **6. THE CRYSTAL** I have performed this for years and it is one of my favorite pieces! A spectator becomes the mind reader and will be able to guess a thought of word from another member of the audience. The script is beatifully constructed and covers all the psychological nuances! Very powerful. **7. UNLOCK YOUR DREAMS** A strong and emotional routine, in which a lady writes her dream on the surface of a lock and will be able to find the key that opens the lock, through the use of her subconscious mind. This story developed from something that really happened to me and it has the ability to really change the life of the person involved. You don't need a special lock to do this routine, everything is examinable, you can even give the lock and key as a souvenir. **8. ASHES OF MIND** A routine which involves tarot cards, a pendulum, and pictures from audience members. A strong routine with an incredible finale! Perfect for psychic parties and for advertising purposes. **9. TAROT CHAIR TEST** I was reluctant to tip the secret of this routine! It is a multiple revelation chair test in which a spectator becomes the psychic! **10. THE HUMAN ENERGY GRID** This is the perfect example of how a simple method can become a great routine with a deep meaning. After a relaxation and energy cleaning process, you will be able to predict the position of three crystals that a lady from the audience places in her hands.

**11. READ MY MIND!** What you do when a spectator ask to read his mind? Well now you can!

### **Contributors:**

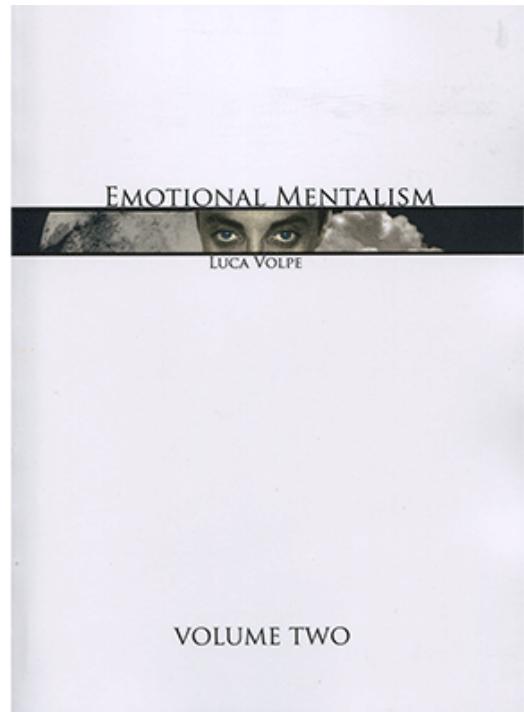
**Neal Scryer - The Box of Enlightenment**

**Peter Turner - A moment from a memory in time Jerome Finley - Into the Twilight Bill Cushman - Heart on Hand Todd Landman - Phronesis Pablo Amirà - Palm Reading Surprise Richard Tenace - Playing with the numbers Dale Hildebrandt - Triple Warmers**

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**Playing cards penetrate into your face!**

## **HOST CARD**



Although it seems completely impossible, the magician slowly pushes a stack of playing cards through his cheek and into his face! This shocking effect is sure to cause audiences to scream out in surprise.

**A baffling device lets you see through metal!**

## **MAGICAL MRI**



You will be able to see through a solid metal plate and determine chosen numbers on top of a pair of dice. You will be able to divine a chosen playing card that is leaning against the metal plate!

**Print cards like magic!**

## **4D PRINTER**



Although the blank cards never leave your sight, you can print designs on them just like magic! A clever gimmick built into the props allows you to perform this amazing transformation. You can also print birthday cards that contain a personalized message.

**Blank sheets of paper transform into currency!!**

## **MONEY SHOCK**



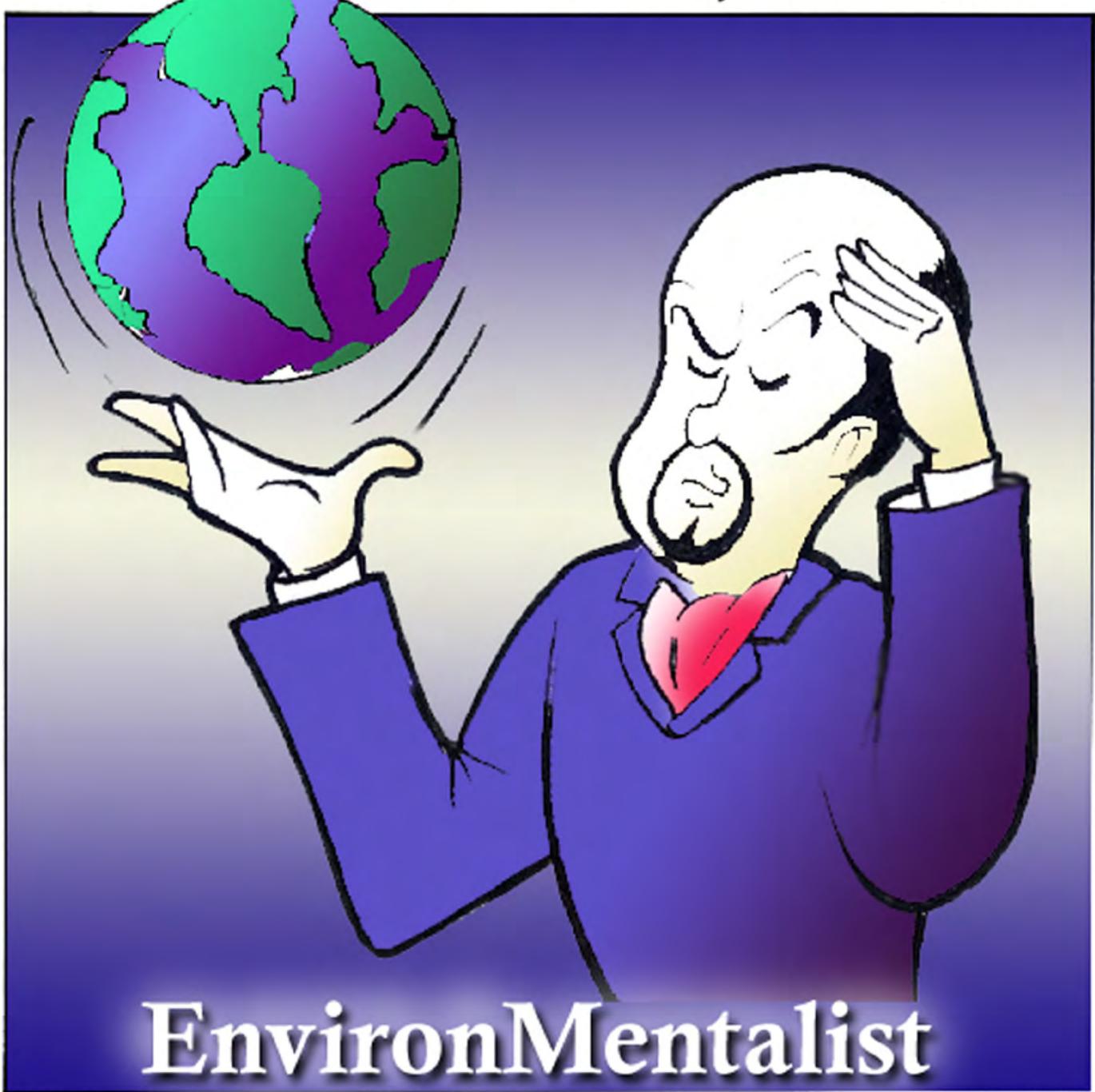
Five sheets of blank paper instantly transform into real currency notes! Thanks to a newly developed gimmick, you are now able to easily perform this dream-like magic effect. You'll be printing magical money in no time!



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# CURTAIN CALL

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## EnvironMentalist

JimR13

Check out Jim's Blog at :[toondini.blogspot.com](http://toondini.blogspot.com)

Also available for illustrations for business cards, lecture notes, animation or caricatures!

Also if anyone has a funny idea for a magictoon, then email: [heyjimr@gmail.com](mailto:heyjimr@gmail.com)