

MAGIC

SEEN

Lite

ISSUE 17



THE SENTIMENTALISTS

HOLD ONTO YOUR BRAIN CELLS

'Jay Fortune is a magical painter whose art captures powerful images of the magic world. Now YOU can own these artworks and make them part of your home or office. We are inspired by his art... you will be too!' – Jeff McBride

The Golden *Art* of Magic Project

Abracadabra means 'it is created as it is spoken'. So, let me put it out there... It's a long-term project, but I have begun a series of studies of magicians from the Golden Age of Magic with the intention of making the finished set as the court cards in a collectible deck of cards. Now the hard part; making it a reality!

My other goal with this ornamental deck is to take an inclusive look at the Golden Age. Perhaps more of a Rainbow Age of Magic (hmm... maybe the final title!) where I could showcase some of the lesser known performers from that era.

To that end, I've been raiding my library and picking the expert minds of those in our Art who know the history of mystery. And my research has illuminated many magicians who I'd never even heard of.

One such person was Ellen Amstrong (huge thanks and shout-out to Jim Magus for being a brilliant source of knowledge here). Jim sent me some stunning photos and, from his collection, I created this study of Ellen.

What I love about this painting is the life in her eyes. Working from old photographs usually means it's difficult to see details so my job as an artist is to define those missing characteristics and bring these magical figures of yesteryear to life through paint.

Hopefully, Ellen will be one of the Queens in the finished deck.



With 12 Court Cards to be done, it does mean limiting the number of magicians I can include in the final deck. (I could paint 52 portraits but I'd be in an urn by the time I got round to doing that many - ha!). Rest assured a few big hitters will make their appearance.

Here's my study of Kellar based on a beautiful photograph from Mike Caveney's collection (Thanks Mike!). I can already envision this painting reduced onto a playing card with the pips and borders added.

Each study takes around two weeks, so I hope to have the final set completed by late Spring 2022. After that, it'll be a case of making the deck appear... like magic!

What do you think? A good idea?

If you'd like to stay updated on how the project develops and to offer suggestions for who to include in the final 12 for the deck, please join my VIP Private email list via the yellow box at the top of my site. Jayfortune.co.uk. Thank you.

In other works... I'm working on a portrait of Uri Geller. Working in collaboration with Uri, the finished portrait will be counter-signed by him and auctioned through his foundation raising money for good causes. To see the work and updates, please check out my socials: [instagram.com/mrjayfortune](https://www.instagram.com/mrjayfortune) [facebook.com/jayfortuneartist](https://www.facebook.com/jayfortuneartist)

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Published by Magicseen



Hello, thank you for downloading the latest taster edition of Magicseen Magazine. Each time we publish an edition of Magicseen Lite we have to decide what selection of content we are going to choose in order to give you the best representation of what the full magazine has to offer. On this occasion I think we've managed to select just the right balance of features and articles.

First up is the full feature on issue 102's cover stars The Sentimentalists, whose stylised presentation of mentalism marks them out as a truly different type of act. Find out all about them inside.

COVID has affected everyone over the last two years in a variety of ways, and in this issue, in an article entitled Impact, we give you the situation from the perspective of a professional children's entertainer. And talking of kid show workers, the trick we have chosen from the Masterclass is a big feature routine for children's entertainers from Pat Fallon called Crime Doesn't Pay. Magicseen loves nothing better than to get input from top performers, and so we are very happy to have got permission to include an article from the late Eugene Burger on how to decide what tricks to include in your act.

Shop Talk is an occasional series in which we give one of our regular advertisers the chance to talk about their business, magic in general and in fact anything else that they want to get off their chest! This time it is the turn of Nathan Buzza from Illuminati Magic.

Finally, as always, we cherry pick a few of the reviews from our extensive Product Review section to help keep you abreast of what is worth spending your money on.

If you enjoy this edition of Magicseen Lite, don't forget that this is only a selection of SOME of the content from the latest issue. You can get the full, tip top, no-holds-barred, rip roaring version from us by way of a 6 month, 1 year or 2 year printed copy or download sub, or by simply buying the stand alone issue in either format too. So go on, you know you want to!

Mark Leveridge

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Every Monday at 7:30pm UK time (8:30pm German time) we stream LIVE on our Card-Shark YouTube Channel.

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Card Shark

MASTERPIECES A LA CARD



THE SENTIMENTALISTS

Mind Games

World-renowned celebrity mentalist 'Mysterion' teams with mentalist Steffi Kay, creating a two-person mind-reading experience that is truly breathtaking. With her vintage look, Steffi brings back the style of classic mentalism, transporting you back to the golden age of magic.

Mysterion has appeared on stages around the globe and has made hundreds of television and media appearances. Together, they showcase their special way of communicating with a touch of humour, and most importantly, class!

The Sentimentalists are one of the hottest acts in world magic at the moment. They're fresh, stylish and brilliant!

Graham Hey asks the questions, without trying to look into their eyes...

How would you describe your act?

Steffi (S) - We are a golden age of magic style two-person mind reading act with a modern touch while still adding a pinch of vaudeville. We are friends who enjoy each other's company and bring our very different personalities to the stage. We both have the same shared love to create wonder for everyone we meet.

Mysterion (M) - A real classic two-person mentalism act, what we do onstage we can do offstage. Unlike the current style, we use no assistants or electronics to achieve our results. We really are like we stepped out of a music hall in 1920s NYC. A little eerie and a lot of fun.

M - I view the show as a glimpse into another time and world. A place to leave logic at the door and experience the supernatural happening. I am a huge fan

of horror movies and creepy lore and want to bring everything that is in that genre to this world. I don't get involved in the ethics, it's about enjoyment. There are bigger establishments that cause more negative impact on humanity than a mentalism show, and I believe the audience understand that it's a show. The juxtaposition of our styles makes a perfect good cop, bad cop dynamic and it works.

What are your roles in the act?

S - On stage I am the "All knowing". Off stage I write, compose and am constantly researching to improve and grow the act.

M - My role is to invisibly communicate with Steffi while also entertaining the audience and participants. Gauging the crowd and choosing in the moment the best way to direct the material. I steer the direction of the show, loosely-scripted, as no two shows are ever the same - even in the same venue during a run. Acts who rely entirely on script and a strict set list of effects can quickly find themselves in hot water with an unruly audience or spectator. I learned on burlesque stages and in loud venues and can keep a crowd attentive because of that experience.

What are the major difficulties in doing a double-act?

S - Finding the right person to work with is key to the success of a double act. Once you have that you can easily overcome difficulties and learn fast. Because you are working with the same person there are two people accountable for the outcomes. That means we rely on one another to be accurate and clear at ALL times.

M - It's challenging to find a naturalness and not appear robotic which can happen when using specific language in this type of act.

We also have to choose props that are not "magicky" and keep things looking as least gimmicky as possible.

How do you decide which effects to do?

S - We choose effects to make the show look as real and invisible as possible. If a mentalist was truly reading a thought, they wouldn't need props to do so.

M - I prefer to work with what a participant has on them. We have tools to use during the show, but they need to



Finding the right person to work with is key to the success of a double act. Once you have that you can easily overcome difficulties and learn fast.

I grew up watching comedians like Benny Hill, Phil Silvers and others and listening to old comedy records by artists like Red Foxx and Dave Allan.





look natural and almost an afterthought. That's how these acts should be done, elaborate props come across as suspicious.

Tell us about how you add comedy to your effects/act – do you have a process that you follow? How do you work together?

S - It's just us. Everything we do or say is a natural reaction. I am usually trying not to be funny so when I get a laugh from a line, I will take it. My comedy is circumstantial, and in-the-moment and I am the same onstage as off.

M - I grew up watching comedians like Benny Hill, Phil Silvers and others and listening to old comedy records by artists like Red Foxx and Dave Allan. I always work clean but can easily snap with the wit of a viper. Wrestling also plays a big part in my patter. Managers like the late Bobby Heenan had lines that were straight from Vaudeville and a wit like no other. As "non funny" as Steffi feels she is, she is actually brilliantly funny and has great lines at the least expected times.



Which performers do you love?

S - David Kovak, Laura London, Danny Cole

M - Todd Robbins, Ward Hall, Doug Henning, Steve Martin, Amazing Jonathan, Kreskin, The Piddingtons, Johnny Thompson, the list is huge. Dracula, Vincent Price, Zabrecky, John Zacherlie, Peter Cushing...

We are loving the hair (especially 'Mysterion's'!!) have you ever heard of UK celebrity Dickie Davies??

M - World of Sport. Big Daddy, Giant Haystacks, Kendo Nagasaki. I remember him introducing the British wrestling in the 80s when I would visit Ireland. I heard his white stripe is bleached though :). My influence is Mad Doctors and Monster Makers. It also separates me in a crowd of

When we have an issue of uncertainty it's pretty easy for us to just ask one another for clarity.



others. There are many times a potential client will tell an agent “The guy with the stripe!”

How did it go at the Magic Castle? And how did that come about?

S - Excellently. There was definitely a growth as the week progressed. It was our first run since covid started and nice to be back at the castle.

M - So much fun. Being at The Castle over Halloween is pure magic. Steffi and I have worked at the castle many times but never in the Palace. We got to share the stage with Kevin James and Antonio, who I am a big fan of. Everyone enjoyed having us back after a two year hiatus. The offer to perform came about because we have been there before, and people seem to like what we bring. Initially on request of the Amazing Jonathan and his wife Sia were we first booked to work The Castle.

Most memorable gig so far?

S - I really enjoy it when we get to

perform on variety nights and I keep thinking about this one night we were on in particular, a few years ago. There was this one we did that was clown themed and everyone was dressed in clown outfits. It was wild being surrounded by clowns and then walking out to perform for them too.

M - Viva Las Vegas. Being introduced by Elvira was unreal. The place was packed and had about 3000 in attendance. You could hear a pin drop when we were on. People I grew up listening to and admiring were in attendance, and it was just surreal. Afterwards, Elvira came up to Steffi and said “Hey, you’re Steffi Kay” and it was a strange feeling to know she knew her /us!

Anything gone wrong during your act? And how did you get out of it?

S - When we have an issue of uncertainty it's pretty easy for us to just ask one another for clarity. That's why it's important for both partners to have

the same skills and be able to do one another's job. We don't use electronics so there's never any grand issues we can't resolve.

M - Things will ALWAYS go wrong. On national TV I botched the big one. So be it. You move on and make the best of the journey. I try to always have an out but, when there isn't one, laugh and move on, it's just entertainment, not brain surgery. Have fun!

Last magic book you read?

S - Some 1940s tarot reading pamphlet.

M - Maximum Entertainment 2.0 Ken Weber

Last great magic show you saw live?

S - Kevin James and Antonio Hoyos. Holy dinah, they were fantastic!

M - Kevin and Antonio. We haven't been to a live show in ages BUT they killed it.

IT'S TIME
TO SAY
THE P WORD



BEFORE WE BEGIN

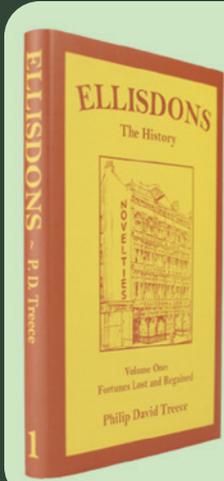
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THE EFFECT OF COVID ON THE KID SHOW MARKET

By Mark Leveridge

Years ago I was having a chat with Jeremy le Poidevin, the much missed previous owner of Practical Magic, about the state of children's entertainment in the UK, something which I felt must affect his business hugely since most of his products were aimed at kid show entertainers. He pointed out something that I hadn't fully appreciated prior to the conversation, which was that usually children's entertainers buy magic to USE, and not just for the fun of having the item itself.

When you think about it, this is very true. Whereas the vast majority of close up magic is sold to hobbyists, who often will buy the latest releases out of interest or simply because they want to own some clever gizmo or fooling effect, but not necessarily to work commercially, children's entertainers most of the time acquire props and routines with a view to going out and using them in shows.

This means that the family or kid show world is full of performers whose sole aim is to work paid gigs, either on a semi-pro basis or quite often as a means of

providing a full time living. Everything had been reasonably rosy in the garden for decades with a steady stream of families seeking live entertainment for their young children, and although in more recent times there have been challenges to the traditional children's party format from other attractions, good kid show workers have still been able to adapt and survive.

And then came COVID. The first lockdown that was put in place towards the end of March 2020 not only caused seismic ripples through society in general

around the world, it had instant and hugely damaging consequences for the children's entertainer. To get a snapshot of what the last 18 months has been like for kid show performers, we approached full time pro Johnny G from Bristol to hear what his experiences have been.

STOP GAP

Although news of the virus had been around since January 2020, the general public mainly thought at first that it might not affect the UK too badly. Nobody could have foreseen the extent to which the entire world would be brought

to a halt within a matter of weeks, but once the lockdown was announced, things suddenly changed, as Johnny explains.

"I had quite a few cancellations after the announcement of the first lockdown. Mostly for the next couple of months of bookings, as nobody was sure how long lockdown would last. But as the weeks and months progressed, more and more cancellations came in. And it soon became clear this was going to affect a whole year of events."

Not only were there restrictions on the number of people who could collect together which prevented parties from taking place, as time went on the financial implications of people being furloughed or even losing their jobs meant that spending money on hiring an entertainer was for most people too risky, even when the rules on the size of gatherings were amended.

ZOOM TO THE RESCUE?

Of course, magicians are a resilient lot, and some quickly embraced the Zoom revolution and started to offer kid shows remotely. This is not totally straightforward and requires a mastery of some technical aspects as well as possibly getting some extra equipment, plus the general public had to buy into the concept of paying for this form of party, which was not a given.

There was also the ongoing uncertainty about how long these lockdowns would last - in 2020 the general consensus was that things might be back to normal by the end of the summer, and so to go to huge efforts to create a Zoom show that might quickly become redundant, was for some performers a step too far. Johnny was one of those who avoided the temptation for financial reasons.

"I thought about Zoom, but as a father of 3 with a sizeable mortgage I had my doubts as to whether it would produce enough income to pay the bills."

CHANGE OF DIRECTION

For many close up magicians, the enforced period of idleness provided an opportunity to develop other aspects of their magic lives. Some wrote books, others created new tricks and ideas, others again took the chance to practise

or investigate properly material in books or online that normally they would not have the time to do justice to.

But for the full time kid show worker, none of this replaces the vital lost income, and Johnny explains what he was forced to do as a result.

"After 2 months of twiddling my thumbs and working on new material and praying this would all just go away, I eventually took up a delivery job, driving for Amazon. Gosh I have so much respect for these guys now, such a truly awful job. I would leave the house at 9am in the morning and wouldn't get home until gone 9pm. I am based in Bristol, but was given routes in Weymouth, Swansea, Gloucester etc. Quite a drive from picking up my parcels in Bristol."

REALITY CHECK

In issue 101 we ran an article by Wolfgang Riebe in which he extolled the virtues of financial planning for magicians, and you can see that in the unique circumstances that COVID suddenly created, how useful it would have been to have some money put away for a rainy day.

The trouble was, everyone constantly held on to the hope that the situation would quickly resolve, but as time went on and things remained totally uncertain, it was difficult for entertainers to know what to do. Should you stop marketing your shows and cut right back on your social media presence, since nobody was currently interested? Here's how Johnny approached it.

"On my days off I continued to work on my social media campaigns etc. I reduced my advertising budget, but kept it on trickle charge. I'm pleased I did now, because it seems to be paying off. And I'm now seeing the fruits of my labour with a slightly new client base I didn't have before."

THE NEW NORMAL

2021 has been a year of gradual improvement in the UK as vaccinations have been rolled out, and although COVID is still very much with us all, restrictions on live events have been relaxed. But past experience has shown that this can all very quickly change again, so I wondered whether kid show party bookings were coming in again yet.

"Initially as restrictions were lifted, bookings were slow and tentative. I offered hefty discounts to encourage bookings early on, which seemed to help. And had to really try and sell myself at times, but luckily it seemed to help.

Bookings seem now back to pre-covid days, but I sometimes have to try and reassure the odd nervous customer. They normally want to know if they would lose their deposit if the event was cancelled. I normally tell them it can just be put towards the rescheduled event."

Johnny's approach seems eminently sensible. Nobody knows exactly what form the new normal for life in general may look like, so it's natural that bookers may be a little wary at this time. But it's good that there is at least a desire to provide children with birthday parties again.

LOOKING IN THE CRYSTAL BALL

So what of 2022? Will we see a continuing improvement as society learns how to cope with the virus and its various strains? What can children's entertainers expect in the new year? Here's Johnny's view.

"It's hard to be wholly confident in the next year, especially after having the rug pulled from under one's feet already. And I'm presently keeping an eye on the difficult covid situation in Europe at the moment. But I'm certainly feeling a lot more confident than I was a few months ago. And I've always been a glass half full sort of guy."

This is probably the best that can be done, isn't it? Keeping an eye on the situation and trying to anticipate the ebbs and flows in order not to be completely caught out, has to be the way forward, and perhaps the only way to make the best of a bad job. And for Johnny, as probably for many others too, it has led to an appraisal of his life as a professional children's entertainer.

"I think I sort of took my entertainment job for granted. Like many other entertainers, I love what I do and get paid well for it. It's not long hours mostly, although they can be unsociable hours. But it is so nice to be back performing at children's birthday parties, family events, and making people smile again."

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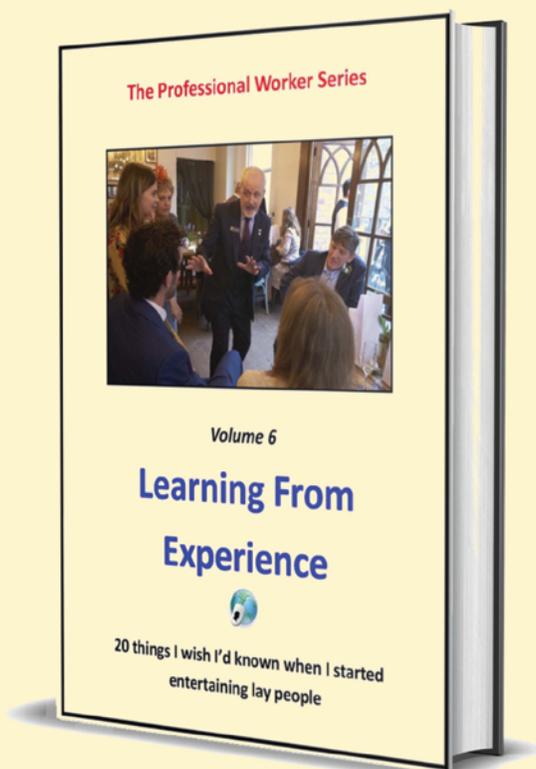


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Learning From Experience is a 44 page e-book in which I look back over my 40 years of full time professional experience and identify 20 key things about performing commercially for lay people that I wish I had known when I started.

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CRIME DOESN'T PAY

By Pat Fallon

EFFECT:

A story unfolds of how the performer on his return home from having two items, a pearl necklace and a painting valued at a local antique shop, is mugged at his front door. The thief puts those items, plus the magician's money, credit cards, silk hanky and watch into a box and makes off with the loot, not realising that the box is a special magic one.

On arriving back to his hideout, the thief discover the box is empty, except for one valueless item. All the rest of the stolen goods have vanished and are in fact already back in the magician's possession.

COMMENTS:

This effect could have been entitled 'The Hold-up for Kids' as it is essence an adaptation of 'It's a Hold-Up' which was a feature in Oswald Rae's act back in the 1950s and which has also had variations published/marked by Alan Shaxon, Tommy Wonder and Rich Marotta.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. Two identical 18" silks.
2. A Sand Frame.
3. A Himber Switch Wallet.
4. The Pearl Necklace Trick (sometimes called Rajah's Necklace).
5. A drawer box (preferably the 'clear' version as it looks so good).
6. Two identical expandable bracelet watches.
7. Two sets of identical bank notes.
8. A few out-of-date credit cards.
9. A folding plate stand to display the Sand Frame.

10. A box large enough to hold the Sand Frame. Fig.1 shows the assembled props.

PREPARATION:

The Sand Frame is an integral part of the routine but normally the one big disadvantage is that you can only show it as an empty frame at the outset. However, an adaptation of an idea published by Vannie Pule in the 'Magigram' many years ago can easily rectify this problem.

Take the box that will have the Sand Frame lying in it and cover the inside of it with black self-adhesive 'Felt Contact'. Now make a card flap of the exact size to cover the glass of the Sand Frame and cover the back of it with the same black Felt Contact. This means that when the flap drops out into the bottom of the box it will look like the base of the box and thus become invisible.

You will need two different pictures for the Sand Frame, one being a portrait of a somewhat ugly woman and the other a photograph of a pretty woman wearing a pearl necklace. One ugly woman picture will be destroyed every time you perform the effect so numerous copies of that picture will be needed. Suitable pictures for this routine can be found in auction and jewellery catalogues or of course on the web.

Begin by covering the back of the photograph of the woman wearing the necklace with some black 160-gram card, making sure that it will be a tight fit inside the back of the Sand Frame. Fix this into the frame in the correct orientation so that the photograph will be visible when the sand falls away.



Prepare one ugly woman picture by cutting it a little smaller than the inside of the frame, remembering to leave a tag at the top for ease of removal. You put this picture behind the photograph, but in the opposite orientation, before closing the back of the frame. Leave the tag sticking out as it will aid the removal of the picture during performance. Fig.2 shows the situation just before you put the back of the frame back in place.



Prepare the extra flap by laminating the second ugly woman picture, before cutting it to size to fit comfortably outside the glass of the frame, then cover the back with the black felt contact.

Holding the Sand Frame upright, you allow the sand to cover the final revelation photograph completely, before placing the laminated ugly woman picture over the glass. This creates the perfect illusion of the picture being actually inside the frame. Because this outside picture is orientated in the same direction as the duplicate picture on the inside nothing will look unusual when you remove the picture from the frame.

Into the drawer box place another well creased folded ugly woman picture between the drawer, and the inner fake of the box, before you close it prior to performance. Fig.3.

SET-UP:

Put the Sand Frame in its box with the ugly woman flap in position and place it on the stand. Set up the 'Pearl Necklace Trick' as per the original instructions and then put identical amounts of money and credit cards in either side of the switch wallet.

The two 18" silks go into the top pocket of your jacket, one above the other, so only one can

3



be seen and when it is removed your pocket will look empty. The watches go on your arm, one of which is pushed right up well out of sight, while the other is left in the normal position on your wrist. Here's the order of the props on your table from left to right. First the jeweller's stand with the necklace, next in line is the drawer box and furthest away from you is the sand frame in its box on the plate stand. The watches, silk hankies and the wallet are of course about your person.

WORKING:

I start the routine with an old Tommy Cooper gag which some younger children will not understand at first, but older children and adults certainly will. I begin by saying:

"My old auntie sent me a short note a little while ago to tell me she was one hundred and eleven years old. It was only after she died that it realised she had actually written that she was ill."

"She very kindly left me a couple of really nice things in her will, one was from the wonderful jewellers Tiffany's and the other by the famous artist Rembrandt."

As you say these words you just gesture in the general direction of the items on the table because it is vital for the success of the next gag that you do not point to anything in particular.

"I brought them both to my local antique shop to have them valued and the man in the shop told me that he had some good news and some bad news. The good news is they are both genuine articles by Tiffany's and Rembrandt, but the bad news is that Tiffany's were dreadful painters and Rembrandt never made good jewellery. I am sorry to have to tell you that they are in fact worthless."

Pick up the picture frame when you mention Tiffany's and then the necklace on the stand when you say Rembrandt so everyone understands exactly what you mean.

Looking at both in turn you continue.

"I was not sure what to do with the picture, but I felt certain that my girlfriend would like the pearl necklace."

Put them both back in their positions on your table and continue your tale by saying:

"When I arrived home that day and was walking in through my front door this scary man with a knife suddenly appeared behind me and pushed me inside."

A slight look of fear on your face as you say this helps to sell the moment.

"Stick em up and hand over all your valuables, he shouted. Give me

that hankie from your pocket and I'll put all the valuable stuff into it".

Take the silk from your top pocket and display it to the audience.

"Having taken it he complained it was not big enough, so decided to take that box instead."

Pick up the box and pull out the drawer and insert together. Make sure the duplicate picture stays hidden when you show the audience that the box is empty before putting the silk inside.

"You can have this really nice pearl necklace and this portrait of a woman I said, hoping that he would be satisfied with just them and go on his way."

Put the necklace into the box and pick up the Sand Frame. Stare at the box and then look at the frame and back to the box again. This action is to convey the message that the thief was attempting to figure out a way to get the picture frame into the box as you continue:

"You won't believe this but the idiot only tried to put the large picture frame into the small box. Of course, it would not fit so the only solution was to take the picture out of the frame. Having done this he discovered that it was still too big so, he folded it a few times before putting it into the box."

To remove the picture, place the

frame in the lower half of the carrying box, resting it slightly over one edge so it does not disappear completely from the audience's view. While you are in the process of removing the duplicate picture from inside the frame, the ugly woman flap will drop away unnoticed into the felt-lined box. Close the back of the frame and lift it away from the box making sure that the sand is totally covering the picture inside before you put it back on the stand.

Fold the picture exactly the same size as the duplicate you have hidden in the drawer box and then pop it in on top of the silk and the necklace. Casually put the lid back on the sand frame carrying box and put it away out of sight as you continue with your story.

"Give me your wallet, and I will have that nice watch as well," he said.

Take the wallet out of your pocket and attempt to put it into the box, but as it also is too big to fit you remove the credit cards and the money from it. Fold the money in half and put it in the box along with the credit cards. Finally take off your watch and put it on top of the other items in the drawer box and close it.

You are now going to recap on the events that have taken place, but in doing so you are also getting set up for the revelations to follow.

Stand facing the audience directly in front of the empty jewellery pad. Swing just the top half of your body around to pick up the pad and display it. As you return it to the table you release the duplicate necklace which should remain unseen due to the fact you are actually standing in front of it. Without changing your position pick up the wallet and show that it is empty and return it to the table.

Finally reach across and pick up the picture frame. When you turn your body to replace the frame on the stand the first finger and thumb of your other hand enters your top pocket and pulls the duplicate silk up a little.

As you begin to turn back to face the audience adjust the watch through your sleeve then pick up the drawer box and hold it about waist level in front of your body as you say:

“When the thief got back to his hideout, he opened the box to look at the loot, but all he found inside was the folded picture.”

Open the drawer box, retaining the inner fake and the duplicate folded picture will pop into view. Remove the picture, show the box otherwise empty and then put it

away. While unfolding the picture you continue:

“The thief had not realised that I was a magician and that the box was a magic one, so the only thing left was this folded picture.”

Pause for a moment before you continue.

“Where had it all gone? Well nowhere really because my handkerchief is still in my top pocket, the pearl necklace is on the stand, my money and credit cards are in my wallet, so all he got for his trouble was this ugly worthless picture. Although that is not strictly the truth, because he was caught trying to sell this picture and the judge sentenced him to five years in jail.”

Show each item is back in its

proper place in a brisk fashion, as speed adds greatly to the revelations. Don't be afraid that people may see things ahead of time, because when they are engaged in the routine they won't notice, simply because they are not looking for them.

All that remains now is for you to pick up the picture frame and hold it facing the audience in front of your body with both hands.

Having shown the empty frame, you spin it head over heels to face you. This action allows the sand to flow down revealing the hidden photograph of the woman wearing the necklace. Looking over the top of the frame towards the audience you say:

“I never really liked that picture of the ugly woman, so I think a picture

of my girlfriend wearing the pearl necklace would be so much nicer.”

Turn the frame around sideways to show the new picture and ask. *“What do you think?”*

To the audience the sudden appearance of the new picture in the frame is a cue for applause and brings the whole routine to a satisfactory conclusion.



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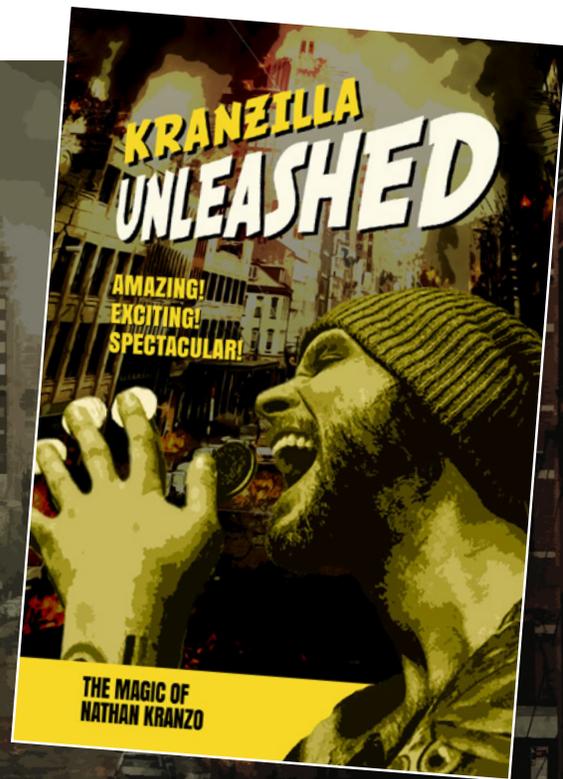
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SELECTING MAGIC TO PERFORM

By Eugene Burger

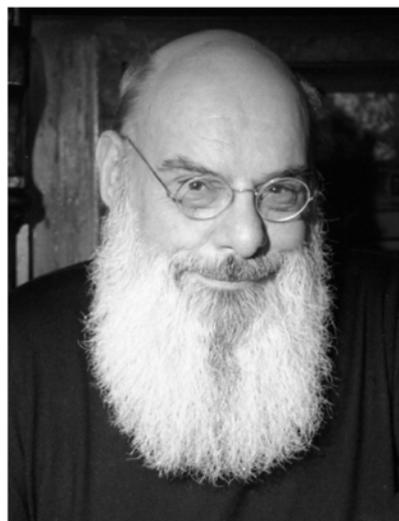
[Extracted, with permission, from Eugene Burger: Final Secrets by Lawrence Hass, Ph.D. with Additional Material by Eugene Burger. Published by Theory and Art of Magic Press, 2021. See a review of this book in the Product Reviews section of this issue]

A few years ago, purely as a personal experiment, I asked myself the following question: In order for a particular piece of magic to make it into my performing repertoire are there any criteria that must be met? What features must this particular piece of magic have—or not have—for it to be something that I would like to perform?

As I thought about it, several criteria did appear. I have noted eight criteria that must be met before I begin performing something professionally. Two years ago, I shared these criteria with the teens at the Lance Burton Teen Weekend of the World Magic Seminar. And now I shall share them with you.

The first criterion that must be met before I add a piece of magic to my repertoire is the magic effect must call to me. It must be a piece of magic that connects with me on some level so I want to perform it. When I am performing material that gives me joy to perform, the audience

It must be a piece of magic that connects with me on some level so I want to perform it. When I am performing material that gives me joy to perform, the audience “catches” my enthusiasm—just as they might catch chicken pox or any childhood disease.



EUGENE BURGER: FINAL SECRETS

“catches” my enthusiasm—just as they might catch chicken pox or any childhood disease. Enthusiasm communicates from the performer to the audience. The great twentieth century master of this was certainly Doug Henning. I think that whether a piece of magic calls to me is the most important of the criteria because if it doesn’t call to me there is no reason to add it to my repertoire.

The second criterion asks whether this piece of magic fits in my pockets. When

I perform at a corporate party, I do not carry my little box; instead, I work completely out of my pockets. So, if this piece of magic I am considering does not fit in my pockets, it does not make it into my repertoire.

The third criterion asks whether the effect under consideration requires any reset. The truth is that I have enough magic in my present repertoire that requires reset and I really do not need any more.

Fourth, to perform this effect do I need a table? Again, I have enough material that does require a table and I would rather not be burdened with more.

The fifth criterion asks if the plot of the effect is simple. There is so much magic that isn't simple to follow and, as Vernon always said, magic is not confusion. I personally want simple, easy to follow, and memorable plots.

Sixth, is the action of this effect up by my face? If I have any hope of appearing on television this is where the action is best. I am selling myself not my belt! I want myself—that is, my face—in the action. It is simply better theatre.

Seventh, if I add this piece of magic to my repertoire, will I need to check luggage on flights? I am now in the enviable situation where I can go to Europe for a month, often with material to sell, without needing to check luggage. Frankly, I would rather not trust my magic props (or clothes for that matter!) to the airlines. And there is nothing better than getting off an airplane and, without stopping and waiting for luggage, going directly to a taxi.

Eighth and finally, how many people can be in the audience for this effect? The fact is that I want a balance in my repertoire. I want material that is intimate and best performable for two or three people, but I also want material that I can perform for a thousand people. Before any effect enters my repertoire, I ask myself how many people can be in the audience.

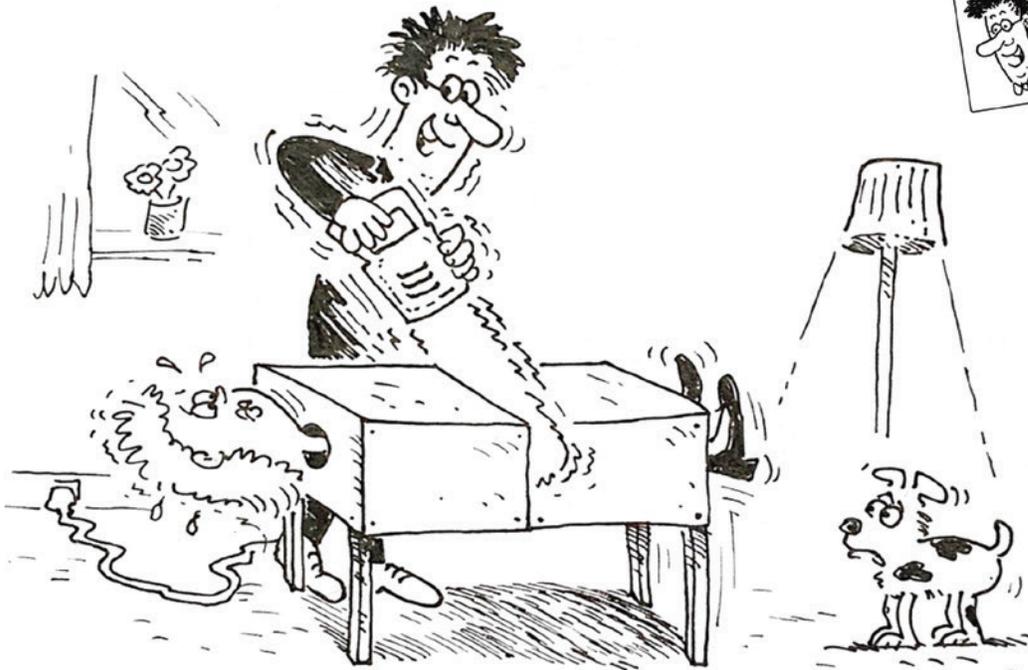
These, then, are the criteria I use when selecting material for my own repertoire. I am offering them for your reflection. I am certainly not suggesting that these criteria are perfect for you. No, on the contrary, they are but signposts on a path—the path to better magic.

Have you ever asked yourself how you go about adding material to your repertoire? If you do ask this question—if you ask it honestly—you might be surprised at the answer.

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Above and left is Magic Dave's Match.com illustration (beautifully modelled by Jay Fortune. It was either him or Graham Hey and we didn't want complaints); one of a set of four brand new mini-prints which are now available in vibrant red, yellow, green and blue.

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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.



Now, PropDog have teamed up with David to create the entire bottle gimmick for you, you get the adapted bottle, the entire gimmick professionally made by PropDog with the card included, we provide a new label for the bottle to help hide the gimmick, a cork and we even provide you with the long forceps required to retrieve the card.

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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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SHOP TALK

IN WHICH ONE OF OUR REGULAR ADVERTISERS CHATS ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS AND THE MAGIC WORLD IN GENERAL

*This time we welcome Nathan Buzza from Illuminati Magic
(www.illuminati-magic.com)*



Dear Magicseen Readers

We are delighted to be asked to contribute to this part of Magicseen, and I thought I would take this opportunity to explain

exactly what Illuminati Magic are all about for those of you who don't know us. So, here goes!

Illuminati Magic designs and manufactures electronic products

for the magic/mentalism community, with around 500 customers using the products regularly around the world.

This includes electronic dice, dominoes and poker chips that report changes in orientation and movement. Additionally, we manufacture three “Color Match” style products – ColorSense, PenSense Lite and MultiSense. We also produce RFID solutions that allow performers to hide wafer-thin RFID tags into a variety of objects.

What's your most successful product so far?

It would be a tie between Second Sight and Notifier 2. Second Sight is a highly configurable RFID Reader. You can quickly scan objects such as playing cards, postcards and lotto tickets and know which item has been selected.

Notifier 2 is an electronic peek device that features a high-resolution display and a haptic vibrate motor. Notifier 2 is compatible with all Illuminati Magic products and integrates with several vendors, including Promystic, InSight & Kinetic Dice. Notifier 2 also works with Inject, WikiTest, IUYM, Let's Draw Pro, Pi Revelation, Vision Tricks, Cognito and more than a dozen other magic Apps.

How did you get involved in designing magic/mentalism props?

I previously owned a business called CommtechWireless, which was a multinational electronics and software company. No doubt every reader of Magicseen would have used one of our products at some point in their life. The business had multiple divisions; healthcare, hospitality, Homeland Security, and hundreds of thousands of devices deployed worldwide.

In 2007, the United States Secret Service approached us to develop a mobile duress system for the President of the United States and the first family. As you can imagine, this was a multi-million-dollar contract for us – but not that far off from what Illuminati Magic does today. Discreetly disguised radio transmitters, with multiple sensors to covertly report events via hidden earpieces... sound familiar?

We sold the business in 2008, and I moved back to Australia and set up two firms; Allure Capital, which invests in technology companies, and Illuminati Magic.

How has COVID affected the business?

COVID had a profound impact on both our business and the magic community. Our core customers were the full time,



No doubt every reader of Magicseen would have used one of our products at some point in their life. The business had multiple divisions; healthcare, hospitality, Homeland Security, and hundreds of thousands of devices deployed worldwide.

professional magicians – however, with lockdowns and social distancing measures in place, the professional performers were impacted directly. As a result, we had to pivot the business from a higher margin, low volume business to a low margin, high volume business and target semi-professional and hobbyist magicians.

Additionally, supply lines were severely impacted – and remain severely impacted. We have seen a 40% increase in component prices, and often the delivery time for components has blown out from four weeks to six months. In some cases, we are receiving delivery estimates of 12 months – I have no doubt that this will translate to increased prices across the magic community in 2022.

On a positive note, we have an unprecedented level of demand for the products. Just in the last two months, we have seen the world come roaring back as social distancing restrictions are relaxed, and vaccination rates improve, enabling performers to get back to performing!

What new products do you have in development?

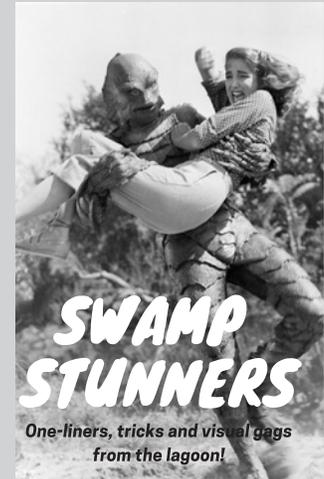
We generally keep product development

pretty tightly under wraps – but there is one product that I am particularly excited about that will revolutionise card magic. I know that this seems like a very bullish statement to make – but the product instantly knows the order of a deck as soon as a spectator has shuffled the cards! In fact, it does a lot more than this; you know which cards have been removed, added, turned upside down or rotated 180 degrees. What’s even crazier is that there are no electronics in the deck!

We developed the proof of concept in 2017 and applied for a patent in May 2018. It is a technically challenging product to design. We needed technology to catch up with the innovation before investing too heavily in product development.

I have been a huge fan of David Berglas, and this product allows for the ACAAN effect, BUT with one very important caveat – the deck can be shuffled and squared up by the spectator!

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WHAT'S HOT WHAT'S NOT

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



4K COLOR VISION

Brent Braun

Available from any Murphy's retailer or dealers contact www.murphysmagic.com

Price: £18

Colour Vision was invented by Martin L. Sunshine (Kismet) 90 years ago and has been reincarnated in dozens of forms, from the cheapest of plastic models to versions in handcrafted wood. The magician turns away while a spectator drops a die into

a square snug box, with one of six colours on top. An opaque lid is fitted and the box handed to the magician who instantly knows the upper colour. This version uses clever routing and an extra principle to greatly strengthen the effect.

The props are well made in plastic, with the blue box allowing a smooth one handed handling. The dice provided are just under 1" square and the coloured circles fully flush and likely to wear well.

The second principle in play allows an extra step in the routine, where the spectator drops the die into the box behind their back. They place the box on the table

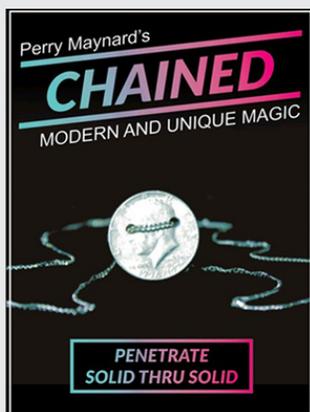
and the magician knows the colour selected, without touching, or even looking. The method is ultra simple, with no electronics or high tech involved.

The explanation video is 30 minutes long and clearly explains everything involved. Basic handling skills are required. **CP**

WHAT'S HOT: a cleverly routined enhancement to a standard prop. Likely to fool those in the know. Examinaible, inexpensive. Could be used as part of a multiphase or Confabulation routine

WHAT'S NOT: needs a good presentation to lift it from feeling like a puzzle with a toy

RATING: 60%



CHAINED

Perry Maynard

Available from any Murphy's retailer or dealers contact www.murphysmagic.com

Price: £43.00

In this effect an American half dollar, hanging from a chain around the performer's neck, is cleanly and visibly unlinked and dropped into a spectator's hands. Just as cleanly the coin is then linked back onto the chain.

The performance you see in the promotional video, apart perhaps from the spectator's reaction, is pretty much exactly how Chained will look when you perform.

In a twenty minute video Perry Maynard provides very easy to follow instructions for each of four possible phases.

The claims that Chained is "easy to do" and can be "mastered in minutes" are both true. The gimmicks provided and the very clear explanation make this simple to learn and with a few minutes practice you should be ready to go. Chained is suitable for most close up situations, in walk around, at tables or for small groups, and is, perhaps with the exception of the final phase, more or less angle free.

Once removed and dropped into the spectator's hand the coin and the chain can be examined.

The coin is not examinable when threaded onto the chain except at the end of the fourth phase and it is this last phase which is a bit contrived. Once the coin has been removed for the second time and is being examined by a spectator, the chain has to be lifted and dropped underneath your shirt or tee shirt. The coin is then folded into the shirt and held by a spectator's finger. As you pull on your shirt the coin apparently penetrates the shirt. Once the chain is removed from under your shirt the coin is seen securely threaded and only at that point can it be examined. At no time, without this last step, can the coin be closely examined while on the chain.

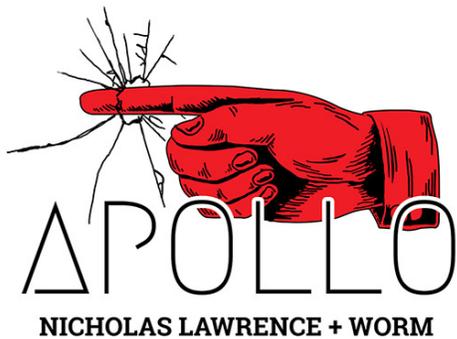
A lot of things we use in performance, metal rings, sponge balls, Chinese coins etc make no real sense, so I suppose wearing an American coin threaded onto a silver chain, medallion

like, is not that different, but it still felt a bit odd to me. To some degree this is covered in the instructions when it is suggested that as a justification you construct a presentation suggesting that the coin holds a special significance for you. Some commentators have suggested that something in their local currency would help, personally I can't see that would make much difference, as in the UK a threaded 50 pence piece would make no more sense than the American currency. **SB**

WHAT'S HOT: removing and apparently re-threading the coin onto the chain is easy to do and quite visual. It is an effect that does not require much skill and can be easily learnt

WHAT'S NOT: the coin can only be examined while threaded onto the chain after the fourth rather convoluted phase

RATING: 65%



APOLLO

Nicholas Lawrence & Worm

Available from any Murphy's retailer or dealers contact www.murphysmagic.com

Price: £26.00

Upon seeing the performance of Apollo, I immediately thought of Simon Lovell's 'Hyperpoke' routine where you thrust your finger into the pack, puncturing half the deck to find a chosen card.

Apollo is a one-card finger (or thumb) penetration.

You receive a well-made gimmick which is incorporated into any standard deck of Bikes. My initial thought was that here was just another piece of magic that would only work on social media. But... after watching the full tutorial (30 mins) with several presentations and thoughts offered, I re-evaluated my opinion.

This is an intriguing gimmick. The basic effect is that you show a single playing card, then using your thumb or finger, you visually puncture it and show it cleanly on both sides (there is a discrepancy with the thumb penetration as the

pierced bits of card face the wrong way, but this is minor and, with a well-structured routine, would by-pass most spectators).

Once shown with your finger poking right through the centre of the card, you pull it out and the card visually restores.

The first performance on the tutorial is my preferred one. A napkin is used and the card and napkin are punctured by your finger. The punctured card is then shown with a hole through it (nicely jagged too, so adds a sense of realism). The napkin is then wiped on the card and the card is shown restored. This 'covered' puncture-and-restoration is stronger to me than the visual restoration as the heat is shared between the napkin and the card, whereas in the card-only penetration, all the heat is on the card. Which is heavily gimmicked.

The gimmicked card can be swapped using a top change or any switch you prefer.

So, where can this be used besides social media? A parlour show would be ideal, with the audience at a little distance. I think it could be worked close-up but, in low-light, some of the gimmick's workings can be seen as shadows cast where they shouldn't!

I have to confess to being at odds in giving this one a final score. I believe it is a reasonable idea, well made and has potential. But with more minds working with it and creating new handlings, this could be a really neat effect which may find its way into the repertoire of many magicians. And on that hope, I conclude this should be in the 'good' score. **JF**

WHAT'S HOT: well made, clear tutorials and potential to be a commercial worker

WHAT'S NOT: needs structured handling and performance to really sell this in close-up situations beyond the non-audience social media environment.

RATING: 65%



JOKES FOR MAGIC TRICKS

Wolfgang Riebe – download

Available from www.wolfgangriebe.com

Price: £5.00

Having a stock of sparkling repartee when performing magic often helps to sugar the pill. Being

annoyingly baffled by magic is not always the greatest feeling so helping your audience to enjoy it by giving them some verbal witticisms can at least make the experience a funny one and bring a smile to the occasion! That's the plan, but you have to choose your lines well.

Wolfgang Riebe has written quite a few joke books and his latest one, at 39 pages with 40 different subject headings, will give you over 300 lines to choose from. The fact is that you have to sift through thousands of lines to find the exact ones that suit your personality. Tommy Cooper bought thousands of jokes every year and only used a very small percentage of them.

Some are aimed at specific tricks like the egg bag (A chicken and an egg walk into a bar and the barman asks, "okay, who's first?"),

and the guillotine trick (Think how famous we'll be if this doesn't work!) but most are aimed at types and genres of magic like mentalism (I told my psychiatrist that I think I am psychic. He asked me when this started? I replied, "Saturday, next week!") or money (My bank manager loves me. He told me that my credit card balance is outstanding!).

It's all in the timing, delivery and attitude of course. One man's joke is another man's groan. A lot of the lines in this book are puns which are often more painful to hear than funny but select a line that is not too obvious with a surprise ending, and if it suits your personality, it should work.

Wolfgang couldn't resist including a few old ones (This trick is so dangerous, even the rope's afraid) and it has to be said many are as funny as ones found in a

Christmas cracker, in fact some aren't as funny as the ones in a Christmas cracker!

I have actually found a few I could use, but my problem is first remembering them and then remembering when to say them! If you are looking for a few comical lines to match a trick you are doing you might find something here to suit, but like all joke books, be prepared to reject the majority. **PP**

WHAT'S HOT: over 300 one liners to choose from 40 different subject headings

WHAT'S NOT: too many puns and a few very old ones. Mostly, the style sounds a little dated

RATING: 40%



DANI DAORTIZ MASTERCLASS LIVE

Dani DaOrtiz

Running time 6 hrs plus
Available from
www.vanishingincmagic.com

**Price: £60 for individual
download (£50 as part of
monthly subscription)**

A theatrical friend described Dani DaOrtiz as a “creator of joy” after watching him perform live to a huge audience. Although English speaking magicians have had wide access to his routines, much of the thinking and theory behind his devastating magic has only been available to Spanish speakers. His 2009 book on forcing has recently been translated into English and in this masterclass he explains ideas from classes and lectures previously only delivered in Spanish.

Before you reach for your credit card be aware there are quite large issues with this production. The masterclass was transmitted live, split over three separate 2+ hour sessions. The first focuses on Triumph, the second unpacks much theory under the heading “Spectator Point of View” and the final session has a short Q+A but includes a 90 minute section on forcing.

The filmed quality is good with Dani switching live between different camera shots and playing footage of live performances. Unfortunately a few of the clips lack sound, at least one lacks both sound or subtitles. The third masterclass has a particularly

noticeable (2 second) sound lag which makes much of the live footage of timing forces hard to follow.

The first session on Triumph opens with a performance of Dani’s Open Triumph and then moves on to talk about the psychology and techniques available to give Triumph maximum impact. This is a treasure house of false shuffles, convincers, a really simple half packet turn, alternative methods and explanation of Dani’s own routine. The techniques all fit with the loose, casual, Lennart Green inspired style of card handling rather than neat, tight riffle shuffles. Handlings are described relatively briefly.

If you do Triumph, or would like to, there will be material here to adopt. Of equal interest is the thread of thinking and psychology running through it. Ideas covered include the importance of chaos, appealing to the “rational”, “sensitive” and “emotional” parts of the spectator, keeping the plot very clear, having visual convincers right up to the last minute, whether to spread the cards face up or down at the end (you may be surprised) and much more.

It is in this first class that some of the barriers to understanding become apparent. Firstly, Dani’s delivery is heavily accented, excited, enthusiastic, occasionally tangential and repetitive. Fortunately each session has a QR code which leads to a structured summary of points covered, and this is an essential reference.

It also helps with understanding some of the specialised words that Dani uses. For example, Dani refers many times to “pye – lars”, and it was only after a few minutes that I realised he means “pillars”. Later he refers repeatedly to “rational” actions and later to “proposit”, neither of which I untangled. This all adds to a sense of strain in following the thread of the talk.

I found the second class quite captivating. Titled “Spectator Point of View” Dani opens with a live clip of his “Mathematical Trick”. Four spectators take a handful of cards each, select one and try to follow Dani’s instructions as the cards are mixed, thrown away and discarded. Despite the chaos the selected cards are all revealed in each hand exactly at the expected position. I’ve seen him do this at least twice, each a complete rollercoaster ending with a standing ovation.

Dani uses this performance as a springboard to discuss the importance of understanding the spectator’s feelings and thought processes. Topics include building and releasing tension, recognising expectations, naturalness of actions and context, manipulating memory, never lying and the use of questions, or exclamation points, to break the link between actions and memory.

In each class Dani describes the material as an “approach” to the topic rather than covering the whole field. The final class is entitled “Freedom of Speech” reflecting his newly published book on forcing. Timing, attitude, subliminal prompts, use of language, splitting the rational mind from muscle memory and many other techniques are discussed and demonstrated. The session finishes with a short Q+A, moderated by Damian Jennings.

In summary, fantastic material let down by some technical problems and single take, unedited delivery. The same material filmed under the guidance from an English speaking director with appropriate editing would be dynamite. If you can’t wait for that and are willing to put in the mental work - invest. **CP**

WHAT’S HOT: superb performer, many insights on how to strengthen magic and the spectator’s experience, expert tips on classic and other timing forces, useful toolbox for Triumph routines. Clearly filmed
WHAT’S NOT: sound missing from some film clips, sound time lag particularly bad on third masterclass, verbal delivery tiring and, at times, a strain to follow. Relatively expensive
RATING: 55%

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