

# MAGIC

SEEN

*Lite*

ISSUE 16

A close-up portrait of a woman with long, wavy brown hair, smiling and looking slightly to her left. She is wearing a black off-the-shoulder top. Her hands are clasped together in front of her chest.

**KAT HUDSON**

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*'When Jay Fortune does a painting, he has a knack for capturing a special moment in time. This comes through in his portraits of magicians: an instant, preserved for a lifetime.'* – **Max Maven**

Max's kind words above reflect my intention when I create one of my 'Forever Memory' paintings: I capture a special moment in time. My friend (and collector) Tom Meseroll commissioned me to paint a special memory he had of him and his partner spending a magical few days with Eugene Burger.

Tom had a photograph he particularly loved with Eugene sandwiched between them being kissed. The photograph was slightly blurry, but one of the skills of an artist is to sharpen those details.

After a few weeks work, 'Magic Memories' was born.

*'Everyone who has seen it, loves your painting. Thank you so, so, so much. The fact you got it done so quickly and in time for our anniversary made it even more special. It is on display in our Great Room as the center piece of artwork. Everyone comments on it. You have captured one of our most treasured memories perfectly. It's more beautiful than we could have ever imagined. Thank you. We love it and will cherish it forever.'*

Right: Tom at home in LA with his Magic Memories art.



*'I am absolutely overwhelmed by my magical portrait, "Doc & the Gift of Magic." Thank you so much, Jay. What an honor!'* – Geoff "Doc" Grimes. USA

*'When looking for a special and unique gift for my dear friend and mentor in magic, I discovered Jay Fortune's gallery. When I saw his creative and compelling portraits, I decided to commission a portrait of my friend Geoff. Jay worked with me throughout the process, asking me for and allowing me to give input as Geoff's portrait came into being. The resulting portrait captured the joy and warmth of Geoff's brilliant personality, from his engaging smile to his endearing magic bunnies. The portrait arrived in perfect condition from the UK, expertly wrapped and packaged.'*

*'Nothing could have made me happier than the overwhelmed and delighted reaction of my friend when I presented him with this remarkable gift. Thank you, Jay!'* -T. Heil-Davis, USA.

With Christmas approaching, owning an original painting capturing a special magician or moment makes a truly magical gift that will be cherished for decades. If you'd like to discuss your unique commission, please contact me at [mail@jfortune.co.uk](mailto:mail@jfortune.co.uk) or visit <https://jayfortune.co.uk> for details. Artworks take approx. 2-3 weeks to be painted, plus a week for shipping. Spaces are limited. Thanks!

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**Welcome to Magicseen Lite issue 16 in which we are offering you selected elements of the content from the full November 2021 Magicseen. We start by featuring the in depth article on our cover star Kat Hudson, who reveals how her success on BGT opened doors in her performing career.**

Then we go behind the scenes to learn how two enterprising magicians, Chris Sewart and Craig Walker, decided to alleviate the disappointment caused by the cancellation of a number of conventions they normally attend, by successfully creating their own event in just four weeks!

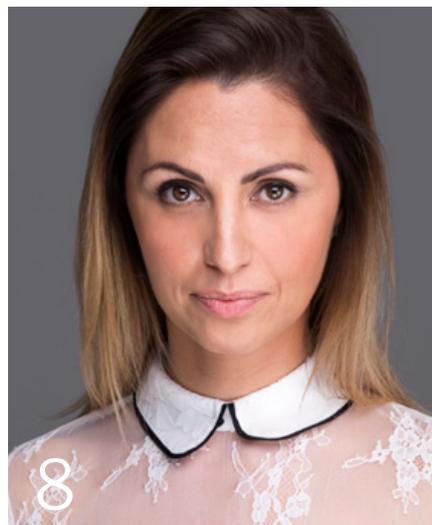
In every full issue of Magicseen we give our readers the opportunity to air their views or ask us questions relating to magic, and the latest collection of the correspondence is shared here. We also include an interesting article on a new magic related documentary being created by Canadian filmmaker Jon Ornoy along with some magical experts including Shawn Farquhar.

From the Masterclass we have selected a stand up effect from Tony Griffith called Silk Away, and of course as usual we have pulled together some of the latest product reviews.

We hope you will enjoy reading these extracts, but if you feel encouraged to move on to the full version, you can do so by taking out a printed copy or download sub (6 month, 1yr or 2yr options are available), or by purchasing individual printed or download copies, all of which can be found at [www.magicseen.com](http://www.magicseen.com).

**Mark Leveridge**

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# Wild Dice

BY MARK LEVERIDGE

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Don't miss the LIVE experience where we talk about and perform new effects, give tips and performance ideas and even explain how to prepare your own gimmicks. We also invite magicians and creators from all over the world as Guest Stars.

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# KAT HUDSON

## From the East Coast to the West End

Since appearing on series 14 of Britain's Got Talent, Kat Hudson's career has really taken off, with bookings all over the UK and beyond. She's also recently completed a series of successful guest appearances in the West End show Wonderville. With a huge social media following and her BGT performance having over 100 million hits online, we thought it was high time we interviewed this talented and very likeable performer!

Kat was raised in Hull, East Yorkshire by her Mum and Dad (George and Annette Villiotis), along with her two sisters, Margarita and Maria and her brother Christos. "You can probably tell by the names that I'm not 100% Hull!" says Kat. "My Dad is from Greece and came to Hull when he was in the navy and decided to stay. I often wondered that out of all the exotic places he travelled to why he chose Hull to settle down? My Dad was a taxi driver (retired now) and my Mum works in a pre-school. We lived in a little terraced house where I shared a bedroom with my two sisters and I absolutely loved it.

"I loved living in Hull, it's my favourite place on the planet. For the summers, Dad would throw us all in an estate car and drive us to Greece where we would spend six glorious weeks, going to the beach and eating souvlaki. We never had much money, but we had the greatest upbringing!"

Kat says she was always the show-off in her family. Her auntie started taking her

to ballet classes when she was about five years old. "I danced for 11 years but no one ever told me that I could do it for a job. Careers like that didn't happen for people like me. So, I quit and went to college to do leisure and tourism.

"I loved flying and I always wanted to be a pilot. But after my Mum sat me down one day and informed me that the problem was "you need to be clever to be a pilot". I aimed my sights a little lower and decided I'd be an air hostess instead and I'd probably just marry a pilot!"

What were you doing before you took up magic professionally? "Before I got into magic I used to work in a mobile phone shop - the air hostess thing didn't really pan out (or marrying a pilot!). I started working for T-Mobile when I was 20 and worked my way up to be a manager for them and then after that for EE." Kat reveals she never really knew anything about phones and wasn't that interested in them. "But I loved meeting people and chatting to them, so I really loved that part of the job. I was absolutely terrible

though, I still can't believe they made me a manager. I always recommended people to buy the phone that I had personally at the time, as it was the only one I knew how to work!"

"I didn't get into magic until my late 20s. I decided to go on a last-minute holiday with a group of friends. They had booked it weeks in advance and told me that some bloke named Alan (Alan Hudson, ex-Magicseen cover star) was coming and he was a magician.

"Alan and I really hit it off. When he showed me some card tricks it was the first time I'd even seen magic close up and I was in awe. He spoke about magic with such passion and was so elegant and gentle when he held the cards it really spoke to me in a way I wasn't expecting! We started seeing each other when we got back from the holiday and I started getting more and more interested in magic and that's when it all started for me."

I aimed my sights a little lower and decided I'd be an air hostess instead and I'd probably just marry a pilot!





# KAT HUDSON

MAGICIAN



Most readers know you from BGT. How did that all come about? And what were your initial thoughts? Kat says, "As most people are probably aware, BGT has researchers for the show to find acts. Alan and I had been contacted a few times to do it over the years and then in the winter of 2019, over a few too many pints, we both finally decided we would, but only if we both did it!"

Kat says she was never really ready to do it before then as she'd never done anything on stage. "I'd only ever done close up, but that year I forced myself to do a comedy course in London. It's one taught by Logan Murray. I'm a huge comedy fan

and always love to make people laugh so I thought why not?

"At the end of the course, me and the rest of the class had to do 5 minutes of stand up each at The Museum Of Comedy for a paying audience. When I started the course I remember saying to Alan that I'm doing the course but I don't think I'll have the confidence to do the show at the end. But when it came to it I'd been on this brilliant journey with my classmates and I felt safe knowing they'd all be going through the same emotions as me and that we were all in it together. That pushed me to perform on stage - and I loved it! I did a few open mic nights

**...in the winter of 2019, over a few too many pints, we both finally decided we would, but only if we both did it!**



after that and that really gave me the confidence to do BGT. Without doing the course I never would have done it.

"Once we decided to give it a go, we got in touch with Russ Stevens and asked for his help which he graciously gave us. We got an act together and then spent a couple of days with him in Blackpool and he gave it the BGT touch and made it 10 times better. I'll be forever grateful for that."

Tell us about the process you went through and how you decided on the effects you would perform? "Because I knew I'd be terrified and the audition would be on a massive stage we decided I would do something a bit more intimate with the judges," continues

Kat. “Chatting to them at their desk and giving it more of a close up feel was more my style and might be a bit less terrifying. The initial idea was always going to be a prediction, but it was the reveal we wanted to do differently. I get the worst shaky hands when I’m nervous, so doing anything sleight of hand was never an option. I know what it’s like when an audience smells fear and I needed to be in complete control.

“That’s why we chose easy forces. I was also scared to death that one of the judges might buzz me and make me lose confidence. I said to Al “I wish I could just buzz myself, to get it out of the way” and he said “why not?? No one has ever buzzed themselves before!”. So I did. The routine was mainly designed to showcase me. I’m not the greatest magician in the world and I’m ok with that. But it was a fun routine and I really liked that they commented that they felt I was natural and didn’t do the usual cheesy magicians patter. I really wanted to come across as myself and I think I achieved that. Alesha said she loved it and that she thought I was “normal”. My friends started calling me “Normal Kat” after that. Is that a good nickname? Could be worse I suppose.”

Before it took place, did you ever have second thoughts about entering?

“Even on the day itself I didn’t know if I could go through with it. I was so nervous. I made Alan promise not to tell another living soul in advance that I was

auditioning in case I didn’t have the nerve to go through with it. It wasn’t till a week after that I told my family and friends. Of course, a few other magicians had seen me at the audition so the Kat was well and truly out the bag. After that, we had the agonising wait to see if we would get through to the semis, would it be shown on TV, how would it look in the edit etc? I was probably more nervous after it to be honest.”

Kat tells Magicseen that she finds the few minutes before she performs to be the most difficult. The nerves kick in and she’s riddled with self-doubt. She says, “I still have complete imposter syndrome and every time I perform I think I’m gonna get found out and I’ll never work again! Then as soon as I’m a few minutes into a performance I relax and start to really enjoy it. I don’t know if I’ll ever feel any different before I perform - whether it be close up or on stage.”

Kat reveals that up until a few months ago she didn’t even have an ‘act’ in the true sense of the word, but after being invited to be a guest act in London at The Palace Theatre in a show called Wonderville, she really worked her socks off and put together a 10 minute act that she now loves to perform. “So I think rather than working on part of my act, I think I need to work on getting a longer stage act together. My downfall is I’m very lazy and will always leave things until the last minute, just like this interview that I gave you on the deadline day!” (Yeah, we won’t forget that – Ed).

So, what would you say are your strengths as a magician? Kat laughs, “I have only just found my strength after 10 years of performing! I got into magic really late on and learnt on the job really. Al threw me in at the deep end and after teaching me a few tricks, he announced one afternoon that I had my first paid gig that same evening...”

“As I never really watched magic DVDs or downloads and hadn’t seen many magicians perform in real life I didn’t pick up any of the standard patter that most magicians do. I simply performed magic as myself. I only realised after I had been doing it for a while (after being told), that that was a very good thing. I also think working in retail helped me a great deal, I am so used to talking to people that I never really stress about who my audience is. Also, I’m told I’m likeable, and that’s half the battle in magic. Or maybe they say I’m more likeable than Alan, also very true ;)”

So, how has husband Alan helped and guided you? “Alan has helped me a great deal. He taught me everything I know today. I have also been with him at most of his stage performances over the last 10 years. I can do his act word for word! I left my job so I could work with him at the Edinburgh Festival which I helped on as a backstage assistant. It really helped me learn the ins and outs of everything that goes into putting an act together and how to perform it on stage. About knowing the timings of a magic effect, how to hold yourself, how you present the big reveal



My main bit of advice would be this - don't think you have to dress in a certain way to get far in this business.



and how you time your jokes. I would definitely not have gotten as far without him!”

In recent times, there seems to have been more women making an impact in the magic world, and more young girls taking it up, which is really great. What advice would you give to girls/young women thinking about getting into magic? Kat says, “If you have any interest in magic please take it up regardless of how old you are. It is such an exciting time to be involved in the magic world as things are progressing.

“It’s no longer a boys club. My main bit of advice would be this - don’t think you have to dress in a certain way to get far in this business. It’s more about your personality, your magic and your work ethic rather than dressing like people want you to look. Just wear whatever you feel comfortable wearing. That way, you’re going to be more confident and more ‘you’ when you perform...

“And,” adds Kat, “don’t try to copy anyone else, try as much as possible to be yourself and play to your strengths. Audiences love to be able to relate to you, it makes everything more magical. I’ve seen so many talented magicians

fail because they try to do a patter act which clearly isn’t their strong point. Or magicians who have seen others tell jokes and they just repeat them and it just doesn’t suit them. Don’t try to be something you’re not!”

“We have just had our very first female president of The Magic Circle elected, Megan Swann, and wow what an amazing thing that is. I really hope this will inspire more females to take up magic. I would love to see a more even representation of women in magic. For too long I’ve been asked if I was a magician’s assistant (and when is the magician turning up?). It’s an old-fashioned assumption, but that is starting to change thankfully. To be fair, I would love to have a go being an assistant, but I don’t think I’d fit into the boxes. Plus, I like to chat too much and they usually have a non-speaking part which doesn’t suit me at all. Also I’m not very elegant!

“I would love to see more routines and gimmicks being released which are not just aimed at men. When is someone gonna make me a nice purse for Card-In-Purse eh??” (great point – Ed!)

Kat tell us that she’s a massive fan of comedy magic and is a huge fan of

David Williamson, Mandy Muden, Rob Zabrecky, Romany, Lucy Darling and Ben Siedman. “I love how much they make me laugh and then they chuck in the wow moments when you’re least expecting it! I also love Justin Willman. I was lucky enough to see him perform at The Magic Castle and his humour and new take on making old tricks more relevant is blooming brilliant!”

“I get more inspired by female comedians like Roisin Conaty, Aisling Bea, Katherine Ryan, Lucy Beaumont (another fine female from Hull!) and comedy actresses like Daisy May Cooper and Sharon Horgan. I love how natural they are on stage or when they’re performing, so I feel like they’re just having a chat to one of their mates. I love how relatable they all are in different ways (which is what I try to bring to my own magic)... Also Alan Hudson - of course because he’ll definitely be reading this.”

What has been the biggest hurdle you’ve had to overcome to get where you are now? “My fear of failure has definitely stopped me in the past, which has stopped me from trying anything new. That’s been a massive thing for me to overcome. I think because

everyone knows Alan and because he's so successful, I feel I put pressure on myself to be perfect from the start. And I know I will always get compared to him. I decided a couple of years ago to start saying yes to the things that scare me. No one else gives a crap about what you're doing. So, as long as you're happy with what you put out there, then that's the main thing. I've learnt you can't please everyone so just be ok with it yourself. Since I've adopted that mantra I've been in a bloody West End show!!! So clearly it's working."

Kat says her stint in the Wonderville West End show has been her most glamorous gig to date. "I got to work in the most beautiful theatre with the most beautiful people. Chris Cox, Josephine Lee, Young & Strange, Edward Hilsum, Harry De Cruz, Louise Andrée Douglas, Magic Singh, Magical Bones and Emily England. A show filled with stars and up and coming stars too. I'll probably never be on a stage with so much talent and with people filled with so much love for what they do ever again. What an absolutely amazing experience I've already had. It's probably all downhill from here," she laughs.

The thing these days, is that people who have a high profile on TV tend to get a huge response on social media. Tell us about how your own is going, and how important is it? "I am one of those people who is terrible at social media," says Kat honestly. "I know it's because I'm lazy, like I said before. I have no idea why people follow me. The clip of me doing BGT has had around 100 million views on the BGT site now because they keep sharing it.

"It's probably something I should get better at, but I've not needed it so far. Maybe if things quieten down a bit I'll start putting out more content. I would like to do more but I have to find my own way of doing it. That's the tricky bit innit?"

So what have been the pluses and negatives of being on BGT? "I would have never got to step foot on a West End Stage if it wasn't for BGT. It's increased my bookings and has shown people I'm not just a one trick pony. I honestly don't have anything negative to say about it. It was the most amazing experience. I even got flown to Rome to do a TV show Tú sí que vales as they'd seen me on BGT. How amazing is that? If you're thinking of doing it and have something to say with your magic - go for it!"

Kat has been busy with her Zoom shows recently, mainly in America. She says, "they love me over there. I think it's because they think I won BGT. I haven't corrected them of course :)"

Finally, I ask Kat what her plans are for the next year or so? "Attempt to come up with another 10 minutes for my act. I'd love to be involved in another ensemble magic show. Working with and learning from other magicians is an absolute dream gig. Apart from that I'll probably just sit in my pj's most days reminiscing about the time I was in a West End Show, the time I was on BGT and the lovely holiday I got paid to go on in Rome during a pandemic. Oh, and probably be drinking more beer!"



## QUICKIES WITH KAT

### Last movie watched?

Free Guy - very excellent

### Last book read?

The Thursday Murder Club - Richard Osmond

### Last effect you bought?

The Prince's Card Trick - actually I got this for social media - have a look to see if I ever actually put it on @kathudsonmagic

### Last biscuit you ate?

Dark chocolate digestive. If anyone from Sunday Brunch is reading this, this is my King of The Tin.

### Last time you cried laughing?

Last week at a family party. It was a moment I probably shouldn't have laughed at and one that I can't tell you about unfortunately. It has just made me laugh again thinking about it.

### Last time you cried?

I can cry every day at almost anything. From looking at videos of cute dogs to someone winning the jackpot on Tipping Point.

### Last time Alan annoyed you?

He's annoying me right now, looking over my shoulder making sure I mention him in this interview and correcting my grammar. FFS Alan!

# Readers' Letters

If you have anything you would like to tell us, whether it's about the magazine or anything magic related, please email: [grahamhey@magicseen.co.uk](mailto:grahamhey@magicseen.co.uk)



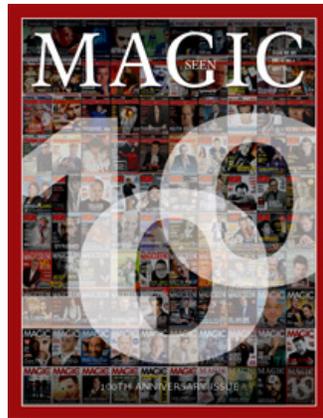
## LOOKING FOR THE SWEET SPOT!

Dear Magicseen,  
In December I have been booked to perform at a party for a national confectioners and I would like to do an effect which reflects that. I'm not an expert on effects, in fact I've hardly used any bought effects as I just wanted to concentrate on non-gimmicked card tricks – but I have since looked at what a few dealers have to offer. Is there a particular effect you could recommend?  
Hopefully,  
**Richard R.**, via email.

*Hi Richard. For once this is a relatively easy question. In the office, we had a chat and straight away, the name Steve Rowe came up, as all his effects are really commercial and revolve around sugary treats, so already, you have a few killer effects to chose from! Also, there's a great effect called "Sweet" by Matt Johnson which is brilliant. We did a bit of research and found a bit of info on the Magic Café: Said creator Matt, "Sweet is something I came up with based on an idea by my good friend Christopher Taylor. It's totally impromptu, instantly resets and you need nothing more than sugar packets and a pen making it the perfect thing to do at a moment's notice. It is also something I do at strolling gigs*

*and quite often I carry my own sugar packets.*

*"You can put anything on the sugar packets. Names, dates, numbers, symbols, it's totally up to you. The spectator never reveals their thoughts, they can be the only one that sees the chosen symbol etc. No memory work, no pre-show work and no fishing, you are right 100% of the time. Zero set up time, take the sugar found in any restaurant, hotel, bar or café, borrow a pen and you are ready to go. Trust me when I say the method is ingenious, simple and it gets gasps from the audience. You WILL do this!" We hope this helps, Richard!*



## WELL DONE MAGICSEEN!

Congratulations on 100 issues, Magicseen! I really never thought you'd get there – but I have every single copy. (I've even printed out the ones you could only do as e-versions during lockdown!). Here's to the next 100!  
**F.B** via email

*Ed says: Thank you so much! Unfortunately, by the time we get to 200 issues most of the team will be dead. Just sayin!*



## SECURITY ISSUES

Dear Magicseen,  
I'm putting together an act for the cruise ships. However, I wondered if you could give me any information re: items I can and cannot take on board with me. I have heard all sorts of conflicting stories, so maybe you can guide me. In my act I use various items such as a pair of scissors, a small hacksaw, and a metal "trap" which will slam shut, finding a playing card. Are any of these items going to cause problems? What should I have in hand luggage and what should I have in my suitcase?  
Thanks in advance,  
**James Redditch** via email

*Hi James. Firstly, any sharp objects such as scissors and knives are going to cause you big problems. Even if you put them in your suitcase, you're going to encounter big problems when you join a ship as their security is extra-tight. Anything like that will be confiscated by security, there will be lots of paperwork to fill in and lots of red tape to take up lots of your time – and the same will happen whenever you need those objects for your show. Then you'll have to return the props to security and then you'll have to go through the proves again to get them back at the end of your stay on the ship. If you can use fake props that don't use metal, that would definitely be for the best. If the items you need are not gimmicked, then borrow them from the ship's maintenance dept*

*– they will have items like that you can borrow!*

*On the subject of props, make sure you have as many of your effects in your hand luggage, as if you transport them in your suitcase, you'll be in big trouble if your case is lost – and we know several performers that this happened to. Play it safe!*



## HOW MANY EFFECTS FOR CLOSE-UP?

I was recently at an awards ceremony in London and there were several magicians booked to perform close-up around the dinner tables. The magician we had at our table was a skilled performer and yet his whole performance was tainted because he did too many tricks which were too similar, and he seemed to be overloaded with effects - his jacket was bulging with props and it took him forever to find the things he was looking for – during which time the table guest began chatting amongst themselves. It's all very well having the skills, but you'll never be that amazing performer unless you look at every aspect of your style. Why would a magician bring 20+ tricks to perform close up? When I performed, I usually did two tricks per table (if I was up against the clock – meaning I had lots of

tables to do in a short time. I think (and correct me if I'm wrong) that magic is best when you do 'more with less'. Multiple decks, countless props, endless gimmicks – to me it all adds up to something of a disjointed mess. Just 3 or 4 effects plus a deck of cards should provide a decent magician with all he needs. I once saw Pat Page (R.I.P) do the tables and he did 3 tricks at every table – the last being a cups and balls routine on a silver tray which was held by a person at each table – it was absolutely sensational! Have less props but make sure your routines are red hot!

**K.N.** via email

## LACK OF GOOD STAND-UP EFFECTS

Dear Magicseen,  
There are tons of cool close-up tricks around, and always more

on the way, but very few really good effects for stand-up. Don't magic creators like us stand-up performers?

**Liam H.** Edinburgh.



## BALLOON MODELLING FOR A NOVICE

Dear Magicseen,  
I'd love to learn balloon modelling, but I've watched videos on YouTube and they are difficult to follow. I'm not an

expert at all and wondered if you could recommend any learning material? Thank you.

**A.C** via email.

*Dear A.C. Try the DVD, Balloon Magic Made Easy #1 by Tricky the Clown. You can find it quite easily. It assumes you know nothing and takes you step by step to making a number of animals and other creations. Balloon modellers will tell you that Qualatex balloons (260Q) are the best, and we also suggest you get an effective hand pump!*

## CONGRATULATIONS MEGAN AND KATHERINE!

Well done Megan Swann on becoming President of the magic Circle! And let's not forget that the prestigious society also elected Katherine Rhodes, its Secretary last year, as its new Vice-



President. Great news all-round, and hopefully all the publicity will encourage more females to get into magic and join the 21st century!!!

**Maria H.** via email

*Ed: Yes, big congratulations from all of us here at Magicseen. Really great, positive news!*

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**ANDY NYMAN**

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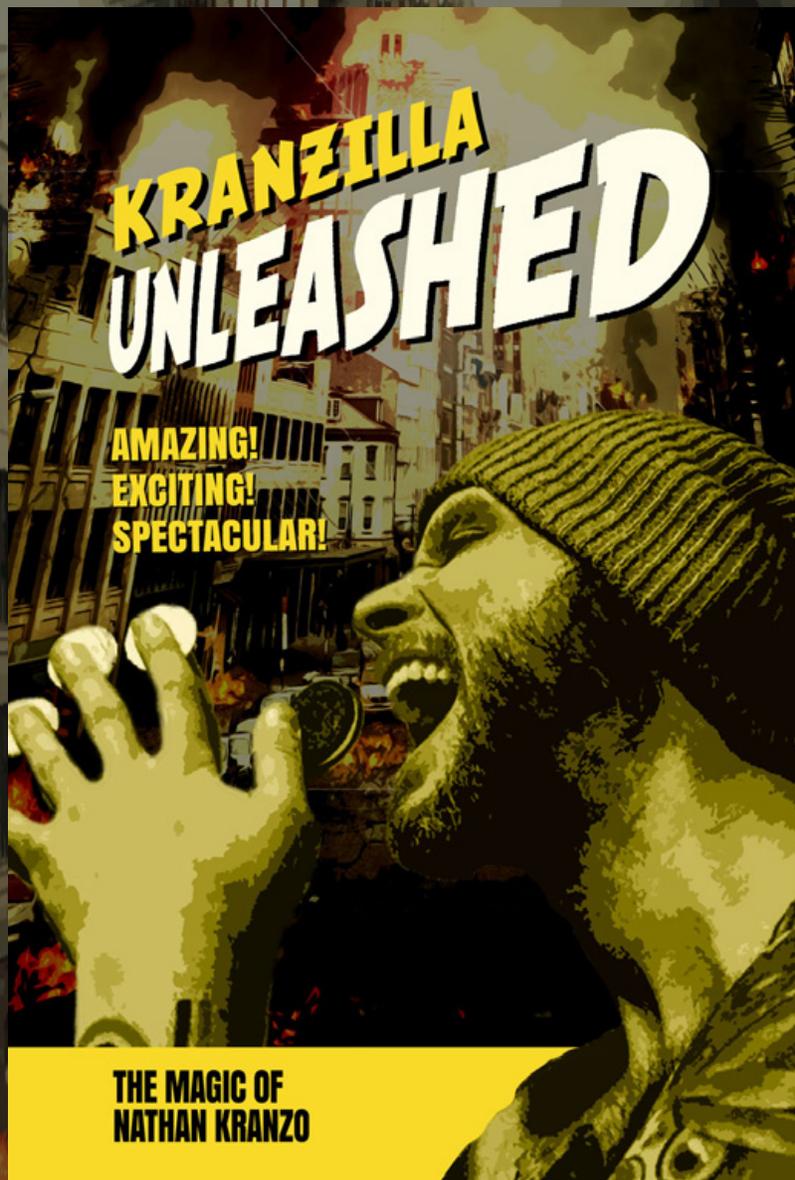
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# How we arranged a one day magic convention in four weeks...

By Chris Stewart



**I**t started with the Blackpool Magic Convention 2021 being cancelled due to government restrictions. This came after the cancellations of two of my other favourite magic conventions, South Tyneside International Magic Festival and the Northern Magic Summit, and at the time I was feeling pretty rubbish.

Magic conventions are more for me than filling my magic room with more gimmicks and seeing lectures. They are my connection to the brotherhood, my professional development and most of all, my time to spend with friends, discussing the things we love. When the last Blackpool Magic Convention didn't go ahead I said to my wife Louise, I just couldn't wait any longer. I said in jest that if I couldn't go to one, I'd have to arrange one. She said, as she always does, that she believes in me.

Fast forward 6 months and unexpectedly the government restrictions were still in place. Although the government had planned the 'roadmap out of lockdown,' like a lot of the nation I didn't believe them. I had started to think we may never

live in a time without restrictions. I'd not given the convention idea any further thought, as it just wasn't possible.

As the summer came on things started to move in the right direction. By the time of the Euro's semi final, I was pretty sure restrictions would end when the government said they would. That's when I met up with Craig Walker, my friend, and President of the Leeds Magic Circle, to discuss something magic related and I mentioned the (theoretical) idea of putting on a convention as soon as restrictions are lifted. He thought it was a good idea and offered to help. I booked a venue the next day. If you build it, they will come. This was turning into my version of Field of Dreams.

The venue we chose was The Legion, Kippax; it had the right amount of space, a bar, a stage and easy access. Although Kippax is not known for its rich magical history, it is home to a magician (Craig) and close to Rothwell where I live, so it was perfect.

The first person I messaged, during the Euro Final game, was Harry Robson. I love seeing Harry, I learn so much. He is an incredible magician and is so helpful. He's been a huge influence in my becoming a professional magician and he always has time for people. I probably wouldn't have gone ahead with the convention if he'd have said it's a bad idea. Thankfully he messaged me back straight away and said he was up for it.

A couple of days later we announced that we were putting on a one day magic convention and the Leeds Magic Jam was born.

I contacted the magicians I wanted to see lecture and explained the idea. It's a one day magic convention built purely for the love of magic conventions. I'm not trying to make money and I've nothing to sell. I've just missed them and as no one else is doing it, so we're doing it. The response I had was wonderful.

We had the best magicians saying they would lecture and perform, dealers wanting in and people were asking how they could buy tickets. It was all coming together.

Tickets went on sale a week after I first contacted Harry. We announced the line up soon after that, one a day to build the hype. We had Harry Robson, Lawrence Turner, Joel Dickinson, Steve Faulkner and Peter Turner lecturing with a close up show from Sean Heydon to finish the day. It looked incredible. Then disaster struck.

It was the first week of unrestricted events, 22nd of July to be precise, and I was busy. I had three close up gigs that day amounting to 8 hours of performing, starting at 9am and finishing at 9pm. Joel messaged me in the morning to say he couldn't make it, due to a scheduling error. As we'd already announced him and I had no backup, I was feeling worried.

Thankfully that very same day I had



**Things were building nicely. I was humbled by everybody's helpfulness and generosity.**



received a message from a legend in the magic industry, David Penn, asking about having a table for World Magic Shop. I spoke to David after my second gig of the day and managed to convince him to do a lecture for us. Things were back on track.

Ticket sales were going well, we had the dealers, lecturers/show. I'd booked Bob Hamilton to do the video projection and Steve Keys had kindly offered to come with his PA and help us out. Things were building nicely. I was humbled by everybody's helpfulness and generosity.

We decided to do a raffle to raise some money for the Leeds Magic Circle. Prizes were donated by Neo Magic, Merlins, Luke Jonas, Tom Wright and all of our dealers on the day. The prize was huge! When the day of the Leeds Magic Jam came around its fair to say I was a bit nervous. Myself, Louise and Craig had

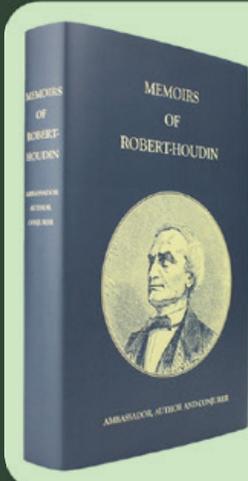
zero prior experience of putting on a convention.

In the end it turned out better than I could ever have hoped. The lectures and show were fantastic, the dealers were selling some great stuff, the raffle raised £255 for Leeds Magic Circle and most importantly we managed to get a load of magicians together for the first time in 16 months to chat magic and have fun. After the day's events finished many of us stayed for drinks and some ended up performing and making balloons for the locals. It was a brilliant night.

We have had lots of great feedback from attendees and lots of people are saying we should do it again. Leeds Magic Jam for me was only ever going to be a one off convention, now the dust has settled and nostalgia is starting to kick in... I'm not so sure.

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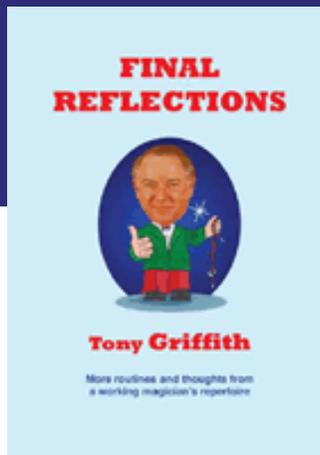
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## SILK AWAY

Tony Griffith  
Final Reflections (2009)



### Background

I was looking for a silk and rope release to fit into an opening sequence for inclusion in my stand up act. The criteria was that the silk handkerchief had to be tied to a piece of rope before its release, and I wanted to present it without the help of any assistants. A thorough search through the various volumes of The Tarbell Course in Magic, and Rice's Encyclopedia of Silk Magic resulted in a variety of methods being explained. Eventually I came across the Jay-Bee Undisturbed Knot Mystery. It is described in Stewart James's book The Encyclopedia of Rope Tricks on pages 312 -313. In effect, a loop is formed in the centre of a piece of rope through which a silk handkerchief is passed. Two knots are then tied in the handkerchief and its release is activated by a simple pull on the knots. It fitted my requirements very nicely.

### Requirements

1. A length of rope.
2. An 18 or 24 inch silk handkerchief.

### Working

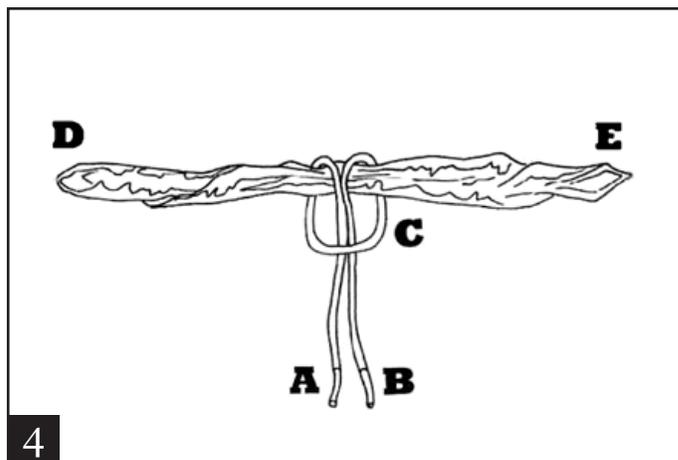
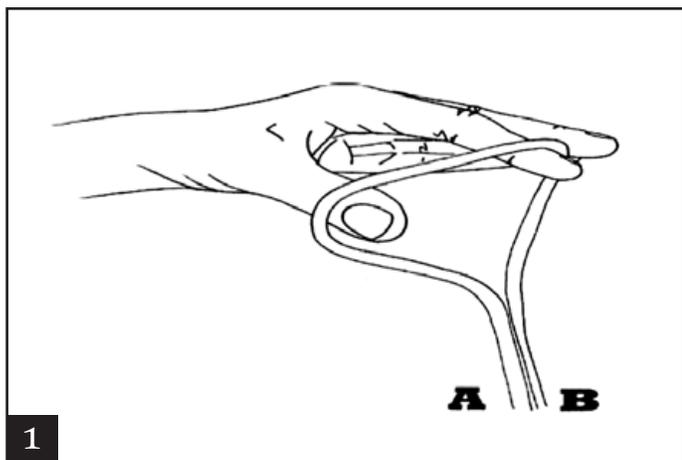
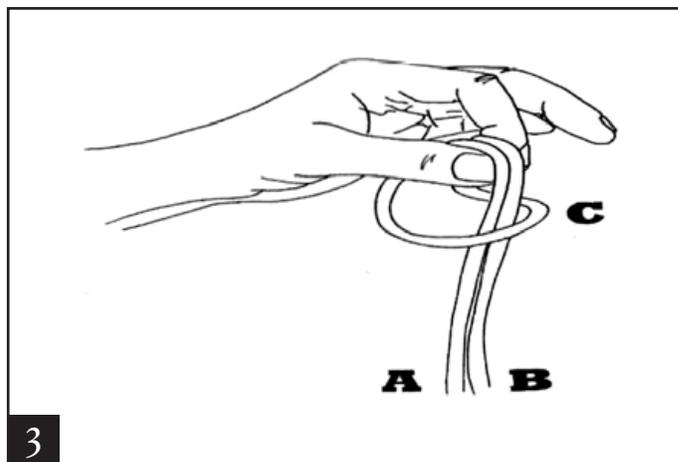
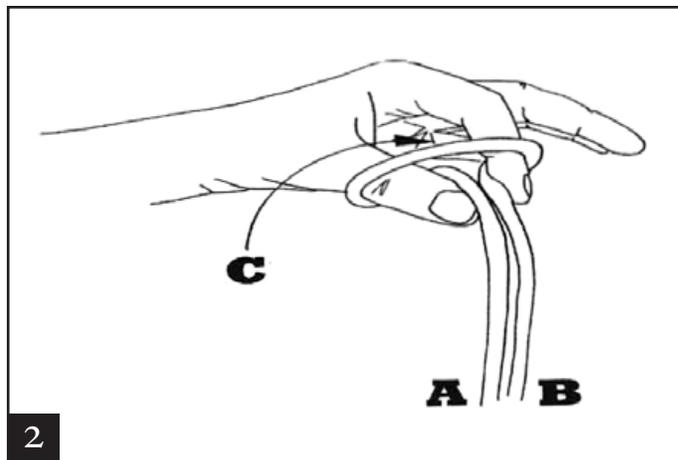
Hold the length of rope and allow the centre to rest over your thumb and first finger of your left hand. Spread your left thumb and first finger (Fig.1) and bring them down on the outer side of the two downward strands of rope (A and B).

Reach up with the right hand and gripping the rope at C in Fig.2, pull down a single loop into position forming a double loop of rope. Fig.3.

Take the silk handkerchief and insert the end through the loop (C) and bring the loop of rope to the centre of the handkerchief. The ends of the rope (A and B) are hanging down. Fig.4.

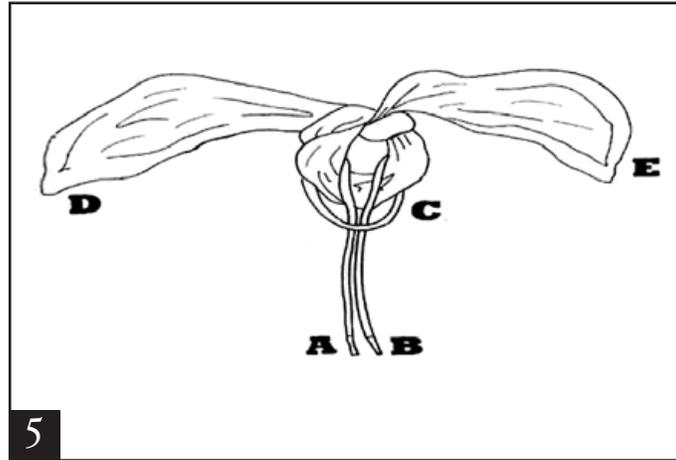
Now tie a single knot in the handkerchief, but do not pull it tight. Tie another single knot on top of the first one, making a double knot. Again don't pull it tight. Fig.5.

The loop in the rope has now to be transferred to the knot in the

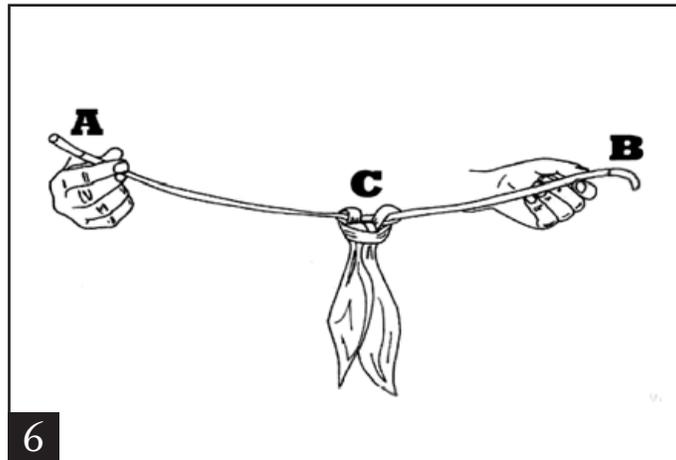


handkerchief and is done in a very subtle way.

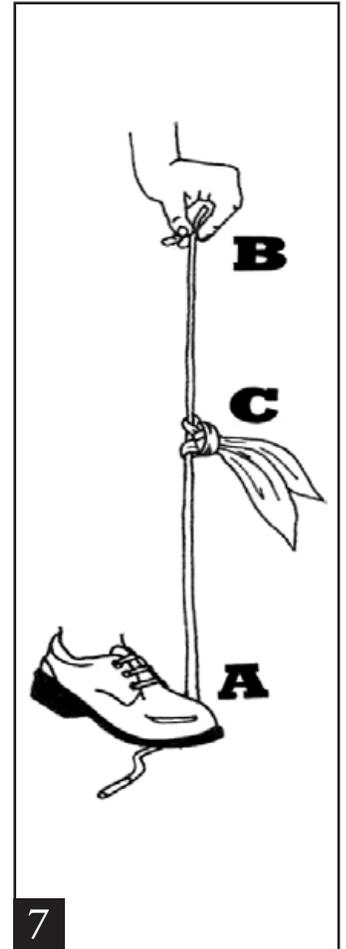
Holding the ends of the handkerchief (D and E) in each hand, throw the handkerchief upwards a couple of feet and as it comes down catch hold of each end of the rope in your hands. In doing so give a slight outward pull on the rope with both hands and you will find the loop in the rope has been transferred to the handkerchief. Fig.6.



Place your foot on one end of the rope, and hold the other in your hand. Fig.7. Move the handkerchief up and down the rope a couple of times before finally inserting your finger into the knot at point C.



Give a smart pull upwards on the handkerchief and you will find it leaves the rope quite easily. Continue this movement upwards and let the handkerchief fly into the air. Catch it as it falls and show that the knots are still there.



# UNITED KINGDOM ESCAPE ARTISTS NEWS & AWARDS 2021

**The 19th Annual General meeting of the United Kingdom Escape Artists (UKEA) took place on Saturday the 25th of September 2021 in Doncaster with a strong turnout of both professional and amateur escape artists. The meeting comprised of a number of lectures and presentations and also saw the 6th annual “Mick Hanzlik” award competition and the 4th David De-Val Award.**

This year, the Mick Hanzlik award was won by Miranda Allen. Miranda performed her new artistic escape titled “fifteen seconds”. Miranda says “It’s an act

*I’ve been considering for about a year drawing unspoken parallels between waiting out a time of crisis and the sensation of a breath hold”. This was Miranda’s first time at the UKEA convention, a double record as it’s the first time an award has been won by a new member and also the first female to win the award. The Award is named after Houdini Historian and Master Locksmith Mick Hanzlik.*

The second award went to Aaron Firth as he became the fourth person to win the prestigious David De-Val award for his efforts during the last 12 months in



promoting the art form. He was nominated for the work he has put into the United Kingdom Escape Artists Zoom meetings and keeping members entertained with his collection at the Doncaster Restraint Museum. Sadly Aaron contracted Covid days before the meeting so had to attend virtually.

Aaron says “I’m thrilled to say that the committee have awarded DRM,

*Clare and I this honour, largely due to our fun Zoom presentations and demos during lockdown and the help with organising the AGM. This was a very much needed lift after all the planning to show UKEA our lovely DRM was thwarted.*

*Thank you so much for voting for us and helping us rescue just the worst piece of bad luck!”*

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# LOST IN THE SHUFFLE...

## AN ANCIENT MURDER MYSTERY!

When we heard about a new magic documentary being made by Canadian filmmaker Jon Ornoy which featured Shawn Farquhar, we were intrigued - and a bit excited! And we were even more excited when we learned more about it. Not only did we think it would make a really interesting feature, but we love to follow a project to see how it develops. We'll be keeping you up to date on *Lost in the Shuffle* over the coming months... Magicseen talks to Jon Ornoy.

**MS:** So how did the project begin, and how did Shawn become involved?

**JO:** This whole journey began for me back in the Fall of 2019 when by chance I noticed that Shawn had opened a pop-up theatre space in Vancouver, and having seen him perform before on *Fool Us*, I knew that I didn't want to pass up the opportunity to see him live. The theatre was tiny, so even people in the back row were still only fifteen feet away from the stage and for more than an hour Shawn blew us all away with one impossible feat after another. After the show I did something I'd never done before; I

contacted the performer to tell them how much I enjoyed the show and ask if we could meet, and happily he agreed. The fact that the night I saw him perform was also my birthday only made things better, because this has truly been the gift that has kept on giving, both in the form of this film and my friendship with Shawn.

It was at some point during one of those early meetings that Shawn pulled out his laptop to show me a PowerPoint presentation entitled the "Court Card Conspiracy", which he narrated with the details of how a trip to a French castle on a day off from one of his tours, had

led him to really start looking at the playing cards he'd been working with his entire life. As a fourth-generation magician, Shawn likes to joke that he learned to count from a deck of cards (this might not actually be a joke, I'm not sure), but he'd always just looked at them as tools without ever considering what their origins were or why they look like they do. But on that fateful visit to Château D'Amboise, he saw a symbol represented on a lot of the art in the castle that he came to realise he recognised from its presence on the King of Hearts, and it made him wonder if there was a connection between the two. He now

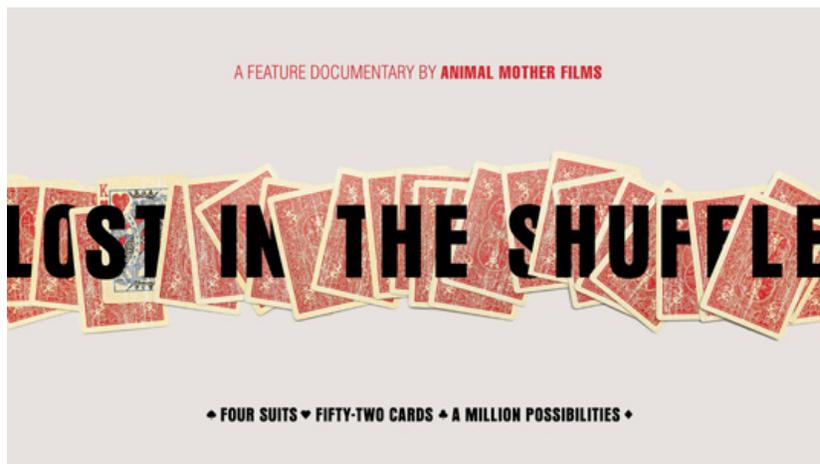
believes that encoded in art of the court cards are clues that suggest that the death of King Charles VIII at Château D'Amboise in 1498 was not an accident as history contends, but in fact a murder most foul at the hands of his wife, Queen Anne. For Shawn, making this film is a chance to really dive into a topic that's been a passion project for a few years now.

**Shawn:** "They say history is written by the victor, but maybe, just maybe, history can be re-written by the inquisitive."

**JO:** It's an inevitable side effect of being a filmmaker that you're always looking for interesting stories to adapt, but it's not too often that they walk up and slap you in the face like this one did. The idea that the clues to a cold-case murder have been hiding in plain sight for all of these centuries was too intriguing to ignore and the opportunity to collaborate with a world-class magic mind like Shawn, too much to pass up, so here we are two years later looking to move into production on a feature-length documentary.

As much as the CCC story was a fascinating hook, what it really got me thinking about was how for most people a deck of cards just lives at the bottom of a junk drawer, but for magicians like Shawn, they seem to be a virtually bottomless well of creative inspiration. It's pretty incredible to think about how many countless thousands of tricks have been created over the years with no sign that there's any end to the innovation in sight, and that got me interested in how these unassuming pieces of paper have become the Swiss Army Knife of magic. Even now in his fourth decade of performing, Shawn's relationship with playing cards is leading him down a rich new creative path to learn more about the history of his art and even develop a brand new routine around Charles' death that he'll premiere as the film's grand finale. Shawn's story was so compelling, that it made me want to learn more about why other magicians have also devoted years of their lives to perfecting this discipline, and that question forms the film's primary exploration.

**Shawn:** "I'm thrilled to share not only the film, but the whole journey with the magic community."



**MS:** What's the next step, and where are you with it now?

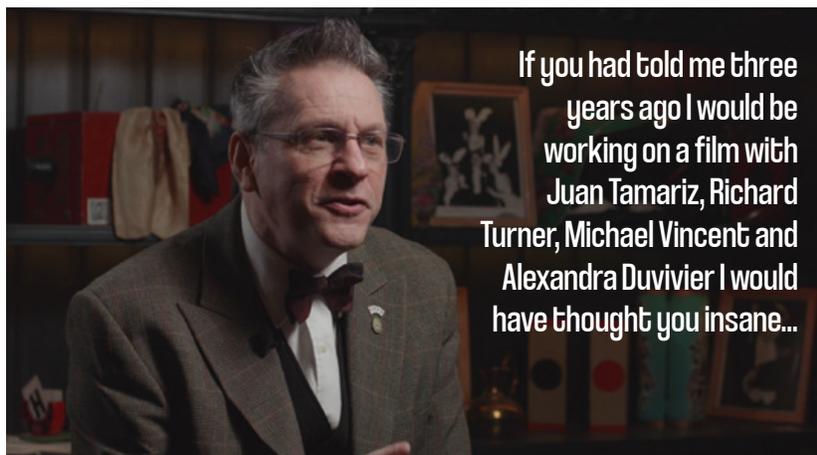
**JO:** Filmmaking is a slow process. In this case, it started with months of research and reading on the medieval French monarchy, a topic which shockingly, I knew nothing about. Once I had sufficiently wrapped my head around that, I moved onto research about the history of playing cards, the history of card magic and a few other key topics. One of the fun things about making films, and particularly documentaries, is the excuse it gives you to immerse yourself in worlds you may have never considered before and that's certainly been true of this project.

With that whole big pile of information in my head, the next step was to sit down with our editor Hart Snider to figure out how to weave all of these stories, characters and locations into a narrative that would be engaging and coherent. After about six months of writing and honing these materials, we began earlier this year to pitch the project to broadcasters and distributors around

the world to raise the funds to go into production, and have been encouraged by the positive responses we've received so far. While filmmaking is a highly collaborative process, developing a project can be a lonely experience made up of long hours sitting by yourself in front of a computer and wondering if anyone else is going to find your topic interesting. I'm excited now to be nearing the point of the process where the rest of my super-talented crew will soon begin to make their contributions as well.

On October 19th we're launching our month long Kickstarter campaign that will help us raise financing for the film, but just as importantly, it's an opportunity to begin to engage our audience in the magic community and elsewhere, which is something I'm definitely looking forward to. I think we've come up with a pretty cool range of perks to thank people for their support, everything from early digital access to the film when it's done, to a deck of cards that Shawn's designing for us, to a VIP experience at the Magic Castle as Shawn's personal guest.





**Shawn:** “Creating a unique deck of cards for a project that reveals hidden secrets in the court cards, while at the same time hiding new secrets into the back design was challenging and exciting.”

In a perfect world, we’ll have our financing in place in the next few months and the Covid situation in the countries where we intend to film will be sufficiently under control for us to safely travel around, at which point we’ll be able to move into production which will probably add up to about four weeks of shooting. With this timeline in mind, we hope to be delivering the film around August or September of 2022.

**MS:** Tell us about your own love of magic and what are your hopes for the documentary?

**JD:** I’ve been watching magic since I was a little kid and Penn and Teller definitely became quite formative in my tastes for what I wanted to see in a magic trick and also a sense of humour that

skews towards the darker side of things. I loved the way that they were able to simultaneously be masters of the form, while also completely subverting many of its tropes, which is something you rarely see achieved in any art form. David Blaine is another performer who ranks really high on my list of favourites; I’m less of a fan of the feats of endurance which have marked the latter part of his career, but I do love his street magic. For me, it’s the close-up, one-on-one interactions where the magician and audience are inches away from each other where magic is at its most powerful. Watching a flashy stage illusionist reveal the woman hidden in the box after much pageantry and fanfare can be a chin-scratcher, but I don’t think that can ever match the power of a more intimate interaction that leaves your jaw on the floor.

A few years ago, I went down to LA for the festival premiere of one of my short films, which by itself should have been the highlight of my trip, but to be honest, it got far over-shadowed by my trip to the Magic Castle the night before. I had

managed to wrangle a pass through some family connections and then got even luckier to get a reservation on very short notice and had probably one of the best nights of my life. From the moment I entered past the false bookcase into the mansion itself, the next six hours were a relentless assault on my sense of reality, though I loved every minute of it and left with my face sore from smiling. I don’t actually have much motivation yet to learn how to do any tricks, because I so love the sense of wonder and awe I enjoy as a viewer, that I’m not sure that’s a balance I want to upset. That being said, I do love making movies for many of the same reasons why I think Shawn loves creating magic, because you get to create an alternate reality and transport people there for a brief amount of time. So from that perspective, mixing movies and magic creates a truly intoxicating blend.

This film is my love letter to magic and my attempt to pull back the curtain a little bit on the incredible dedication and creativity that one needs to excel in this art form, so that a broader audience can hopefully feel the same appreciation for it that I do. By routinely showing us the impossible, magic is an antidote to the increasingly siloed thinking that’s becoming endemic in our culture and I think that’s what makes it an important and relevant craft that needs to be celebrated more than it is. I never thought I’d get to immerse myself in this world to this extent and meet the phenomenal artists that this journey will introduce us to, and I can’t wait to share that experience with as many people as possible at a time when we could really all use a little more wonder and joy in our lives.

**Shawn:** “If you had told me three years ago I would be working on a film with Juan Tamariz, Richard Turner, Michael Vincent and Alexandra Duvivier I would have thought you insane, but today it’s just me going crazy waiting to interview these icons of magic.”

**Our Kickstarter runs between October 19-November 19 and can be found at [LostInTheShuffleFilm.com](http://LostInTheShuffleFilm.com)**

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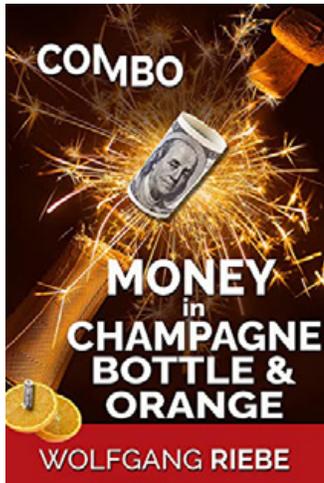
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# WHAT'S HOT WHAT'S NOT

WE TAKE A LOOK AT SOME OF THE LATEST PRODUCTS ON THE MARKET



## COMBO MONEY IN CHAMPAGNE

Bottle and Orange (E-Book)

Wolfgang Riebe

Available from:

www.amazon.co.uk

Price: £11.00

Two paper currency bills are borrowed from different spectators and “accidentally” torn

in half. Half of each bill is returned to the respective spectators and the other two halves vanished. As the title suggests one half bill is found in an orange, the other discovered within the cork removed from a sealed bottle of champagne.

There is a lot to like about this commercial routine. It is practical, memorable and quite simple to perform. The orange and champagne bottle are in full view throughout and the spectators open and reveal the half notes themselves. The main problem in the UK is that it cannot be done with polymer notes. Fortunately the Eurozone and the US look set to continue with paper money for a while which is just as well since the routine and method depend entirely on both notes being torn completely into two halves.

The eBook is written in a conversational, persuasive style

and does an adequate job of describing how to prepare and perform the trick. The preparation is key, with one off initial research to decide on which sparkling wine and bottle to use and the seeking out of suitable supplies such as corks and covering foil. Several suggested sources are provided.

Some details are rather glossed over, for example the vanish of the two half notes is described as “stuff the two money bill halves into the thumb tip”. Similarly with the preparation, recorking a champagne type bottle, in a manner that will withstand an inevitable build up in pressure, deserves a little more description than “re-twist the wire around the cork” (how tight? with pliers?) and “I would recommend using a clear glue or glue gun so that the aluminium foil actually sticks to the bottle” (what glue?). How about transporting the gimmicked bottle full of fizzy champagne,

does that need care, avoiding shaking, getting too warm?

The routine is straightforward to perform and Wolfgang gets quite excited, rightly so, at the elegance of the spectators unwittingly doing the dirty work of swapping the appropriate halves. This was certainly a new and intriguing principle for me.

The routine has quite a high cost to perform, a bottle of sparkling wine is given away and two destroyed notes need to be replaced with clean ones as a give away. Add to this the preparation time and this routine definitely falls into the stage / feature category. **CP**

**WHAT'S HOT:** strong memorable magic. Fairly simple to perform

**WHAT'S NOT:** will not work with polymer notes

**RATING:** 65%



## SWITCH ONE

Christian Grace

Available from:

www.vanishinginmagic.com

Price: £72.00

There's a saying, “When something looks too good to be true, it usually is.” Well, Switch One really is as good as it looks.

Here's the basic effect: a playing card folded in quarters is placed onto the table at the start. A spectator is asked to generate a playing card at random. When the folded card is opened up it is an exact match of the card the spectator created. Now that does sound too good to be true, doesn't it?

From its name - Switch One - you would expect to receive a James Bond style switching device which does all the hard work for you. Well if that's the kind of magic gimmickery you enjoy then this is not for you. What you actually receive is an nicely made index wallet which houses playing cards or billets. This allows you

to store all of the red cards from a deck ready to be retrieved when needed. The index system can also be used for other routines where access to a particular card or billet is required, so it's not just for use with Switch One.

The switch part of the routine is achieved with good old sleight of hand. I realise this will probably put some off when they hear this but bear with me. The switch taught by Christian is a superb move and when executed properly is undetectable. It is a little knacky but once you get it down it's a killer move that can be used. It's the kind of move that will even fool your when performed in a mirror, it's that good.

As you would expect the teaching on the tutorial is second to none. Christian is an excellent teacher and everything is very clear and precise. Lots of uses are explained should you wish to perform more than just the basic routine.

Switch One is not cheap but if you are willing to put in the time it deserves then you will have a killer routine at your disposal. **PS**

**WHAT'S HOT:** amazing effect when executed properly

**WHAT'S NOT:** not cheap and name could be slightly misleading for what you actually receive.

**RATING:** 85%



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that have been extended to  
seven cards by the addition of  
a dot and a triangle. The backs  
of these cards also incorporate

a marking system. The balance  
of the deck is made up of double  
faced cards, a double backer, three  
blank faced cards and one extra  
regular card. The gimmicked  
cards only really make sense when  
you start to understand how they  
are used in the effects. The cards  
are poker size and appear to be  
printed on good quality stock.

The instructions come in the form  
of a thirty two page downloadable  
pdf file but don't panic, half the  
booklet is in Italian and the latter  
half in English. There is a pictorial  
guide to the cards in the deck  
followed by an explanation of the  
marking system. The cards are  
marked by a slight variation to the  
pattern of the back design which  
is far from obvious and may take  
time to become accustomed to  
reading quickly.

Getting the instructions is a bit  
fiddly but is a one time process.  
You need to scan a QR code,  
enter your name and email  
address, follow the emailed link,  
which is valid for nine days, and  
then download the file. There

is no video demonstration or  
performance.

The nine effects are all easy to  
perform, do not require any  
sleight of hand and follow well  
established plots in which the  
performer in some form predicts  
an outcome or, following a  
procedure with the cards, the  
spectator's outcome matches  
that of the performer. The  
one exception to this format  
is Pendulum. This requires an  
ability to read the marks on the  
back of the cards and construct  
a live narrative that justifies why  
the random movements of the  
pendulum, held by the spectator,  
finally reveals the thought of card.

Which of the nine most appeals  
probably depends upon your  
presentational style. Some, like  
Shuffle Coincidence, involve  
quite a lot of process. My own  
preferences were for the shorter  
more direct effects. One Ahead  
V1 gives the spectator the power  
to discern which card is laid on  
the table and provides a clean  
final match. Of all, a Message For

You, using only three cards, is  
the one I'll most likely perform.  
Using the marking system and a  
subtle step in the presentation,  
a written prediction exactly  
matches where the spectator  
'freely' places the three cards.

Several effects require a prior set  
up utilising one or more of the  
gimmicked cards which does  
mean that they need to be stand  
alone effects. You can of course  
just use the regular E.S.P. cards for  
any of your existing routines, and  
with the built in marking system  
and the variety of gimmicked  
cards, there are almost certainly  
more effects that could be  
developed. At £27 it does seem a  
little on the pricey side. **SB**

**WHAT'S HOT:** some clean direct  
effects and the potential to  
develop more

**WHAT'S NOT:** marking system  
needs a keen eye to read.  
Occasionally the English  
instructions need a moment's  
thought to understand what is  
intended.

**RATING:** 70%



## THIS IS THE PLACE

**Cameron Francis download**

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

**Price: £9.99**

Cameron Francis has travelled  
back in time to discover an age  
old self-working principle from  
the books of Professor Hoffmann.  
Nowadays, it would be quite  
transparent to a semi observant

spectator, so he has added a  
subtlety that adds a next-level of  
deception to the concept.

This gives it a brand new lease of  
life and turns it into a deceptive,  
self-working (apart from  
controlling a card to the top)  
fun method that is adaptable to  
a number of well-known card  
plots like the Open Prediction,  
Coincidence effects, and even  
Card At Any Number, would you  
believe.

Add to that, being virtually  
impromptu, and "easier than  
falling off a log," and you have  
four great effects on this 28  
minute download. All four  
effects are well explained with a  
performance of each one. They all  
follow a similar procedure and are  
easy to begin performing.

Kicking off with 'Destination', a  
spectator remembers a card and

chooses a place, town or country  
they would like to visit. The place  
is spelt using the cards and the  
final card turned over, along with  
the card on the bottom of the  
packet and the top card of the  
pack, and all prove not to be the  
chosen card. Reassembling the  
deck, the spectator tries it spelling  
to their destination and finds the  
final card dealt is their chosen  
card.

'Coincidence' follows a similar  
procedure by both magician  
and spectator at the same time  
resulting in the mate cards  
turning up in the same place in  
both packets.

Similarly, an easy-peasy way of  
presenting the Open Prediction  
uses the same procedure. An  
unknown card is placed on the  
table, and cards dealt to the  
spectator's number first by the  
magician arrives at the wrong

card, but when the spectator deals  
they arrive at the card matching  
the prediction.

The least impromptu application  
is a four Ace production which  
again is successfully done by  
the spectator with a minor  
preparation that's easy to set up as  
you introduce the trick. You will  
enjoy playing with this simple,  
updated principle which is more  
fun than falling off a log. It won't  
break your leg or break the bank!  
**PP**

**WHAT'S HOT:** a self-working  
principle that is adaptable to  
many card plots. Four different  
tricks explained using the  
principle. Use any deck. Easy and  
enjoyable to perform. Good value  
**WHAT'S NOT:** may not engage the  
typical 'move monkey'!

**RATING:** 75%



## Recent Additions To E-Club Pro Select



**The Purser** - using two ungimmicked purses and a couple of coins, you create an impossible effect in which the coins magically swap places and even jump from pocket to purse. No real sleight of hand required, this is very clean magic.

**Printable** - straight from my current working repertoire, this walkabout up-in-hands-effect enables four double blank cards to print themselves one at a time to match a freely selected card. Reset is quick and can be done in front of the spectators.



**Amazon Predictor** - you claim that Amazon can predict what book you will purchase next in advance of you placing the order. A title is randomly chosen from 7 potential books and it turns out to be the exact book already wrapped in an Amazon delivery box.

**Ribbon Spread Reverse** - A freely chosen and signed card is shuffled back into a deck which is then ribbon spread face down across the table. Flipping the spread over one card instantly is seen to reverse itself and it is the chosen card.



*Each of the above download routines costs **£7.00** and they are part of the current selection of 10 effects extracted from the E-Club Pro vaults. For dems go to the link at the page top.*

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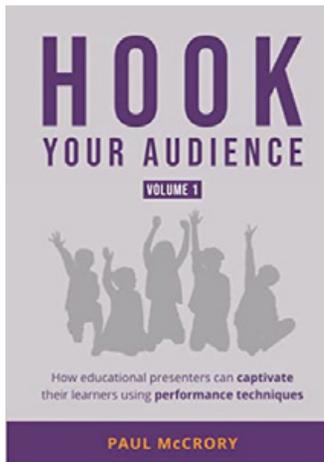
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**UNLUCK** by Chris Rawlins

*"A clever principle for clever performers."* - R. Paul Wilson

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## HOOK YOUR AUDIENCE

**Paul McCrory**

Available from [www.hooktraining.com](http://www.hooktraining.com) and [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)

**Price: £20.00**

Paul McCrory is an amateur magician based in Northern Ireland, but his 'real' job is as an informal educator i.e. he teaches young children outside of a regular classroom via more informal presentations in settings such as libraries etc. This large soft backed book running to over 300 pages is directed at fellow informal educators and is designed as a manual to help them put across

their subjects in a manner that will both captivate the youngsters and also help the content to hit home.

Paul has a training arm to his business (Hook Training) which provides general instruction to fellow presenters too, and with over 20 years experience Paul definitely knows what he is talking about. This book sets out clearly and logically everything an informal educator needs to know in order to present effectively, and as such it is a real goldmine of practical and thoughtful advice and tips.

So you might wonder what all this has to do with you as a magician! Well, being a magician Paul very much takes an entertainer's approach to his presentations, and nearly all of the advice he dispenses is completely relevant to children's and family entertainers. He talks knowledgeably about how to create a performance character (see the extract we featured in issue 100), he analyses show content in order to help people to make it all lively and engaging to the audience, he advises how to avoid performing

in a jaded or uninspiring manner, talks about the importance of audience involvement, how to get the most out of volunteers, and the best ways to use humour.

Although in some ways this is a technical handbook, it is written in a clear and very readable style. The connections with magic are regularly reinforced through his use of pertinent quotes from many of the top names in magic, and his personal stories about funny/disastrous things that have happened to him over the years and the lessons that can be learned from the experiences, are a valuable and entertaining aspect of the book.

Sometimes magicians expend all their energy on learning new tricks while ignoring some of the often more important underlying presentational skills that go to make a complete and well rounded performance. Hook Your Audience, if read with your thinking cap on, will help you to consider whether your current approach is the best it could be. You may not want to be an informal educator, but the

overlaps between what magicians do and what good educators do are many and varied, and in the same way that Paul's experience as a magician has probably enabled him to be a good educator, so his advice can work back the other way for you.

I think this is an excellent book full of relevant, useful ideas and advice. It is written in an entertaining style by someone who clearly has experience and knowledge to pass on and at the price, this book is certainly worth reading and absorbing even if it doesn't have any tricks in it! **ML**

**WHAT'S HOT:** pertinent, relevant performance advice of huge benefit to kid show and family entertainers

**WHAT'S NOT:** the content is aimed at informal educators so at times requires you to use your imagination a little in order to appreciate how it could apply to you as a magician

**RATING:** 85%



## MODERN CARD TO WALLET INSTA

**Patrick Kun/Quiver**

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

**Price: £57 (approx)**

With so many Card to Wallet wallets on the market I am always intrigued when a new one is released. Will it have something better than my current wallet I have been using for many years? Let's take a look at Patrick Kun's latest and see...

Measuring 12cm x 9cm the Modern Card to Wallet (MCTW)

is a nice sized hip style wallet that isn't too large. It has space for five credit cards, one zippered pocket along with a metal clip for holding notes. There is no separate compartment for notes like a regular wallet. There is also a compartment on the outside to hold a business card, for example.

This is a Card to Wallet and the MCTW offers two solutions to this problem. The first is the standard load from the outer side of the wallet. A slide is built in to help aid the loading. The card is revealed in the zippered pocket. This is quite tight to remove which I actually quite like as it makes it even more unbelievable it has got in there.

The second method uses a principle I first saw used by Mark

Mason's Mirage Deck, the Insta. Will Tsai's Cash Out also uses something similar. The gimmick is built into the wallet but it's worth bearing in mind that if used it takes up one of the credit card slots. What's nice about this set up though is that a card can be shown in the wallet from the start. No palming/loading is required and the gimmick has a locking system making sure it doesn't activate prematurely. The gimmick could also be adapted to be used for a Confabulation style routine.

You are also supplied with a second smaller wallet which can be used to house a couple of packet tricks and three half dollar sized coins. This fits inside the MCTW or can be used separately.

As seems standard these days,

online instructions are supplied. Patrick runs through everything about the wallet and how to set up the Insta gimmick along with basic routines. There's also a nice driver's licence switch routine taught which will appeal to many, I'm sure.

The MCTW is really nice to use and if you're a wallet junkie then this is certainly worth your attention. **PS**

**WHAT'S HOT:** extremely well made with two options for Card to Wallet.

**WHAT'S NOT:** nothing really negative to report

**RATING:** 90%



## NAYPES

**Robert Mansilla**

Hardback book 174 pages A5

Available from:

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

**Price: £25.00**

First published in Spanish in 2011, "Naypes" (Playing Cards) written by Argentinian magician Robert Mansilla has now been translated by Rafael Benatar and Peter Cobb and is available as a nicely produced, small format hardback.

There are several things that make this book special. Throughout the text the author weaves in reflections on his influences (Juan Tamariz,

Gabi Pareras, Rene Levand) and sometimes these expand into short essays and form the meat of an interesting interview by Helder Guimaraes.

The focus is exclusively on classic card plots in a parlour setting with methods tailored to that environment, taking advantage of the formal conditions and seated audience. This means the effects are often cleaner and stronger than repurposed close up routines. For example, "Outstanding" simplifies "Out Of This World" by using a deck comprising of only red faced cards and cleanly switching one of the packets for all blacks.

Several routines use the "Rashomon Principle" (a term coined by T.A Waters to describe what Kenton Knepper later coined as "Dual Reality") where the same sequence of events is perceived differently by individual

spectators, the commonest example being the Tossed Out Deck or the Al Koran Linking Finger Rings.

This principle is applied to The General Card plot in "Everybody's Card IV" where a Joker apparently changes identity to match in turn each of three chosen cards. In "Thanks To Diaconis" three cards are set aside and three cards selected from the balance of the pack. The three cards set aside are fanned and each spectator confirms their card is not present. One by one each of the cards transforms into the three selected cards.

In "What Does Oblivion Look Like" the four cards set aside at the start are blank and later transform to match four selected cards. The "Dual Reality" in play makes these plots very clean and apparently impossible.

The line up of routines is completed by a clean ACAAN, Card in Envelope, Cards Across where two and a half cards transpose, two routines based on Karl Germain's reversing a wine glass principle and "Sunrise", a revelation of three cards thought of from small handed out packets.

To sum up, this is a thought provoking and absorbing book with material that inspires. **CP**

**WHAT'S HOT:** elegant, classic card routines tailored for maximum impact in parlour conditions. Refreshing insight into the influence of the Spanish school of card magic

**WHAT'S NOT:** nothing really, provided you are interested in performing parlour card magic  
**RATING:** 80%



## TRIO

**The Other Brothers**

Available from

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

**Price: £52.50**

If you are a parlour or stand up performer who enjoys presenting lightweight mentalism, this latest offering from The Other Brothers might provide something of interest. As the title suggests, Trio is a triple prediction routine that is simple to do and which has the capability to be customised once you understand the main method.

In the sizeable box supplied with this routine you receive a large card mailing envelope which will house your prediction, a set of 19 A4 sized composite colour pictures which will provide you

with a multiple out at the finale to the trick, and a black cloth ungimmicked drawstring bag. There is also the ubiquitous url to the 32 minute online video instructions.

In the presentation using the props supplied, three spectators are invited, in three different ways, to suggest a famous person, an animal and a piece of fruit. When the prediction card is slid from the envelope, the famous selected person is shown riding on the chosen animal holding the correct piece of fruit. This is a slightly bizarre combination of elements which bears little or no scrutiny in terms of logic, but which might provide some traction for a bit of comedy.

The bag is used to force one of the three prediction elements in a way that is quite clever and simple. You could just use a change bag, but I suspect for reasons of simplicity of production and to reduce costs, the creators have concocted a method using a regular bag. I

wasn't totally convinced by this as it left the outside of the bag looking a bit odd, but in stand up conditions no one is going to remark on it.

The second element also has to be forced and on the instructional video, which sees Matthew Wright explaining everything, he recommends two or three different ideas from both The Other Brothers and himself. There are actually many potential possibilities and since nothing tangible is provided in the kit you will have to go either with what you may already have, or that you decide to put together. The third and final element (the fruit) is a genuine free choice and the envelope provides the multiple out necessary.

Matthew Wright explains on the video how he has changed the prediction elements to personalise the trick to himself, and you could potentially go down your own individual route too. Obviously you would have to produce all the

necessary artwork etc yourself but it would at least allow you to create a theme with which you might feel more comfortable.

As with so many mental effects, there is quite a lot of procedure in order to arrive at a selection of just three choices, and that procedure needs an experienced performer to add the necessary presentation if the whole sequence is not to come across as longwinded and unnatural. The effect is not particularly strong, I feel, but if lightweight mentalism is your thing then there is a certain novelty about this which could make it an attractive addition to your stand up show. **ML**

**WHAT'S HOT:** simple to do and a novel, albeit somewhat quirky, plot

**WHAT'S NOT:** not an especially strong piece of mentalism, and the procedure feels a little like a sledgehammer to crack a nut

**RATING:** 55%

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## David's Bottle

by David Regal & PropDog - £74.99



David's Bottle, is an extremely clever gimmicked bottle created by David Regal and written about and explained in David's amazing book - *Interpreting Magic* (page 453).

The wine bottles David recommends to use for the effect need adapting and require tools that most people do not have. David recommends finding a craftsman to adapt the bottle, then explains how you can make the rest of the gimmick yourself.



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## Giant Comedy Appearing Foam Bananas

by PropDog - £20.00



These huge soft foam bananas are expertly hand made by PropDog in the London workshop and each one measures about 13". They are not carved or cut, but are moulded from a real plantain with the upmost attention to detail. The low density foam allows them to be squeezed to a really small size, as seen on the photos, meaning they are great for comedy productions. Perfect for both kids entertainers and adult comedy magicians.



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