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Issue No. 3



MANDY MUDEN

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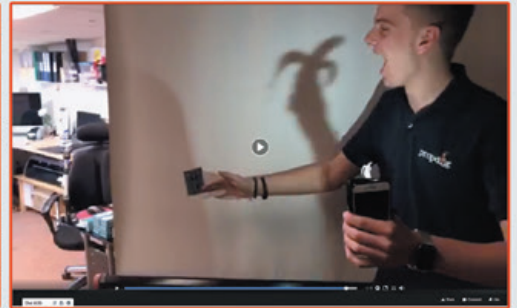
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A WORD FROM THE EDITOR



Wow, we are into our third edition of Magicseen Lite already, yet it only seems minutes ago that we decided to go ahead with the project at all! It's great to see that lots of readers are taking advantage of these special taster issues and we hope that you will enjoy this latest one too.

This time we welcome Mandy Muden, one of the UK's foremost comedy magicians, to our cover. Mandy cut her performing teeth

in Comedy Clubs after giving up her attempts to become an actress, and although her rise has been steady rather than meteoric, her good showing on Britain's Got Talent has helped to firmly establish her act. We are delighted to provide further background on her for you to enjoy in this issue.

Escapology is an allied art to magic that we rarely get to feature in Magicseen, so we are particularly pleased to talk to Allan Taylor, the newly elected chair of the United Kingdom Escape Artists organisation. He

helps to fill us in on everything that is happening in this niche entertainment world.

What else have we extracted from the full September Magicseen to include here? Well, there's Friend Not Foe, which is an article exploring how we can harness the 'comedian' in the audience to enhance our act rather than destroy it, we offer a Masterclass routine from David Regal's brand new book Interpreting Magic, we let you see what things are on our readers' minds in the letters page, and there is a selection of the product reviews to help you make

sensible buying decisions. If you enjoy this free taster edition of Magicseen, maybe we can tempt you to sign up for the whole thing! We have 1 or 2 year printed copy or download subs available, and subscribers not only get the full versions of every issue 6 times a year, they also get other benefits too. For more information and to order go to www.magicseen.com.

Mark Leveridge

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YOUR VIEW

Have your say

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



PETER TURNER

Brilliant that you featured Pete Turner on your last cover – and what a brilliant piece of artwork. I also loved the effect he contributed. There are one or two things I don't like about Magicseen, but I love 95% of it – and I really like the fact you introduce us to people we may not necessarily know. I had not heard of Pete Turner before, but I am now a huge fan. It was the same when you featured Ian D. Montfort. It's amazing what he's gone on to achieve – so far! I saw him at Blackpool and he got another standing ovation. Let's have more on Pete Turner please!

N. Dawson, Wallsall

TURNER THE GREAT!

Loved the feature on Peter Turner – and the best Magicseen cover EVER!

Neil Simpson, Edinburgh

STAR LETTERS!

on stage when all eyes are on me. I wondered if you have any advice for me. I'm not into the magic chat rooms or anything and I live a bit remote to join any magic clubs, so I feel like I'm out on my own to be honest. Any suggestions?

Thank you,

Matthew Dixon, via email

Hi Matthew, thanks for your email. We remember talking to the fabulous Wayne Dobson about this ages ago and he said, 'Why do complicated sleight-of-hand on stage when there's no need to?' He told us that for many years he used to use a one way forcing deck on stage, so he could never get things wrong. That makes sense. You also need to remember that when you are on stage at a venue, in front of the hot lights, and a crowd thrown in, there's lots of extra pressure too, your hands become sweatier and it can distract you from actually performing. So, go for easy, every time. It will give you confidence, and you can concentrate on your performance. (Ed).

ROBERT DE NIRO

Dear Magicseen, I saw an interview on TV in the USA with Robert De Niro who was talking about magicians and how he couldn't understand it how everyone knew they were going to attempt to trick the onlookers, but the onlookers still seemed to believe every word they said. He added that he thought magicians were masters of psychology. I believe that performers in the magical arts – and I'm talking about the really good performers here – really are psychologists, with additional skills thrown in. How they can manipulate people's minds to think one thing, when the opposite is happening at the same time is a beautiful skill to have. I'm a psychologist, with zero magic skills, but have recently become really interested in magic because of the magic creators. How can a single mind create something that will fool a thousand people in the same room? These really are amazing minds. I've

just bought a couple of books, one by David Stone and the other by Patrick Page, and they are fantastic. I've also been to see a few magicians, and the magic world is very lucky to have so many talented performers- such a shame that more are not on TV.

J.P. Stevens, Chicago, USA. Via email



CLASSIC DARYL

Dear Magicseen, I've just bought a boxed collection of DVDs by the late, and unbelievably great Daryl. I recommend every

magician should have a selection of his material in their library, if not in their act. This guy was so gifted. I know that he'd won many awards, but I think he's one of the greatest magicians of all time, without any doubt at all. A genius, and so very, very sad to lose him so young.

Jared Davis, Toronto, Canada

SKILL OR SIMPLICITY?

Dear Magicseen, I'm putting together my first ever stand-up act, and it's proving more difficult that I thought. I have previously done close-up, but I have been asked several times if I do a cabaret act and I've had to say no. So I've decided to try out with a stand-up set. Where I'm finding it difficult is that I've tried to simply to do a close-up set, only do it bigger. Where I'm struggling is that the sleight of hand moves are more difficult to do in a cabaret situation as there is so much more to think about – it's very difficult to do sleights to a spectator

LIFE'S A BEACH VOL2

When is the next volume of Gary's book out? Volume one was ace...

K.T. via email

Hopefully in the next 4 weeks, we'll let you know asap. All the material is in – and there are some fabulous, easy tricks in there. Gary is so brilliant!



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MANDY MUDEN

NATURAL BORN THRILLER!



The hilarious comedy magician and mentalist wowed the country with her brilliant performances on Britain's Got Talent and has since achieved so much. She's worked in the USA, won an Award from a Woman's Magazine and bought herself a very expensive handbag.

She's come such a long way since being sacked as a beauty consultant at a famous London department store for drawing a moustache on a rude woman who wanted to have her make-up done. We are BIG fans of this fabulously funny performer with attitude, and so are delighted to sit down for a chat with Mandy Muden. And she bought the coffee and cake. Result!

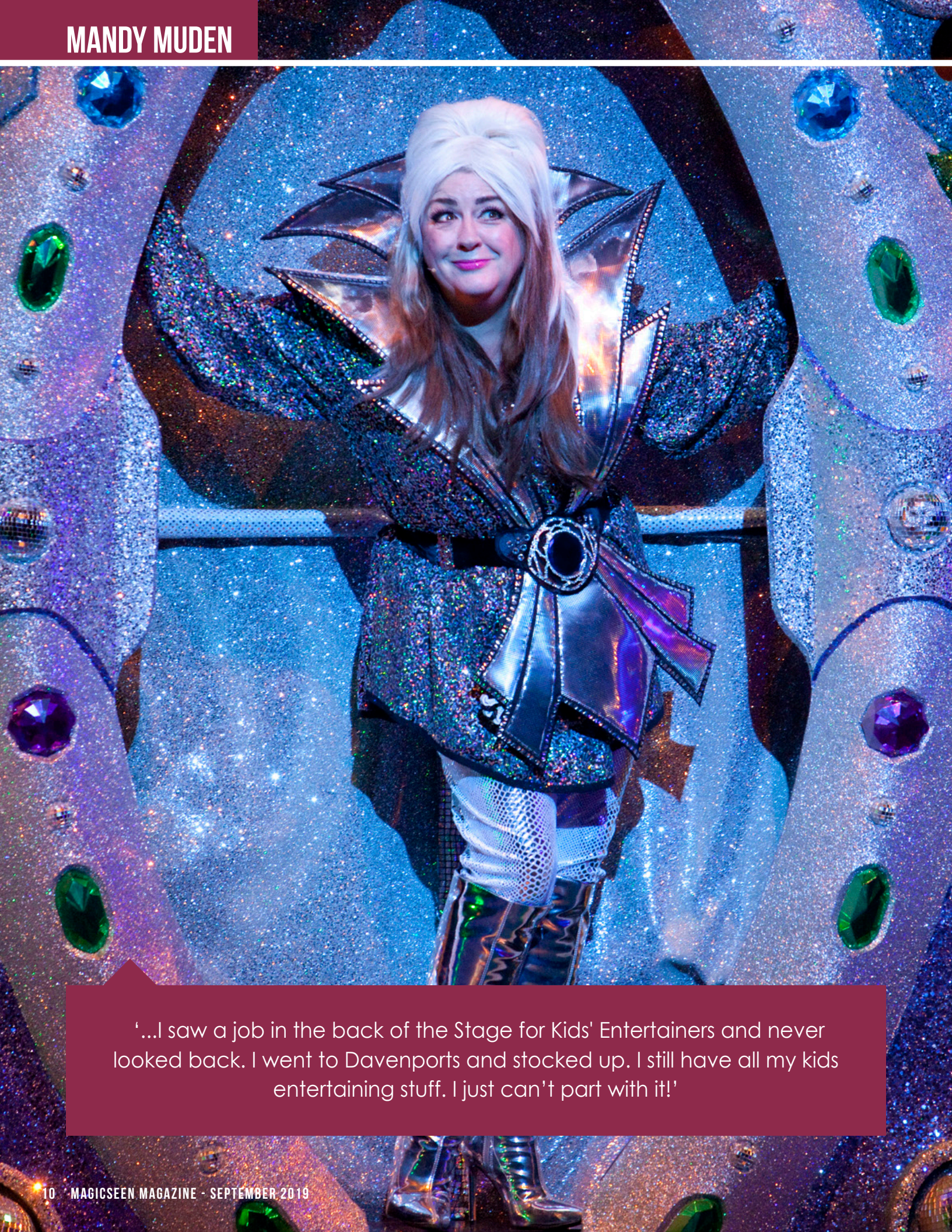
Graham Hey asks the questions.

Well Mandy, we saw you at Blackpool and it's been really difficult getting hold of you, you've been so busy. We really loved your spot at the convention, how was Blackpool for you? 'Aw, thank you very much. I have to admit I was very, very nervous because as we all know





'I was the naughtiest, silliest kid in the school. I just found humour in everything. I had a tough home life and laughter was my escape.'



'...I saw a job in the back of the Stage for Kids' Entertainers and never looked back. I went to Davenports and stocked up. I still have all my kids entertaining stuff. I just can't part with it!'

magicians can be a very hard audience. But I have to say I loved every moment of it. The audience were amazing and I was so thrilled to perform at the Blackpool Magic Convention at the Opera House!

Mandy is no overnight success (although she is still young, obviously!) – her grounding was in the comedy clubs around the UK. I ask her if she recommends it for magicians who want to try and be funny? ‘Absolutely!’ says Mandy, ‘Comedy Clubs are the only places to really cut your teeth in this business now. I still do them now because they keep you totally match fit and on your toes. Bite anyone’s hand off for a gig. I am still learning from doing them.’

Mandy reveals that she actually started out as an actress, but found it extremely tough. ‘I would turn up to auditions and there would be 100 other women after the same job!’ She says, still obviously frustrated by the whole thing. ‘But then I saw a job in the back of the Stage for Kids’ Entertainers and never looked back. I went to Davenports and stocked up. I still have all my kids entertaining stuff. I just can’t part with it!’

Mandy tells me that she was always a funny kid. ‘I was the naughtiest, silliest kid in the school. I just found humour in everything. I had a tough home life and laughter was my escape.’

What are you like when you’re off stage? ‘I’m a shy person and off stage I don’t like to be the centre of attention. So people rarely see that side of me off stage unless they know me really well!’



‘Comedy Clubs are the only places to really cut your teeth in this business now. I still do them now because they keep you totally match fit and on your toes. Bite anyone’s hand off for a gig. I am still learning from doing them.’





You had a great run on Britain's Got Talent – why did you decide to enter the show? The answer isn't what I expected. Says Mandy, 'I had a cowboy builder in who had taken my savings and wrecked my home...I needed to make more money.'

As far as BGT goes, she tells me she had total control of her spot. For the live performance

show, she says, 'I was asked to take some jokes out... but I forgot. It was live, what could they do?'

'I think the spots were supposed to be 3 minutes. My first was around 9 minutes and the second was probably longer!' She continues, 'I loved doing it. I think you should be clear about what you want from it before you do it. I saw it as a free advert on Prime Time TV and for me that is exactly what it was.' The result is that she's been a lot busier, and if you're friends with her on Facebook, you'll know that she's been doing some terrific, high-profile gigs around the world.

She reveals that her comedy hero is The Amazing Jonathan. 'I love him. I went to see him and I was scared sitting in the audience. It was brilliant. You just didn't know what was going to happen next. I loved Joan Rivers too, she was a comic genius.'

Like many performers, she is her own worst critic. She says she has lots of weaknesses but is not sure about her own strengths. Says Mandy, 'I am always anxious before a show. I hate doing a bad job. I never come off stage and feel happy. I always think I could have done better.' She should be on a high right now, as we heard she stormed it last night at an Edinburgh Preview with Omid Djalili...

It's time for Mandy to scoot off. She's a very busy lady. If you get the chance, check out her performances on YouTube.

QUICKIES WITH MANDY

What has been the highlight of your last year or so?

It's been such a wonderful year that it's hard to pick something. BGT, obviously, getting an award from a major women's magazine, working in America... getting a very expensive handbag.

Most difficult aspect of being a performer?

I find it hard to have a proper life. I miss a lot of family dos, special occasions and just seeing people I love for a cup of tea. Sometimes travelling around on my own all the time I get very lonely.

Someone's putting a cabaret act together, what advice would you give them about performing?

As Pat Page said to me, go out for 'sandwiches' - work wherever you can.

Last time you bombed on stage?

Corporate in Dublin where the whole audience was drunk before the event even started. When I went on it was like a scene from a disaster movie...bodies everywhere. Tough crowd.

How do you go about constructing your own show?

I just sit in front of a computer screen for hours and hours and get nothing done. I ring everyone I know and moan. Then I write it out like a story and try and piece it together. Eventually I get about 3 minutes of new stuff.

What's coming up for you in the next few months?

As I do this interview, I am currently working on my Edinburgh show Mandy Muden: Is Not The Invisible Woman. I am only doing Edinburgh to work on new material. Please come - Gilded Balloon Teviot at 4pm. Also, I'm thrilled to be doing panto in Belfast at the Royal Opera House.

What would you say to any girls wanting to get into magic/mentalism/performing?

Do it. Try and be your own person on stage. It's not about the tricks most of the time. It's you and how you sell them.

Are you married?

No, not married but I am now looking. If anyone's interested?

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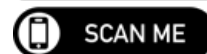
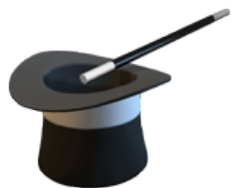
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FRIEND NOT FOE

USING THE HUMOROUS SPECTATOR

BY MARK LEVERIDGE

"SUBCONSCIOUSLY THE JOKER WILL NOW POSSIBLY FEEL THE NEED TO WREST BACK THE CONTROL OF THE GROUP, AND SO HE STARTS TO MAKE HIS OWN JOKES AND ASIDES, THUS INTERRUPTING YOUR PERFORMANCE. HIS MATES WILL LAUGH AUTOMATICALLY AT WHATEVER HE SAYS, EVEN THOUGH MOST OF THE TIME HIS COMMENTS ARE NOT THAT HUMOROUS, BUT THAT'S HOW IT IS ALL THE TIME IN THAT PEER GROUP."

If you are a strolling or table magician you will no doubt recognise the following scenario. You are walking up to your next group ready to entertain them and as you approach, one of the spectators, usually a man, will see you coming and immediately fire off some sort of 'funny' comment or quip, such as, "Oh, hello Dynamo, what have you got to fool all of us then?" At which point everyone else in the group falls about laughing at the 'hilarious' comment.

Hmmmm. You probably think to yourself, "Oh dear, this doesn't bode well!" and you immediately feel a bit defensive because you anticipate that this spectator is going to cause you trouble.

However, rather than see this person as enemy no.1, I would suggest that in most cases, that comedian could well turn out to be a real asset for you if you handle him right, and in this article I am going to take a look at the whole situation and recommend ways to deal with it.

THE JOKER IN THE PACK

When you are entertaining at big commercial events such as company parties or club socials, most of the people who attend will probably already know each other. They may work or regularly socialise together, and so when you approach a table of 8 people, the chances are they will already be very familiar and comfortable in each others' company. Groups like this can often have one character who dominates. He will be the guy who leads the conversation, who makes all the jokes and who the rest secretly look up to. When they are all sitting together, the Joker will be holding forth on this and that, and because all the others know him so well, anything he says or does is automatically hilarious!

A DISTURBANCE IN THE FORCE

So, up until the moment that you arrive, all the attention of the table or group has been on him as usual, which is how he likes it. Then the magician turns up. The entertainer might be smooth, slick, fooling and funny, and immediately the balance of power shifts from the Joker to the performer, and the Joker suddenly feels superseded and possibly even ignored.

Subconsciously the Joker will now possibly feel the need to wrest back the control of the group, and so he starts to make his own jokes and asides, thus interrupting your performance. His mates will laugh automatically at whatever he says, even

though most of the time his comments are not that humorous, but that's how it is all the time in that peer group.

THE PYRRHIC VICTORY

Now, as the entertainer you need to deal with this situation. Some people overreact, in my view, and start a verbal battle with the Joker, trying to basically shut him up by proving that they are far funnier than he is. The trouble is, his mates are more used to him than they are to you, and I would suggest that this is a battle you will rarely win.

If you do manage to halt him in his tracks by using heckler stoppers, the potential humiliation that the Joker will feel is not healthy for the general atmosphere of the group - after all, your job is simply to enable them all to have a good time, not to win a verbal jousting match! The rest of the people in the group may not like the way you have just treated their hero, and so they will not be as receptive to you and your magic as a result.

EMBRACE THE MOMENT

So, my contention is that you should help the Joker to enhance your time with his group rather than attempt to stop him. However, you should try to do it in such a way that you still maintain control of your show, but at the same time embrace the Joker's presence, humour

and popularity with the group, because if he gets on with you and seems to like you, everyone else will too.

Here are a few personal suggestions for do's and don'ts in this situation.

1. Don't use abrasive put down comments or lines the moment the Joker starts to get involved with your show. Remember, he may not be heckling, just joining in!
2. Do acknowledge his comments with a smile or an aside of your own which builds on what he has just said, thus keeping the good humour of the moment.
3. Don't let the Joker take over entirely, however - remember you have the magic as a weapon, so if you are doing amazing things the spectators will react to you and be keen to watch what you are doing.
4. Do keep the pace and direction of your performance on track. In other words, while it is politic and sometimes desirable to acknowledge the Joker or something he has said, make sure that you still continue to perform through your routines, because that is how you will get your credibility at the end.

LET THE GOOD TIMES FLOW

The fact is, you are being paid for the spectators to have a good time with you. Exactly how that is achieved is not the issue, it is whether you succeed or not that will

determine whether you did a good job. So, if the Joker and his comments are creating laughter at the table, and if as a result the people are having a great time, I would suggest that this is a win/win situation. The Joker gets to keep his status unblemished with the group, but you get the kudos for the magic and leave the group feeling amazed and amused in equal measure.

It shouldn't be a matter of ego or status for you. If you go in to each group thinking that you have to be an performing deity that no one should interrupt or interfere with, you are missing out on a lot of potential entertainment value. Some of my best and funniest moments over the years have come when I have been having fun with the Joker! He sets up a situation, and using my experience I can nip and hijack the moment or the comment and prolong the fun of it.

The net result of all this is that at the end of your set, if you have handled it right, the Joker will often be the one who extends his hand to shake yours while complimenting you on the show. He's happy because he has not lost face, and you have benefitted because you have harnessed his goodwill and standing with his peers to ensure that your act was well appreciated. It's the benefit of having him as a friend and not a foe.

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David Regal

(This is one of the many routines featured in David's new book called Interpreting Magic which is due to be published imminently. Look out for a review of the book in our next issue (#89 Nov 19))

EFFECT

The spectator cuts to the Aces.

REQUIREMENTS

A deck of cards.

PREPARATION

The Aces are on top of the deck in any order. The Ace fourth from the top is given a convex crimp at the inner end.

WORKING

1 False shuffle the deck, retaining the top four cards, then table it. Have the spectator cut the deck into a row of four piles, the Aces atop the leftmost pile.

2 The way I usually have this done is by testing the spectator's "luck quotient" or ability to handle cards. "Cut off three quarters of the cards from here... to here. Three quarters—that's most of them." I indicate that the cut is to be made to the left of the deck (Fig. 1).

3 "Okay, let's shake things up. Let's try sixth eighths. Try to cut six eighths of the cards from here to here. Again, that's most of them." Indicate a spot to the left of the just-cut pile.

4 Continue in this manner. "All right, let's just go nuts: twelve sixteenths. Do not confuse that with sixth eighths or three quarters. Cut twelve sixteenths from here to here—that's almost all of them".

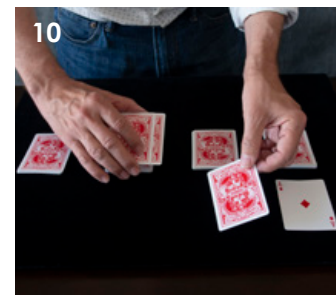
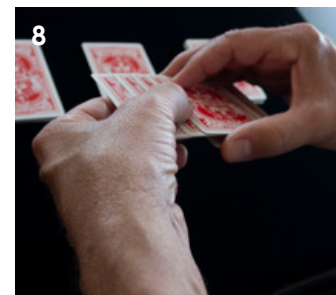
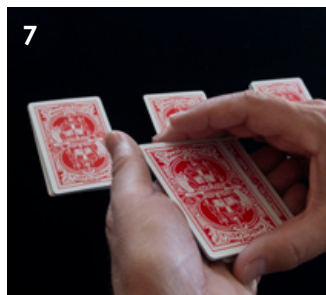
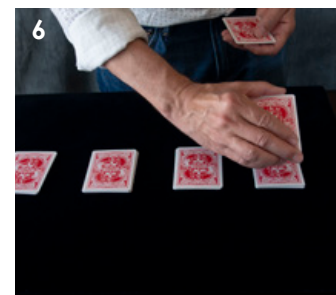
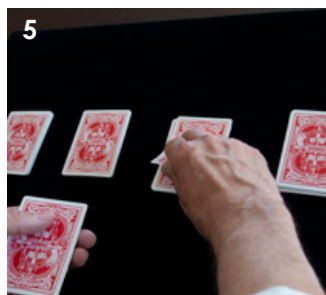
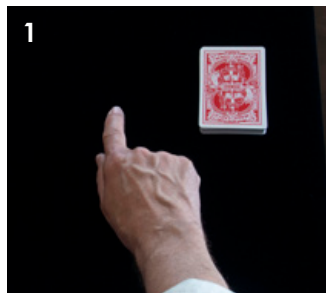
5 You will end up with a row of piles (Fig. 2). The reason you stress "that's almost all of them" is to ensure that you have a good-sized pile on the left, the Ace pile.

6 "If you did this perfectly, the piles will all be exactly the same size"...Look at the piles—they will be slightly different. "Hmm... that's all right. I'll take what you gave me. That's the whole idea." This serves to remind the audience that you arrived at random spots in the deck. "You cut here... here... here... and here."

7 The right hand goes to the rightmost pile and lifts off the top card by its inner end (Fig. 3). The card is placed onto the left fingers (Fig. 4). The hand goes to the pile left of the first, and removes the top card in a similar manner, the hand covering a bit more of the card (Fig. 5). The card is placed into the left hand on top of the card already there.

8 The right hand goes to the pile second from the left and picks up the top card from above, depositing it on the two already in the left hand. Finally, the right hand moves to the leftmost pile and picks up the four Aces, the right fingers masking the thickness of the cards in his hand (Fig. 6). The crimp allows you to do the four-card pickup with a light touch.

9 "Let's see what you got"... The right hand brings the squared



Aces to the left hand and essentially overshoots the mark, laying its cards about three-quarters of an inch to the left of the cards already in the hand (Fig. 7). The right thumb maintains a small break between the two packets of cards as the right hand takes the combined pile from above.

10 This is a very efficient moment in the routine, as the piles are segregated—and you have performed a get-ready for the move to come—with zero adjustment. In a continuing action, the left fingertips spread the Aces, sliding them to the left from the bottom (Fig. 8). The right thumb break above the X cards is maintained.

11 The hands move over the piles. The left fingertips slide the lowermost Ace from the right hand's cards, and flip it face up in front of the left pile (Fig. 9).

12 You will now apparently repeat the process with the next Ace, but it is here that the dirty work occurs. The left fingers slide out the next Ace, and flip it face up in front of the pile second from the left. As this Ace is displayed, the right hand momentarily lowers onto the pile second from the right, leaves the cards below the break, and rises (Figs. 10 & 11).

13 The right hand gently moves to the right as the left fingertips slide out the next Ace, flipping it face up in front of the pile second from the right (Fig. 12).

14 Finally, the last Ace is flipped face up and placed in front of the last pile (Fig. 13). It must be stressed that the laydown of the Aces occurs in an unhurried rhythm. You are clean after the second Ace is shown, when you still have two Aces to go—a nice situation to be in.



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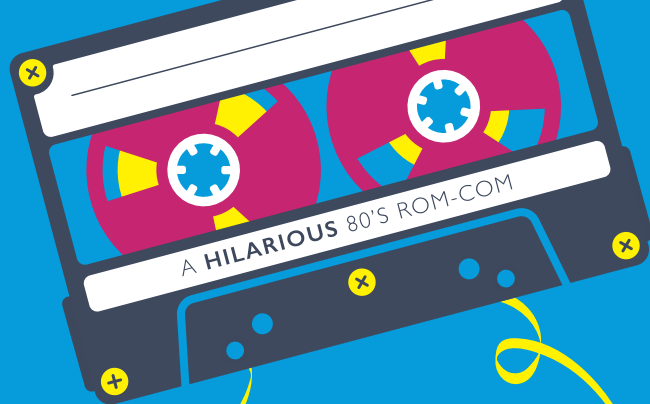
3 WORLD RECORDS AT THE EHRlich BROTHERS SHOW!

On 15 June 2019 the two brothers played the football stadium in Duesseldorf, Germany with a special full-evening show. The show was sold out with 40,211 visitors. This gained Andreas and Chris Ehrlich a new world record for the "Largest Audience for a Magic Performance". The former record with 38,503 had been set by the Ehrlich Brothers at their first stadium show in 2016 in Frankfurt.

The German magicians received a second world record by the RID REKORD-INSTITUT fuer DEUTSCHLAND for the "Magic trick with the highest number of spectators involved". Guided by the Ehrlich Brothers 36,190 visitors tore four pieces of cardboard each, shuffled them, exchanged pieces with other visitors until only one piece was left. This last piece exactly fitted to another piece that the visitors stored away during the process.

A third world record was not for Andreas and Chris Ehrlich - but for their fans. They collected the longest fan letter in the world with a length of 23,023 kilometres. Can that really be true? If it's not, we're sure there will be a letter in the next issue telling us we got it wrong!

The world record show was filmed and will be aired on RTL TV in late autumn 2019.



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Uri Geller

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SHOUT OUTS

Here are some special 'extra' announcements from a few of our regular advertisers

CARD-SHARK.

"What Happens in Vegas.....!"

It's hard to believe the largest magic convention in the USA has come to a close for another year, to reappear in 2020. As always, The Magic LIVE Convention (produced by Stan Allan formerly of Magic Magazine) had many superlative moments and some amazing surprises!!

Roger and I barely spoke to each other during the day as we were so busy demonstrating our wares. Our Hottest Sellers... Thought of Card Across, Polish Poker, the Destiny Deck, Science Friction and The Bar Cup Reloaded.

Another "Hot" item that we demonstrated in Vegas AND will be available at The Real Magic Roadshows is "Rex Ignis" by Paralabs. You can now control the heat of any lit candle. Hold your hand close to the flame and it will not burn you. Nothing is added to your hand or to the flame. You can even have a spectator hold their hand over the flame to show it is hot. Then have them hold their hand over the flame again, and it doesn't burn. Hands and candle can be examined... in fact you can borrow the candle. See the video here:

<http://www.card-shark.de/ad/REX>

Don't forget to register for The Real Magic Roadshow in a city near you. See the announcement on Page 27 of this issue.



READ MY MIND.

Back in 2007, Looch set the mentalism world on fire by introducing the L.P.I (Looch Pocket Index). This well designed pocket miracle maker instantly sold out and was considered by the pro's as one of the best pocket indexes ever made.

Over the years one of the most frequent requests from fellow mentalists was for the L.P.I to be made available again. After years of research, discussion and development, Read My Mind Ltd are delighted to announce that this incredible product is finally back and better than ever!

Each L.P.I has been expertly manufactured in Stainless Steel and will last a lifetime of performance use. Load up your L.P.I with billets, folded business cards, or even currency and it will always be ready to assist you in producing mind blowing mental miracles for your audiences!

Each Stainless Steel L.P.I comes with its own custom printed velvet bag and access to an eBook with detailed instructions. You will also be granted access to the Facebook owners group to share ideas and routines with each other. (Facebook account required)

*Please note, the L.P.I is designed as a billet index, with the primary focus being to simply and efficiently organise a range of 'outs' and give you instant access to them during performance. It will not hold a full deck of playing cards. www.readmymind.co.uk.

BLACK HART.

Trickery for Tarot Readers is a great 'how to' book from The Black Hart. TFTR is NOT about performing tricks with Tarot cards, it's much more than that, it's about techniques that are available to the card magician but adapting them so you, as a Tarot reader, can demonstrate the latent power within the Tarot.

TFTR contains the following:

- Six presentations that are perfect for Tarot readings
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- How to handle Tarot cards and 'mix them up' so you do not look like a 'card sharp'

The ethics of using trickery in a Tarot reading:

In other words all you need to know to make your Tarot readings stand out above all the other readers your clients are likely to come across. TFTR is a 25 page comb bound book packed with useful and useable information. It is written and published by The Black Hart and is exclusively available from Black Artefacts. If you want to make Tarot reading for private or corporate clients a part of your portfolio, the TRTF is an essential part of your armoury. Check it out at blackhart.co.uk

CARL DE ROME.

In my HEAT advert this month, I have included A VERY SPECIAL LINK at the bottom of the advert. This is really for those magicians/mentalists/hypnotists who are still sceptical about the HEAT effect. Normally this link I only send out to people after they have ordered the HEAT effect direct from me, but I thought some of you may like to see all the extra info, tips and warnings about HEAT, so you can at last have a look at the videos and decide for yourselves if this effect is for you. May I also thank all the entertainers worldwide over the years who have bought HEAT from me and have had great success performing it over and over again. Remember Heat is available direct from my web site www.cdrmagic.com/heat or if you are in the USA/Canada it is now available from www.getmagicheat.com. And for those who like to buy their magic from the best magic dealer in England, HEAT has been stocked in the UK by The Merchant Of Magic www.magicshop.co.uk. Type HEAT into the search box. Lastly CONGRATULATIONS to MARC SPELMANN performing as X, for featuring my HEAT effect in his winning semi finals performance on Britain's Got Talent. Proving HEAT can also be performed on stage.

COPELAND COINS.

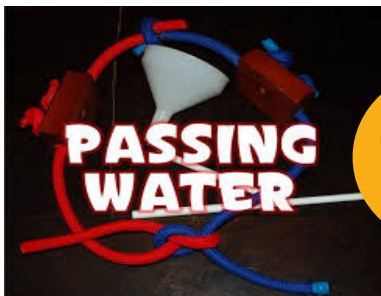
Copeland Coins is super excited to release Sly Palm to the magic community. It's a brand new, clever sleight by Rick Holcombe that has as many applications as a classic palm! Rick is a clear teacher and the lessons are taught through the DAVE teaching system which lets the viewer learn via book and video at the same time! It's like speed reading. Only at CopelandCoins.com

UKEA.

Hello Escapologists, The UKEA (United Kingdom Escape Artists) are looking for new members. We are the only recognised group in the UK for escapologists and have been running since 2004. We have a wide range of members, from those that are very academic, focusing on the history of the art itself, through to novice / semi-professional performers who are keeping the art form alive. We currently have 2 meetings per year full of lectures, demos and the chance to compete for the Mick Hanzlik award. To join, we do require each applicant to demonstrate that they are currently part of a recognised magic association, or a full time or retired performer, an author, someone who has an academic interest in the art or someone who has been recommended by a current member.

The first part of the membership will be access to our private group and is free, from here you can apply for full membership at a cost of £20 per year. If you are interested then please contact us at members@theukea.co.uk for more info. We look forward to hearing from you. www.theukea.co.uk

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ALLAN DE-VAL

UNSHACKLED

For the past few years, Magicseen has been reporting on the U.K.E.A (United Kingdom Escape Artists) and with escapology in the spotlight recently – especially on Britain’s Got Talent - we thought we’d better get our act together and find out what’s really going on in the world of escapes.

We chatted with Allan Taylor from De-Val Magic and Escapology, newly elected chair of the U.K.E.A

Firstly, congratulations on your new position! Now, every year you have an Award for the best escapology routine – which is partly

named after the late Mick Hanzlik, who created some sensational effects. What was your connection to Mick? ‘We knew Mick for many years through our connection with the U.K.E.A and we became great friends. Mick was also a friend of my wife’s late father David De-Val,’ says Allan, ‘Mick supplied David with a lock back in 1984 when he performed his rollercoaster escape at Blackpool pleasure beach, a lock that Mick kindly passed onto my wife Rebecca.’

Tell us about this year’s award. ‘The Award is named after Houdini Historian and Master Locksmith Mick Hanzlik and is presented for the “Best Escape” of the day as voted for by all members of the U.K.E.A.

‘As a previous winner I understand how much this award means to the escapology community and trust me when I say the competition is getting hard. Everybody wants to win the coveted Hanzlik award. This year, the award was won by Tim Houlton from Hull. Tim came up with an unusual escape and possibly the first of its kind anywhere in the world.’

Tim combined his love of motorcycles and escapology. The escape comprised of getting secured into a straitjacket, and then as if this wasn’t hard enough, he then put on a pair of full body motorcycle leathers, with the straps from the straitjacket being inserted through the arms of the leathers. Motorcycle helmet

ESCAPOLOGY IS VERY REAL AND HAS TO BE TREATED WITH CAUTION....SO EVEN THE SMALLEST OF ROUTINES WOULD HAVE HAD HOURS OF TRAINING BEHIND THE SCENES. IF YOU FAIL TO PLAN - THEN PLAN TO FAIL!



and full boots were also worn. Says Allan, 'This was surely enough to secure Tim! After around 5 minutes of wrestling with the suit and straitjacket and even throwing in some comedy air guitar, Tim much to our amazement managed to escape successfully. A very well deserved winner!'

Allan speaks about Mick with obvious affection, continuing, 'Mick had a lot of great effects and his most famous is probably the Supalok. However, it was his research into the Houdini Mirror Cuffs that really amazed me. This was something we spoke about with David Copperfield last year when we were lucky enough to be invited to David's International Museum and Library of the Conjuring Arts.'

There were one or two escapologists on BGT this time... Jonathan Goodwin etc, what did you make of it? 'I loved it. We have obviously seen a rise in magicians over the last few years but it's great to see some real escapologists on TV,' says Allan enthusiastically. 'Matt Johnson did an amazing job last year with some of his underwater stunts – he's one of the hardest working people I know and is now working with the Illusionists tour.'

'Jonathan Goodwin also did an amazing job and I was shocked that he didn't get through to the final. His take on the water torture cell/ buried alive was amazing and deserved to go further. Jonathan is also part of the Illusionists and is part of the London show.'

So how would you describe the state of escapology at the moment? 'Absolutely buzzing. BGT has obviously done it well and here at the UKEA we are getting more and more people reaching out to us to find out how they can join or how they can start up in escapology.'



'We are also getting asked for more and more escapology products at De-Val Magic so we have just brought out a range of padlocks, handcuffs and straitjackets. We are also seeing TV coverage. Rebecca and I were recently visited by George Hardeen (Harry's great nephew) and featured on the Discovery Channel show called Houdini's Last Secrets that was aired in the USA and the UK.'

Do you think there will ever be another true world star of escapology? 'I think the inclusion of Matt Johnson and Jonathan Goodwin being part of the global illusionist shows definitely proves that we have stars of escapology. However, I would like to see a full escapology show on tour. I think once that happens and only then, will we have the world star.'

Allan tells me that it's partly the danger aspect of escapology that appeals to him, and a real sense of achievement when you get out of something that people deem to be impossible. 'Escapology is very real and has to be treated with caution,' continues Allan, 'so even the smallest of routines would have had hours of training behind the scenes. If you fail to plan - then plan to fail!'

Who has been your own personal inspiration? 'My wife's late father David De-Val has had the greatest impact on me but I can't possibly leave Houdini and his Brother Theo Hardeen out – they are the ones who have probably inspired most escapologists out there more than anyone else!'



Allan with George Hardeen.

THE SECRET TO A GREAT ESCAPE ROUTINE IS TO MAKE THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE - AND YOU HAVE TO KEEP THE AUDIENCE ON THE EDGE OF THEIR SEATS.

the shackles and the cell, but he had already escaped from the prison and was found fully dressed in his street clothes (but these were locked in the cell adjoining the condemned cell)! They found David some three hundred yards away from the prison, drinking a pint of milk.

'The press fired questions - Was a double of David used? Was a confederate involved? Was there a tunnel between the condemned cell and Clifford's Tower, where David was found? These were the questions and a little thought showed them to be very wide off the mark. How did David do it? That's a good question isn't it?' We'd say that's more than a good question!!

Allan says that the secret to a great escape routine is to make the impossible possible - and you have to keep the audience on the edge of their seats. 'They need to be sat thinking will (s)he or won't (s)he. Add in some danger and it will get most people excited but a good story behind it will keep most people interested,' says Allan who is obviously passionate about the art. 'Danger alone will keep the audience occupied for several minutes, but add in a great performance and a story and they will be hooked!'

So, we can safely say that escapology is still attracting creative performers and the public seem to love it, when they can witness it. 'Yes, I think it's actually more popular now than it's ever been. We are also seeing more females getting involved too which is great. There was a time where people were overlooking escape artists as they were seen to be too dangerous to book. I would like to see more acts on the outdoor circuits again. Luckily we have just had Rob "Roy" Collins appear at Glastonbury and we have Doctor Diablo appearing at outdoor events...'

www.de-val-magic.co.uk
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Allan meets the legendary David Copperfield.

I put Allan on the spot and ask him about his all-time favourite escape routine. 'Wow that is a tough one. An American escape artist called Norman Bigelow performed "The Doors of Death" which was very dangerous indeed, but for sheer skill then I would say the York Cell escape performed by David De-Val, something that the great Houdini refused!

'David was challenged to escape from the condemned cell in the Debtors Prison. The cell walls are six feet thick and the tiny windows are securely barred. Under the sceptical scrutiny of the press, David allowed the steel waist band to be locked tightly on him. Then his wrists were locked on each side of the waist band. His ankles were secured in heavy leg irons and finally a short chain was locked at one end to the waist band and to a ring attached to the wall at the other end.

'Security guards checked both ends of the passage where the cell door was. No-one was allowed to open the door from the outside. Five minutes or so after the cell door had been slammed shut there was a cry from the press of 'He's out!' Not only was David out of

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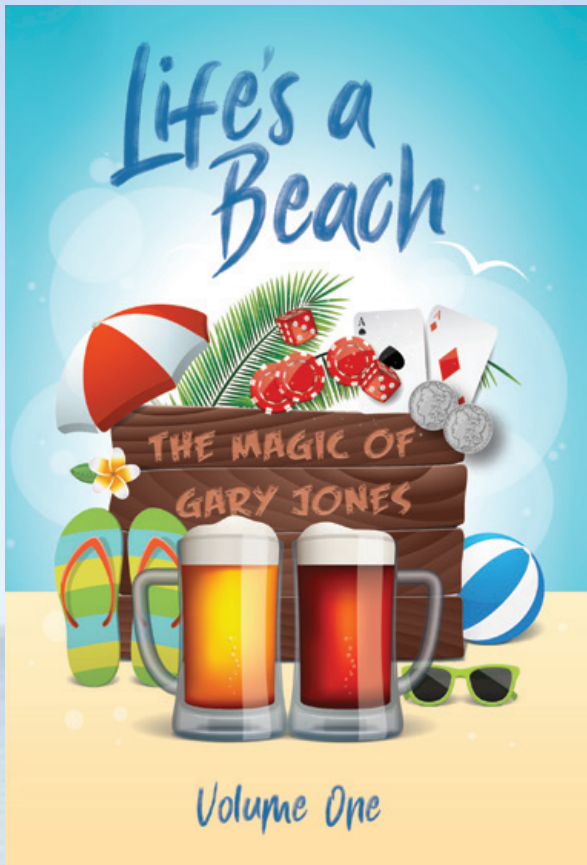
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The advertisement features a background of a sunset over a forested landscape. At the top, the text 'COPELAND COINS' is displayed in a white circle. Below this, a stylized hand in blue and pink holds a coin. To the right, the words 'SLY PALM' are written in large, colorful letters. A red horizontal line separates this from the name 'RICK HOLCOMBE' in blue. At the bottom, there is a paragraph of text and the website 'COPELANDCOINS.COM' in white.

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The advertisement features a cartoon character with large purple eyes and a white body, holding a red sign that says 'THE PEEK MAGIC REVIEWS'. The background is a dark gradient with a bright light source at the top. At the bottom, the website 'www.thepeek.co.uk' is written in a white, serif font, and there are icons for Twitter and Facebook.

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WE TAKE A LOOK AT

WHAT'S HOT

and what's not!



TIPPLE

Vinny Sagoo

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

Price: £20.00

This is an unassuming yet effective mental flavoured packet trick that I am sure many close uppers looking for a novelty effect to perform for friends or family should consider.

You are supplied with a set of 7 very nicely produced cards on the faces of which are featured colour pictures and the names of different drinks that you might buy in a pub. A spectator is asked to mentally select any of the drinks, then to shuffle the cards and deal them all out face down onto the table.

You now show a metal beer bottle cap (supplied) and you place the cap randomly on the backs of the face down cards one at a time, asking the spectator to silently spell the name of his drink, one letter for each card, as you do so. When the spectator gets to the last letter he calls out STOP.

You then state that it would be impossible for 'Your Drink' to be under the bottle cap, since the chosen drink was only mentally selected, to which the spectator can only agree. As a gag, you then turn over the bottle cap to reveal the words YOUR DRINK printed inside the lid. However, groans turn to surprise when the card you randomly ended up on is turned

over to reveal the actual selected drink.

The method is straightforward, pleasingly contrived and, I would suggest, pretty fooling. Vinny says you will learn the method in a matter of seconds (!), and although understanding the principle of the trick will not take you very long, you will nevertheless need to spend some time working with the cards in order to get the handling smooth. There is, however, no sleight of hand of any sort.

This is not a particularly commercial trick because of the need to spread the 7 cards out on the table, and table space might not allow this. But in every other respect the trick is engaging, interesting and a baffler.

A few years ago I released a routine called The Leveridge Beverage which came with a set of 7 cards with drinks on them. The set of cards supplied with Tipple would be perfect for using with the routines that I originally supplied,

so if you have that product and want some new drinks cards, this will also supply an ideal replacement set.

The instructions come as a small neatly printed booklet featuring 18 colour photos, a welcome departure from the often redundant online video directions, although you are given a link to some footage as well. I can't see why you would need to bother watching it though, as the written instructions are clear and perfectly sufficient. **ML**

WHAT'S HOT: good routine that is fooling yet easy to do. Nicely printed cards, written instructions, and even the bottle cap is supplied
WHAT'S NOT: probably not for the usual commercial performance situation, unless the conditions allow for the cards to be spread out on a table

RATING: 75%



BILL IT

SansMinds, Workers Series

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

Price: £27.00

In the Bill It effect you hold a pad of Post It notes in your hand and start to peel sheets off one at a time into a spectator's hand. On the third sheet the Post It note transforms into a bank note. Effect over.

The whole thing takes about ten to fifteen seconds to perform, is quite angle sensitive, best viewed directly from the front and just about suitable for posting on social media but not really much use in any other situation.

There is a reset, claimed to take fifteen seconds but which I think would take longer. The note can be handed out for examination but the Post It pad cannot be examined.

What you get for your £27 is a pad of Post It notes, a cheap plastic gimmick and eleven minutes of downloadable instructions.

The first seven minutes tell you how to assemble the gimmick. There is nothing else to say. **SB**

WHAT'S HOT: nothing, it is not even luck warm
WHAT'S NOT: the price, the effect and the fact that you could only use it in very limited situations, so pretty much everything.

RATING: 10%



CHOICE

Jerome Sauloup

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

Price: £37.00

Jerome Sauloup's Choice is a nice trick but similar to a lot of other 'Gemini Twins' coincidence type tricks that have been on the market in recent years. That's not to say there is plagiarism going on, just that creators come

up with similar methods for this type of plot. At least its lack of originality won't be apparent to a lay audience.

Two spectators have a red and blue deck and deal face down cards stopping at random places in the pack. They exchange each other's cards at the position where they stopped and reassemble both decks and swap decks. When the cards are spread across the table, the stranger backed card is found in each deck but when they are

removed and turned over, they match exactly. When each deck is turned face up, every card in each deck is completely blank.

You receive two blank decks of cards, two duplicate cards and a certain something that aids the trick, to give you a 'rough' idea. The method is fine, the trick is very easy to do and would suit a novice. The best part is that two spectators do all the work according to your instructions without you having to touch the cards.

The online instruction video feels interminably long at 35 minutes for a method that could be easily explained in 15 including the 'bonus' ideas, one of which offers a slight improvement to the original by having a regular card on the bottom of each pack. That didn't take long to explain did it!

The reset involves too much for mix and mingle/walk around gigs so it remains a one-off trick, but

suitable for a small audience parlour type show especially with a husband and wife or partners presentation. If I wasn't surprised at a dealer marketing an item that felt rather dated and similar to other marketed tricks, I am utterly gobsmacked at the ridiculous price for a package that contains two blank face decks, two duplicate cards and a small amount of 'stuff', which in some cases is the best part of forty quid! If you can live with that you get a hobbyists dream trick that requires no skill, has a strong effect and a kicker ending! **PP**

WHAT'S HOT: An easy to perform method that with a little audience management doesn't even require you to touch the cards. Strong effect with a kicker finish

WHAT'S NOT: Similar to other marketed tricks and far too expensive for what is supplied
RATING: 55%



SWEET SIMPLICITY

John Carey

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

Price: £22.00

The runaway truck, bearing the John Carey brand overprinted onto the Eddie Stobart logo, continues its unbreakable roll, seemingly unstoppable.

Actually this is less of a truck

and more of a bandwagon. Liam Montier at Big Blind Media seemingly pounces on any collection of easy-to-remember card tricks which are simple to execute but OK in execution. BBM alone have been responsible for the bloated genre that is described as 'Self Working Card Magic', as well as the myriad others who have clambered onto the bandwagon (Cameron Francis, Ryan Schultz, John Bannon, Steve Beam: I'm looking at you).

John Carey is highly fecund: he has released a lot of product. I like watching Carey perform, but lately he has clearly kept his hand off the quality control button. To my eyes Carey is at his best with smart routing underpinned by nifty handling with cards.

To be fair (for a moment) there is some useable material contained within this collection. I liked his handling of Equivoque, and the Rainbow Deck is something you might find useable. The 'I In 52' is an example of experienced thinking and routing, but I'm still not sure... why. Because a) there

are better versions of so many of these routines out there, and b) this is not what Carey does best.

I am well aware I sound depressingly world-weary about this, but to me this type of material has either already been explored, or is delivered better than this by the inclusion of some sleight of hand. I'm not sure why we are prepared to make so much of the low road - when did it become undesirable to learn your craft? Particularly when that craft has gifted advocates such as John Carey to meld sleight-of-hand card magic with engaging presentation?

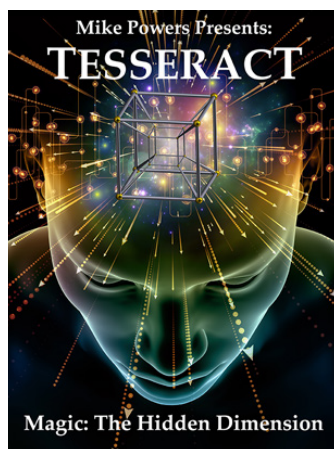
The inclusion of an approach to 'The Trick That Can't Be Explained' is a particular low point. It sidesteps the entire point of Vernon's original and is the magical equivalent of the ready meal: a short instant gratification, with no lasting goodness in it and leaving you feeling slightly cheated.

Look: if you like self-working stuff there is already a wealth of it out there (much of it branded BBM). It's largely become derivative and

lazy. To describe any of this as "a worker" is stretching credulity. Sorry, Liam, I really am, but I fail to get this. John Carey cannot crave more exposure than he already enjoys, surely. **BG**

WHAT'S HOT: nothing hot; there are three lukewarm effects herein. Carey explains stuff lucidly, so if you want any of this material, he'll teach it to you. And to watch him is to share the company of a genuinely nice chap.

WHAT'S NOT: the needlessness of it all. Even the artwork on the cover is naff. I fear this overcooked genre has become self-serving and copyist since Trost's and Beam's days.
RATING: 25%



TESSERACT

Mike Powers

Hard backed with dust jacket, 11" by 8.5", 296pp, b+w photos, illustrations, 60 online teaching videos

Available from any Murphy's retailer or dealers contact

www.murphymagic.com

Price: £52.00

Subtitled 'Magic – The Hidden Dimension' you know you're in for an interesting read when the author is a professor of physics, as well as a published magician of long standing (for over ten years Mike led the 'Card Corner' column in 'The Linking Ring'). He even chooses for his title a scientific term literally meaning 'a multi-dimensional geometric structure involving the hidden 4th dimension'. Yes, quite.

I first encountered the author in 1990 when I purchased his superb book, 'Top Secret Stuff'. You might know him through his marketed effect 'Diminishing Returns' which became something of a minor classic upon its release in 2002. 'Tesseract' contains 55 items, the majority with cards but also coins, a nifty rubber band/ring routine as well

as some self-working mathematical effects and close-up mentalism. Truly something for everyone.

It is a large format book, on very nice paper to show the 300+ clear photographs off to good effect. Personally I found the book design and layout somewhat archaic, even slightly off-putting but then book layouts are part of my business so I'm probably unnecessarily a pointy-head about it.

Aficionados will turn immediately to the final effect in the book, bearing the unlikely title 'Heisting Histed Heisted 3.0', his latest version of an effect he's been committed to for many years, and highly regarded among the underground. Starting out as a self-worker, Powers turbo-boosted it in his previous book 'Power Plays' by bringing in that prop so beloved of scientists, the mem deck.

Here he has replaced that stricture with a Si Stebbins set up and some ingenious (and not difficult) mental calculations. He clearly regards this as the book's highlight, and it manages to be both interesting and strong.

Five people are each given a packet of cards from which they mentally select one. They each shuffle their packets and then assemble them into a single packet which is given a final shuffle by one of the spectators. Despite all this cleanness you are able to determine each person's card in different ways. He adds a less convincing but self-working version for those who find the main version too demanding. This is serious thinking at its best, manifesting as a workable solution to direct mentalism.

How's this for attention to detail. Powers has set up a dedicated site containing some 60 films that teach the moves needed for any of the effects. Annoyingly each separate film is password protected and the password has to be entered for each. Not user-friendly, but indicative of how fiercely he protects his hard won secrets.

The book is divided into eight sections: Unprepared Card Mysteries; Prepared Card Mysteries; Faro Slough Off Ideas; Scripted Mysteries; Friends; Moves; Pure Mathematics; Miscellaneous Mysteries. The titles might lead you to expect a rather heavyweight, even theoretical approach, but in practice the contents pass the practicality test.

They also represent his catholic magical tastes. Self-working effects rub shoulders with gimmicked cards, alongside a plethora of sleights with titles such as Double Lift From Centre, Finessed Gallo Shuffle, Kelly Bottom Replacement, the Centripetal Force and the Willis Kenney Deceptive Control(!) and the aforementioned Faro Slough Off – not as offputting as the name suggests, since it avoids the need for full faro ability. Powers enjoys colourful scripted narratives, with more than a nod to the Bizarre.

The self-working material is of high quality, and manages to hide the mathematical principles well. On most of them you will not be aware of the principle making the thing possible. If mentalism interests you, it is well catered for here. I particularly loved his cloaking of 'Bank Nite'. 'Ring Bandit', built upon Bill Kalush's classic 'Rubber Ringer' is another standout for me, as is the Cameron Francis contribution 'Impossible vs

Impossible', a good effect with a fine presentational hook.

I hugely enjoyed exploring this weighty book, which was more fun and consistently practical than its physical appearance and the author's weighty CV leads you to expect. If you like your magic to be thought-provoking as well as inspiring you to pick up the necessary materials to try your favourites out right away, you will not regret this purchase. **BG**

WHAT'S HOT: high quality throughout; it will intrigue you as well as provide you something you'll actually use. It will speak to the enthusiast within you and encourage you to explore many of its routines. The online films are a welcome addition. The book is very well written and taught. Great VFM.

WHAT'S NOT: his heavy leaning towards cards may put some off. I didn't warm to the layout design. This is a book for the serious reader, which again would not endear it to those more casual about their magic literature.

RATING: 85%

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COLLARD 2

John Archer
Available from any Murphy's retailer or dealers contact www.murphysmagic.com
Price: £45.00

John Archer is one of those mentalists who manages to combine laugh out loud comedy with mind magic, and this routine is a perfect example of just how wonderfully effective it can be.

In essence the plot is that several audience members contribute to creating a unique name for the performer's stuffed dog, a name that impossibly turns out to be already inscribed on the name tag that has been in view and attached to

the toy's collar from the start. The trick has its origins in Al Koran's Medallion, and Don Wayne's Room Service, but the concept of creating a name for a toy dog is pure Archer!

This iteration of Collard shows a number of improvements and small but important embellishments on the original effect that appeared on John's DVD Educating Archer and which was also sold as a stand alone product in the mid 2000's. The quality of the products supplied by Vanishing Inc looks excellent (you receive pretty much everything required, except the stuffed dog!), and the routining has been streamlined to make this an easy to perform routine.

One of the challenges that worries many performers when performing the Koran or Wayne versions, is

the perceived need to make the information on the disc or fob look as if it has been engraved rather than written. The same issue could potentially apply here too, but because Collard is a much more lighthearted effect, I think there is far less scrutiny of the trick's outcome, and therefore the fact that the audience compiled name is on the dog tag is more simply a pleasant result of the preceding few minutes of fun and entertainment.

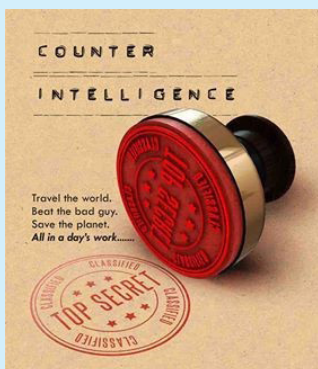
The instructions come via the usual online video directions. There's a live performance of John presenting the effect, which is helpful as it allows you to understand how it is possible to get fun out of the situation that the magic creates. Then there's a 21 minute explanation segment in which John goes through everything you need to know to technically work the routine. And finally there's a 17 minute chat between John and experienced commercial performer Levent, who regularly uses Collard.

There are basically two different types of marketed effects. There are those which have been devised with the hobbyist magician in mind, and these often lack in terms of cohesive plot or attention to practical considerations. Then there are those tricks which have come to the marketplace after they have been worked for many years by

the creator, someone who has over time tweaked and refined everything about the product in order to suit genuine performance conditions. Collard 2 is one of the latter types of effect. Listening to John and Levent discussing the detail of what is essentially a very simple idea, reveals a depth of experience and understanding of the small details that make a big difference, and that is why Collard 2 can be wholeheartedly recommended to busy working performers.

If you are a serious mentalist, I don't think this effect will be quite right for you. However, if you take a more lighthearted approach to your work, Collard 2 has much to recommend it. I think it is especially suited to those stand up performers who combine magic and mentalism in their shows, as this routine is primarily about fun and entertainment and less about mentalism, and as such it is £45 very well spent. **ML**

WHAT'S HOT: lots of comic potential in the presentation combined with a practical no-nonsense method that won't tax you unduly or let you down
WHAT'S NOT: you don't have to be John Archer to get the most out of this, but it helps
RATING: 85%



COUNTER INTELLIGENCE

Steve Wood
Available from www.stevewoodmagician.com/products
Price: £29.99

From the creator of Lost for Words, Counter Intelligence is the latest release from the brilliant mind of Steve Wood.

Based upon the story of a spy mission, a spectator is given a series of 50/50 choices. After deciding on 6 or 7 choices (which happen to all be correct) they are also shown to have predicted a secret code word which has been on the table from the very start. This can be a different word EVERY time!

You are supplied with a set of cards along with a couple of marker pens to use while performing.

There is a small amount of preparation but this is a one time procedure so once done you shouldn't really have to do it again.

The instructions come in the form of a 36 page printed booklet which is clear and concise. Everything you need to know is there and easy to follow along with scripting should you wish to follow it word for word. Additional video tutorials are also available from Steve if you supply him with the number and code word from the contents page of the booklet.

The method for this effect is so clever and must have taken an age to get right. The method for the 50/50 choice(s) section of the routine reminded me a little of an effect we published back in issue 3 of Magicseen by Max Maven called Frozen Rodent. Without giving away the method if you are familiar with Max's routine then you will know what I mean.

The effect itself is not hard to do and it is completely baffling, especially the final reveal of the secret code word which as previously mentioned can be a completely different word each time you perform this.

Due to the method it is worth noting that Counter Intelligence will only work in English so bear this in mind if you perform in any other language.

Counter Intelligence is another solid release from Steve Wood and I for one am looking forward to what he comes up with next. **PS**

WHAT'S HOT: Brilliantly clever method
WHAT'S NOT: nothing really
RATING: 85%



ON THE MONEY

Gavin James

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

Price: £30.00

A card is selected in a very fair manner. A spectator chooses any coin, for example 50p, from a handful of change and tosses it to

show, say, heads. The performer runs through the deck and cuts to a card, the spectator names his chosen card – it matches. The card is then turned over to reveal a written prediction of a 50 pence coin tossed to land on heads.

The red Bicycle deck is gaffed for this one trick and, using an age old principle, forces a card despite a genuinely free stop as the cards are

riffled off face down. A small amount of work is needed to tailor the deck to your local currency.

The online instructions could have been better structured, giving an overview of the principles rather than diving straight into a detailed card by card setup. A written crib sheet for the UK and US currencies would also have been useful, even if this was a downloadable PDF.

Another small grumble, only two of the four suits are provided for the non force cards. The method relies on the colour and value of these cards and could include all four suits. This is not likely to be important in performance (who will notice only two suits flash by) but a simple extra 2 seconds in assembling the trick could have avoided that.

The effect is strong, though needs good presentation to lift it from a puzzle to feature status. Part of this is deciding how, or whether, you mindread something that you claim

to have already predicted – but that is a presentational trap of a lot of modern mindreading!

There are two videos on the RSVP website, one achieves puzzlement, the other, shot in Covent Garden, plays much stronger. The trick cannot be repeated so is not suitable for walkabout but could be done as an extra special item at the end. **CP**

WHAT'S HOT: strong, practical, prediction effect using cards and a borrowed coin.
WHAT'S NOT: single trick gaffed deck, cannot be repeated to the same audience. Arguably not quite strong enough to feature or close.
RATING: 55%



OMNI COIN

SansMinds, Workers Series.

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

Price: £27.00

Named after the much used Omni Deck this is an attempt to transfer the concept to coins. The effect, with slight variations in handling, is that a real coin is displayed and placed in a spectator's hand. Work the magic and the real coin transforms into a plastic version of a same value coin. It is a completely underwhelming effect

and yet another in the seemingly endless overpriced ten second tricks from SansMinds.

It is available in different currencies, including apparently a British 2p piece. The 'coins' in my set were discs of plastic with a cheap looking piece of paper stuck to one side showing the image of a Kennedy half dollar. They looked and felt cheap. This might be offset if there was original creative thinking in the structure and composition of the effect. There isn't.

To perform you start with a real coin and the Omni Coin held

together and orientated in the same way. You will have to work out how to get to this starting position on your own. Even in the demonstration video the double thickness of the two coins is visible. If you're using the interactive handling the thickness is further increased by the addition of a magnet to the real coin.

The twenty minutes of instructions give you three ways to present the effect, all broadly the same. At times it felt like a barely disguised excuse to try and sell you other SansMinds products. If you want to perform the 'Visual Interactive Handling' then you are recommended to buy SansMinds Silent Assistant \$49.99. Alternatively, try the Bonus effect using the SansMinds special Sharpie, \$24.95. Concerned how to carry the plastic coins, stop them getting scratched and be able to retrieve them easily? Buy the SansMinds wallet, \$49.95.

In the Final Thoughts you are exhorted to "Let your imagination go wild", usually a euphemism for "We can't think of anything else

to say so over to you." It is also claimed to be a "reputation maker". You might not want to rest your reputation on this effect and a couple of tatty plastic coins. **SB**

WHAT'S HOT: nothing
WHAT'S NOT: over hyped and massively over priced.
RATING: 10%



DEBAJO

Juan Luis Rubiales

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

Price: £16.00

With Debajo you get two effects. The first is an easy to do card and coin effect with a strong impact in which spectators can apparently correctly name playing cards placed face down on the table. The second effect is a coin matrix with a twist, more difficult to do but which has the production of

ten coins as a surprise ending. You also get a variation to the first effect using different objects.

Inside the small Debajo package there is a single gimmicked playing card, and a link to just over forty minutes of instructions. At first sight it does not seem that you are getting much for your money, particularly as the gimmick, although well made, is not some brand new concept, it is something you may have come across before. Similarly, although the first coin and card effect is quite strong the principle used is also well known to magicians.

So what do you get for your money? What you get is an effect which has been thought through and carefully constructed. The construction disguises the method, emphasises the impossibility of the effect with the aim, successfully, of creating the biggest impact possible.

The attention to detail, timing, misdirection and presentation is really a masterclass in how quite simple technique can be deployed to create strong magic. The effect is a very good illustration of the Leonardo da Vinci maxim "Details make perfection, and perfection is not a detail." It is the detail that makes this effect work.

In both routines the work with the coins is made easy using the Debajo gimmick. In the matrix effect, unknown to the audience, eight coins are on the table from the start. In this second effect you will need to learn how to pick up a card and coin cleanly and to switch a coin between two cards. None of this is very difficult and everything you need to know is very clearly explained. You will need to do

some practice to make the actions fluid.

Both effects need a table top and are ideal for small groups or a parlour setting. The video instructions include a live performance, very clear explanations and details of how to make a replacement gimmick if required. **SB**

WHAT'S HOT: material that you will use. More importantly, a case study in how to think through and add subtlety and thoughtful construction to an effect, a transferable skill you can use to improve all your magic.

WHAT'S NOT: nothing
RATING: 80%



NUMBERED

Astor Magic

Available from www.astormagic.com

Price: €45 (approx £42)

I must admit to being a real fan of Astor's magic. Whenever I see him at a convention, more often than not, I end up buying one of his new releases. Numbered is Astor's take on the magician's

favourite plot - Card At Any Number (CAAN), with a twist.

You begin by showing a prediction playing card which is underneath the card box cellophane wrapper. The prediction has a blank yellow sticker stuck to it. Opening an app on your phone you show a number counter counting for 1 to 52. A spectator is asked to stop the counter anywhere they like. They can change their mind as many times as they like should they wish. Say they stop on the number 15. You then write 15 on the yellow sticker on the prediction card with a white board pen.

You remove the cards from the box and count down 15 cards. You show that if they stopped the counter one number before or one number after they would have got a different card. You turn over the 15th card showing it matches your prediction. Not only that but it has a yellow sticker on it with the number 15 written on it.

As with all of Astor's effects Numbered uses a simple method. In fact the main method involved will be very familiar to most magicians. The app and the deck do all the hard work meaning you can focus on the presentation.

The effect could be repeated with a different number should you wish to but as with all magic it is not recommended. It would be a good effect however, to use if you're tablehopping as anyone following you around would see it performed with a different number each time which is a huge benefit. You would have to use the same prediction card however due to the method.

When you receive Numbered there is a small amount of DIY for you to do. This will only take around 5-10 mins though and is a one time task.

At approximately £42 it's not a cheap effect, especially when you can only use the deck for this one

effect. This may put some people off who have pocket space issues when performing.

As with all of Astor's effects, if you like the look of it from the trailers then I would recommend buying it. You will not be disappointed. **PS**

WHAT'S HOT: Good solid routine that looks impossible
WHAT'S NOT: The counter is not so much an app as a web page. Deck can only be used for this one effect
RATING: 75%



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