



# **magicseen** MAGAZINE

**PAUL TALKS  
MENTALISM (PART 2)**

**LUIS DE MATOS**

**RESTAURANT  
MAGIC (PART 2)**

**MASTERCLASS**

**REVIEWS**



ANDI  
GLADWIN

**CREATING OUR FUTURE**

**FREE TASTER PDF #6**

# IN THE NEWS...



## THIS PLAY IS FAR FROM DEAD!

If you could talk to the dead, would you want to? That's the question explored in the new off-Broadway production "Play Dead." It was directed by the magician Teller - of the duo Penn and Teller - as homage to the old magic seance shows. On the stage, performer Todd Robbins raises the dead, plays tricks on the audience, and generally scares the wits out of anyone who shows up. The show has received rave reviews so far! Coolio!

## NORTHERN MAGIC CONVENTION DATES AND STUFF!

April 16/17th are the dates for the Northern Magic Circle Convention 2011 to be held at The Spa Complex, Scarborough.

**magicseen** cover star Marc 'Where did that gold statue come from' Oberon has been booked, and so has Jay Scott-Berry.

**Visit: [northernmagic.co.uk](http://northernmagic.co.uk) for full details...**



## Fancy a good Session?

The brilliant 'Session' convention is gearing up for it's January 15/16th dates. An impressive line-up includes the mega-talented Luke Jermy, massively talented Darwin Ortiz, the amazingly talented Benjamin Earl and the incredibly talented Pit Hartling, and superbly talented Justin Higham, and the supremely talented Denis Behr. So much talent, yet so little time to book a place!

**Visit: [www.sessionconvention.com](http://www.sessionconvention.com)**



## CHARLES REYNOLDS RIP

Magic legend and historian Charles Reynolds has passed away to the great magic club in the sky. The New York Times posted a very thoughtful and well developed obituary on the magician known as 'Charlie'.

Mr. Reynolds belonged to the circumspect, virtually

invisible world of "backroom boys" who help magicians refine their acts. In "Merlin," a 1983 Broadway musical starring Doug Henning, he figured out how to make a live white horse and rider vanish into thin air. In "Blackstone!," a 1980 Broadway show, he helped Harry Blackstone Jr.



bifurcate his wife with a buzz saw.

He was producer, director, magic creator and magic consultant for television, stage and film productions from Hollywood and Broadway to London, Paris and Hong Kong. He was chief magic consultant to Mr. Henning for all eight of his annual one-hour network magic specials. The first, in 1975, attracted 50 million viewers.

## THE 'NEW' ILLUSIONIST MOVIE GOES AHEAD!

The new trailer for The Illusionist serves as a perfect reminder of just how captivating the art form can be. Based on an unproduced screenplay by the great Jacques Tati and directed by Sylvain Chomet (The Triplets of Belleville), even the film's trailer transports viewers to a new world. And it looks much more fantastic and inspiring than this one.

In addition, it appears that a judge has cleared the way for the release of the film by denying a restraining order filed by the rights holder to the 2006 film of the same name.

According to the Hollywood Reporter, it looks like Sony Pictures Classics won't have any problem releasing The Illusionist, despite a film by the same name having been released four years ago.

A federal judge in Los Angeles has denied a restraining order request by Illusionist Distribution, LLC, the rights-holder of the previous film, The Illusionist, which came out in 2006 and starring Ed Norton. The plaintiff in the case had sued Sony last month, arguing that the new film - an Oscar contender, according to pundits - infringed its trademark and would cause substantial consumer confusion.



FIG 1

**TWISTED**

Wayne Fox

**EFFECT**

A spoon is handed to a spectator which they initial with a permanent marker and hold in their clenched fist. The magician takes hold of the bowl of the spoon and turns it around several times. The spectator can feel the handle turning in their hand, and yet when they open it, the spoon's handle has a twisted spiral right the way through it.

**THOUGHTS**

One of the most common questions you get asked along with "can you make my wife disappear?", is, "can you bend metal?". I find some long spoon bending routines for a restaurant, are too long. So rather than say "no, I don't do metal bending", I created this short routine that involved people at the table, but was just as intriguing.

One very important point here is to tell the manager of the place you are working that you will not be using their cutlery to perform this effect. The customers don't know that and are just as blown away, but they have to believe that you are using any spoon. The restaurant manager will appreciate knowing that you are not costing them a small fortune in spoons!

**MAKING THE GIMMICK**

You will need a vice, some pliers and your supply of spoons. Take a spoon and put it in the vice about a third of the way down the handle. Now take your pliers and get a good firm grip just under the bowl of the spoon. Give a steady turn of the pliers and twist the spoon bowl 180 degrees keeping the whole thing straight. Be sure not to scratch the spoon. You should end up with a twist in the spoon handle as shown in FIG 1.

Make as many of these as you need. Sometimes, after a performance, you can retrieve the spoon, but I like to let the spectators take them home as they make great promotional items.

Requirements: One of your gimmicked spoons, a regular spoon, a permanent marker pen and a handkerchief.

**SET UP**

Take one of your 'gimmicked' spoons and place it in your right trouser pocket in such a fashion that the bowl of the spoon is at the bottom of your pocket and the handle is at the top. Now take the handkerchief and fold it enough so that it fits flat into your pocket with the gimmicked spoon on the outer side of the handkerchief. This helps the spoon to stand on end so that you have quick and easy access to it. This is not the only reason for using the handkerchief, as

you will see. Have the marker in the left hand pocket and the regular spoon to hand. Performance: When someone asks you if you can do metal bending, pick up the spoon from the table and ask to borrow it or bring out your own ungimmicked one. Say that you want the spoon marked in some way. You now execute the Tommy Wonder Deck Switch, but with spoons. Have the spoon in the right hand and as you say that you need it marked, you tap your pockets. Immediately put your left hand into your left trouser pocket and bring out the marker, whilst at the same time your right hand merely puts its spoon in the right trouser pocket between your leg and the handkerchief and brings out the gimmicked spoon. The handkerchief stops the two spoons 'talking'.

This is done very naturally but with rhythm, as you hold the switched in gimmicked spoon in the right hand and the marker in the left. Give the marker to the spectator and ask him to initial the bowl of the spoon. Hold the spoon upright with your index and

middle finger hiding the 'twist' in the neck of the spoon, explaining that you are holding it "up high so that everyone can see you sign it"

Once it's been signed/marked, hand it to the spectator and ask him to hold it tightly in his clenched fist with the bowl and the handle protruding from either end of his hand FIG 2.

You now take the bowl between your fingers and give it a turn, asking the spectator if he can feel the handle turning inside his fist. Then repeat this but with the handle end, pointing out that you can see the bowl of the spoon turning. Now take the bowl in your left hand and the handle in your right and pretend to turn the spoon in opposite directions. In fact you turn the bowl round but mime the turning of the handle by letting it rotate in your fingers.

Ask the spectator to open his hand; of course they do this to reveal the 'twist' in the neck of the spoon. The spoon is bent, it's signed, they get to keep it that way, and you end clean.



FIG 2

# ANDI GLADWIN

## Hope Springs Eternal

We've been waiting for something positive to happen in UK magic for quite a while now. At **magicseen** we've featured a few up-and-coming performers who we hope will go on to find success, but at 27 years old, Andi Gladwin has already made a massive impact with his original magic, The Session magic convention, and his company Vanishing Inc. which he owns with Joshua Jay. He's also just released 'The Master Push-Off' DVD set. It seems that at long last, the future of magic is here! Graham Hey asks the questions!

With so many projects, it's hard to keep up with Andi Gladwin, so when people ask him what he does for a living, it's not an easy question to answer. "I really don't have an answer," he says. "I think that summing up your life based on your job is a terrible tradition, so I tend to tell them that I'm a magician and a publisher before quickly changing the subject to something more interesting!"

"I do perform professionally (in that I do it as a paid job), but I also spend my days creating, writing, producing and publishing magic. I also organise a magic convention and run a couple of other businesses."

Andi left school straight after sixth form, starting work as a web programmer the day he left for study leave. He then took annual leave from work to take his exams and stayed in full-time employment for about ten years. "I moved from a web developer, to the head of a user interaction team for a London-based startup and then finally as UK product manager for the world's largest web host. It was a



Photograph by Mark Chivers

**"I DO PERFORM PROFESSIONALLY (IN THAT I DO IT AS A PAID JOB), BUT I ALSO SPEND MY DAYS CREATING, WRITING, PRODUCING AND PUBLISHING MAGIC..."**



*Photograph by Nigel Byde*

**“...I HAD PRODUCED A BUCKET LIST FEATURING A HUNDRED THINGS TO ACHIEVE IN LIFE; BEING A PROFESSIONAL MAGICIAN WAS ONE OF THEM. SO, WITH THE CONSTANT ENCOURAGEMENT AND HELP OF KERRY SCORAH AND THE AMAZING SUPPORT OF MY WIFE SARAH, I TOOK THE JUMP. I HAVEN'T LOOKED BACK SINCE!”**





**“WHILE CORPORATE GIGS AND WEDDINGS AREN’T MY MAIN SOURCE OF INCOME, I DO AIM TO WORK AT LEAST ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK. I STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT THE ONLY WAY TO BECOME A GREAT MAGICIAN IS TO PERFORM A LOT, SO I’M REALLY TRYING TO GET AS MUCH STAGE TIME AS POSSIBLE.”**

corporate roller coaster that set me up to do what I do now.”

Turning professional in 2010, I ask him what his motivations were, taking into account that he already had a successful career. “Firstly, the companies that I was running consumed too much time to fit around a day job,” he continues. “And on top of that, I had produced a bucket list featuring a hundred things to achieve in life; being a professional magician was one of them. So, with the constant encouragement and help of Kerry Scorch and the amazing support of my wife Sarah, I took the jump. I haven’t looked back since!”

With a successful business, magic conventions, creating and other

things taking up his time, I ask him how much he actually gets to perform for the public?

“I try to perform as much as possible. While corporate gigs and weddings aren’t my main source of income, I do aim to work at least once or twice a week. I strongly believe that the only way to become a great magician is to perform a lot, so I’m really trying to get as much stage time as possible.”

Andi tells me that every now and then, an agent will get in touch but they’re not his main source of work. “The problem that I have with many agents is that they call the shots when it comes to how long I perform for and the conditions that I work. I much prefer to take control of that so that I can provide the

client with the most suitable entertainment for their event. That can be tricky with some agents, so I don’t rely on getting much work from them.” But doesn’t that cut down the amount of work you get? “Probably,” he replies, “But I’m not in the business of compromising a performance for myself or the client. So if I don’t think I’ll be suitable for a gig, I won’t do it. For example, yesterday I got a call for someone wanting me to perform magic dressed as the Mad Hatter. I’d be terrible at that, so I passed the gig on to someone who would be great for it. It’s a win for everyone; I keep my integrity, the client gets someone more suitable and the other magician gets to do a job they’ll be great at!”

Andi gets work from a variety of places, but says the most interesting is PostGigs.com, which he set up with Rob James. “It’s a work referral service that allows magicians to post gigs that they can’t do and then others can apply for those gigs. Rob is a very clever thinker when it comes to this industry, so along with my design and development skills, I think we have a great partnership!” So far, over £350,000 worth of gigs have been posted in less than a year, which is really incredible. Continues Andi, “We have sections for close-up magicians and children’s magicians. It’s self-regulating in that the ‘poster’ gets to choose whom they give the gig to, so quality tends to remain very high. And if you’re able to help a client find the perfect magician for their event, they’ll almost certainly come back to you in the future!”

We know that Andi certainly has a knack for business, and for what customers want, but as far as performing goes, I ask him to describe his performance style? “It’s always hard to describe yourself, so I recently asked some other magicians who had worked with me this very same question. They said that I’m confident, funny and in control of my performance. I try to choose my magic to suit my surroundings, age and personality so it’s very useful to know how others perceive me. I’m a little nerdy, so I have a lot of gags around that, but a lot of my humour is ‘off the cuff’ and in response to the audience.”

So what kind of magic does he actually perform? After considering the question for a moment, he says, “I’m constantly evolving and expanding my repertoire. The key though, is that I try to perform magic that is direct, simple and strong. I almost exclusively perform close-up magic, but have a few minutes of stand-up too.” Is entertainment the key ingredient? “We’ve all heard that argument that we’re entertainers first and

magicians second, but that's a backwards approach," he says, as if he's discussed this question before. "If someone has hired me to perform magic, you can be completely certain that I'm going to do everything I can to fool their guests as my main priority. I will still be fun and entertaining, but I really don't subscribe to the idea that the magic comes second to that.

"I think that a lot of magicians need to carefully consider the job description. My goal is to leave people speechless, amazed and questioning what they thought was possible. I'm not interested in performing a few "nice tricks;" I want to leave them with the impression that they've seen something amazing, unique and special."



Photograph by Nigel Byde



**"IF SOMEONE HAS HIRED ME TO PERFORM MAGIC, YOU CAN BE COMPLETELY CERTAIN THAT I'M GOING TO DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO FOOL THEIR GUESTS AS MY MAIN PRIORITY. I WILL STILL BE FUN AND ENTERTAINING, BUT I REALLY DON'T SUBSCRIBE TO THE IDEA THAT THE MAGIC COMES SECOND TO THAT."**

## Q&A

### **How important are your friends to your magic?**

I am extremely lucky that some of my best friends are the most talented magicians out there and I consult them all on everything I work on. For example, Ben Earl is one of the best close-up magicians I have ever met, Rob James understands magic marketing like nobody else I know, Noel Qualter is one of the most creative people I know and Joshua Jay has created and published some of the best effects of this decade.

The list could go on, but I think the key is that you can't become a great magician alone; you need help from others and I'm not afraid

to ask my friends for it. Everything I've ever done in magic has had their influence and has almost always been improved by working with them.

### **Your friendship with Joshua Jay turned into a business relationship. Tell us about that.**

When Josh did a two month tour in the UK a few years ago, I lived in Gloucestershire for half the week and London for the other half. That meant that I was often nearby when Josh wanted somewhere to stay, so we spent a lot of time together. We first met filming a television show in Las Vegas when we were teenagers, but hadn't really had the opportunity to spend a lot of time together, outside of magic conventions.

It turned out that both Josh and I had dreamed about the same

thing; owning an old-style magic shop. That is, a plush shop where the owner would show you any trick and tell you the truth about how good it was. We realised that we could have this kind of shop and that we could fulfil our goals as an online shop. After eight month's work on the site, Vanishing Inc. was launched and it's going great guns.

Our team now spans across four different time zones and offers a twenty-four seven service. We're incredibly quick to reply to correspondence, send orders and are extremely passionate about what we do. We've modelled ourselves on mainstream online retailers, not magic shops.

Our website is custom built and our team are experts at what they do.





#### What do you sell?

We publish and produce our own magic, but also sell some select items by other people. Whereas most online magic shops stock all 8,000 products that are available from Murphy's Magic (the main distributor for magic), we stock only the best few hundred. The aim is to be the best magic shop and not necessarily the biggest or highest earning. We have integrity and want customers to become customers for life.

#### What are you working on now?

Three words: *The Complete Sankey!* Everyone knows that Jay Sankey is one of the most creative magicians out there, with way over six hundred published tricks to his name. Josh and I have spent over three years compiling and writing up all of his material into three big hardback books. It's been an all-consuming project but we're getting close to completion and we expect a mid-2011 release. I also just finished up on my first

ever DVD set, *The Master Pushoff*. It focuses on the double pushoff; one of the most versatile, useful techniques I use.

#### Can you explain what a double pushoff is?

Anyone who does a double lift can benefit from this technique. It's a way of taking two cards perfectly squared as one, without a break or get ready. You can just pick up a deck and push over two cards as one. It really cleans up your card magic as you can go straight into moves that require a double card. So, once learned, the double pushoff can then be applied to false deals, multiple lifts, switches, palms and so much more.

The feedback that I've received so far is that it's really having a big impact on people's card magic and I'm thrilled about that. I didn't just want to release a DVD of tricks, but instead something that could really have a positive impact on people's magic.

**“THE AIM IS TO BE THE BEST MAGIC SHOP AND NOT NECESSARILY THE BIGGEST OR HIGHEST EARNING. WE HAVE INTEGRITY AND WANT CUSTOMERS TO BECOME CUSTOMERS FOR LIFE.”**

#### How do you gauge the magic market, is it expanding, or in decline?

It's clear that magic has been commercialised beyond belief over the past few years and there are lots of people out there to make a quick buck from magicians. But I see those kind of products slowly declining and the better releases standing out more. Due to the Internet, magic has become self-regulating so the number of terrible releases is declining.

#### There are lots of excellent young guys coming through - any tips for them?

The future of magic is strong. We have lots of great upcoming magicians, many of whom are exceptionally dedicated sleight of hand technicians. The key (and I had to go through this stage myself) is to find the midpoint between method and effect. The day I realised that a method is only important in how it affects the effect (to paraphrase Darwin Ortiz), my magic became indescribably stronger.



Photograph by Nigel Bye

### Women in magic - what's happened there? Not many around?

One of my best friends is Kerry Scoria (she lives in the house opposite from me) so I have a pretty good viewpoint into women in magic. We're seeing many more female comedians reach stardom, so I'm sure that we'll see that reflected in magic in a few years.

### Creating magic: do you have a particular thought process which serves you well, or is every effect created differently, if you get my meaning?

I no longer create magic for the sake of it. When I was younger, creativity was an important exercise in understanding what made a good effect. With that groundwork done, I now rarely create an effect without a need for it first. Because of that, I always focus on creating the clearest, most amazing effect. Once it's clear what I want to achieve, I then set about finding the best possible and most direct method.

### How did The Session start?

Rob James and I have collaborated on several projects. We used to attend a lot of conventions together and we often discussed our frustrations with them. All magic conventions that we attended in the UK aim at the lowest skill level, follow the same format and have no focus. We started The Session six years ago and it's now stronger than ever. The goal is for everyone to go away a better close-up magician. We do that with a series of hands-on workshops, sessions, interviews, and discussions. If you've attended other magic conventions, I think you'd be surprised at just how big a

difference the subtle changes we've made to a magic convention make.

### You got married recently. Tell us about the wedding.

I proposed to Sarah in Las Vegas after the MAGIC Live convention in 2009. I had planned to do the deed outside of the Bellagio fountains, but after a brainstorming session with Paul Wilson and Rune Klan, I decided to change location to the Eiffel Tower at the Paris hotel. When we got to the top of the tower, I noticed two people who looked a little familiar. It eventually dawned on me that it was Tyler Wilson and Kerry Scoria who wanted to get a photograph of the moment without us ever seeing them! My last minute change of location annoyed them a little as Kerry is scared of heights!

The wedding itself was in the Cotswolds in August 2010. About a dozen magicians attended. Joshua Jay and Rob James were best men and Kerry Scoria was head bridesmaid, so it was definitely a magic themed event! I realised how important entertainment is at a wedding, so I flew Chad Long to perform for my guests. He went down a storm and it was great to give my family and friends the opportunity to see a world-class magician. In the evening, as a surprise for everyone, I had 'Signature', the Michael Jackson tribute dancers from Britain's Got Talent perform. It was a lot of fun!

[www.andigladwin.co.uk](http://www.andigladwin.co.uk)



## VIVA LAS VEGAS!

**On his recent trip to Vegas, Andi compiled a few places that visitors might be interested in...**

**Gambler's General Store:** supplies for everything related to casinos, including many, many decks of cards that I've never seen before (many by USPCC). They also stock many cheating and casino protection books that I've not seen elsewhere.

**Non-magic shows:** with so many magic shows in Vegas, it's easy to ignore the other places to see magic. Variety shows such as V or Peepshow at Planet Hollywood often have illusions in their shows. I also believe that you'll learn more about magic from a Cirque Du Soleil show than any magic show in the world.

**Neon Boneyard:** first pointed out to me by Ben Earl, this is a great way to find out the story of Vegas, told around the history of Neon in Vegas. I just visited it a few days ago and thoroughly enjoyed the tour.

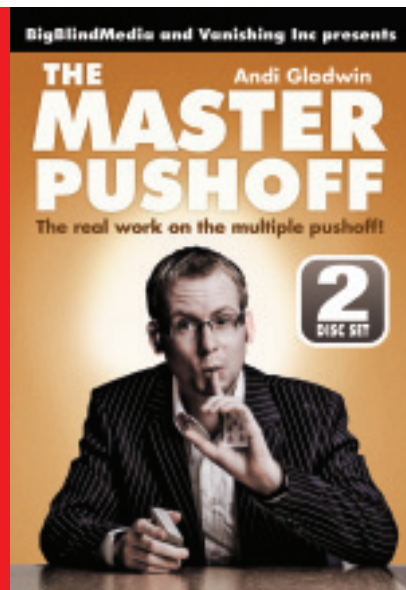
**Houdini's:** these magic shops for the public are everywhere in Las Vegas. Why do I suggest you visit them? To watch the pitch! Pitchmen are a forgotten art in magic, but to see some of the better performers at Houdini's perform and then sell a trick is quite a treat. They also give a simple lesson: the most direct magic effects are often the best received.

**Casinos:** I'm fascinated by how croupiers and players handle playing cards and often spend time taking in their styles etc. It certainly gives you an interesting view into how other professions handle the same props.

## COMPETITION: WIN ANDI!

OK, don't get too excited, we just mean a copy of his great new DVD set: The Master Pushoff!

**QUESTION:** Name five DVDs currently promoted by [bigblindmedia.com](http://bigblindmedia.com). Yes, just visit their site, get the answers and email them to [grahamhey@magicseen.co.uk](mailto:grahamhey@magicseen.co.uk). We'll inform the winner direct and also print details in issue 37 of **magicseen**.



Photograph by Nigel Bye



# TURNING THE TABLES

How to succeed with magic in a restaurant **PART 2**

Mark Leveridge

**Welcome back! Last time our resident experts in the art of performing magic in restaurants - Harry Robson, Matthew Dowden, Iain Moran, Jayne Corrigan, Shaun McCree and David Willmott - gave their opinions on many aspects of the subject including explaining the differences between restaurant magic and entertaining at dinner functions, the type of magic to use, what to carry it in and how you are often more than just the magic man when working in a restaurant, you are also part of the team representing the venue. This time, they will be turning their attention to more nitty gritty aspects of the job, starting with a question that the neophyte will often ask - "How do you approach a table?"**

## OPENING SALVOS

Years ago, people used to say that you should do an unexpected piece of magic by way of introduction, so that the spectators immediately get to see that you are the entertainer. Nowadays, this seems to be largely

out of fashion as it can be perceived as being a bit too pushy or impolite. Our experts all seem to agree that, to a greater or lesser extent, they like to be upfront and just introduce themselves and explain what they are there for. Iain sums it up nicely when he comments: "I prefer to be open and explain right off the bat who I am and why I'm at their table. I also emphasise that I won't be staying at their table all night and that it's

with the compliments of the restaurant."

Of course, whether the table are aware of who you are before you approach them, can make the job either easier or a bit more difficult. If they have seen you working your magic for other tables, no explanation is necessary, and so you can just walk right up and once you have their attention and have formally introduced yourself, you

can begin. The same applies if there are tent cards on the tables advertising your presence or maybe posters or billboards visible explaining that there will be magic in the building that night. However, if there is no obvious publicity posted, in restaurant work, where people are coming and going during the night, it doesn't necessarily follow that although you have been entertaining for some time that evening that the latest

**"DON'T GIVE THEM A HUGE OPPORTUNITY TO RESPOND EITHER. I FIND THAT PEOPLE DO NEED A LITTLE PUSH TO GET THINGS MOVING AND A LOT OF THE TIME THEY DON'T REALISE THAT THEY LIKE MAGIC UNTIL YOU IMPRESS THEM."**

**MATTHEW DOWDEN**



table you approach will have seen you - they may have only fairly recently arrived and therefore not had any pre-warning of what you are doing. So some form of verbal introduction makes sense.

Shaun also thinks that to a certain extent how you approach can come down to your personality and also to how much experience you have. When you have been doing the job for a while you get to "read the attitude and dynamic of the table" and then have the confidence to "just go up to people and have a chat." David reckons that how you approach may also depend on who is on the table itself, as he explains. "A table filled with a children's birthday party is different from a group of Hell's Angels bikers."

Matthew makes an excellent point when he says that enthusiasm is vital. "If you go over and ask them in an indifferent manner whether they'd like to see something, the majority of people will say they are OK. They might have ended up being the best group you've ever had, but it is easier for them to say 'no thank you'. Don't give them a huge opportunity to respond either. I find that people do need a little push to get things moving and a lot of the time they don't realise that they like magic until you impress them."

The fact is that you are being paid to be there and you are therefore entitled to approach the table. So, don't be apologetic about it, look like you are pleased to be there and that you can't wait to share with the table the magic that you can do. Your enthusiasm and confidence alone will reassure the people that they can relax and that they will enjoy what they are about to see.

## THE REFUSAL

The fear that beginners always have, though, is that they will get refused and that it will be embarrassing! First thing to say, is that if the approach is right, the

chances of being refused are reduced right down to almost nil. However, unlike at a dinner function where entertainment is usually part of the deal, going to a restaurant to eat does not necessarily come with the expectation that there will be anything more than background music to accompany the food, and so sometimes you may get unlucky and hit a table that really isn't in the mood for you to work for them. Jayne thinks that under these



**"I THANK THEM FOR THEIR TIME, GO TO THE NEXT TABLE AND HOPE TO RECEIVE A FANTASTIC REACTION. 9 TIMES OUT OF 10, AFTER SEEING YOU WORKING AT OTHER TABLES AND PEOPLE ENJOYING THEMSELVES, THEY WILL ASK YOU BACK."** HARRY ROBSON

circumstances it is best just to "wish them a nice evening and move on to another table."

Harry thinks that sometimes people refuse because they worry that they won't like what you are going to do, and so he says, "I thank them for their time, go to the next table and hope to receive a fantastic reaction. 9 times out of 10, after seeing you working at other tables and people enjoying themselves, they will ask you back."

There can be all sorts of reasons why a table may not wish to see

any magic. It does not necessarily mean they don't like the look of you, or even that they don't like magic in general, it might just be that it is not an appropriate time for you to interrupt and perform. The people may be in the middle of an important discussion or they may simply want to have some private time. As performers we have to respect this and not force ourselves on the diners in contravention of their genuine desire to be left alone.

magic man, we will LET you do your magic now", I tell them politely that I've got a few more tables that have been waiting for ages to see me but I'll see what I can do later on, which is very satisfying if they have been rude to you."

## IT'S ALL IN THE TIMING

With a dinner function, as was pointed out in Part 1, there are obvious moments as the whole room is being served or cleared, when you can start to perform at the tables. But how does it work in the more free flow conditions of a restaurant? When is a good time to make your approach? Harry extolls the generally held view that it is best not to entertain "when people are eating. But on some occasions, when asked specifically by customers, I will, although I'm always conscious that their food could be going cold whilst I'm performing."

Jayne says: "I try to wait until a point after they have ordered, to entertain them, as I am very aware that as magicians we are employed to entertain customers and not detract from the fact that they are probably mainly there to eat, which is the restaurant's primary means of earning revenue!" David agrees, but adds, "Its very important not to do any magic before the food order as the restaurant will want to turn over as many covers as possible. You must always be aware of people coming and going, pacing yourself so that every table gets to see a show, but any time between courses is good."

Matthew concurs that trying to work while people are actually eating is rarely a success as you seem to end up having to apologise for asking someone to take a card or hold a sponge ball since they have to put down their cutlery in order to help you. Also, during a meal, people sometimes need to call over a waiter for something to do with the meal, and this causes a problem and an interruption. Iain has another reason

However, there are situations where your invitation can be quite rudely rebuffed by someone who thinks it's 'funny' to try and send you packing with a few well chosen words.

Matthew says, "If someone tells me to get lost, trying to be funny, I simply say "no problem, enjoy your meal" and make sure that all the tables around them get the works. I know it's a bit of a vengeful attitude, but there is nothing more satisfying when someone has been rude to you than having the other tables in hysterics while they try to see what is going on. If they then ask me to go back later on, typically done in a "OK then



## “I’VE ALWAYS FOUND IT USEFUL TO GO TO THE RESTAURANT A FEW TIMES AS A CUSTOMER, BEFORE APPROACHING THE MANAGER ABOUT WORKING THERE.” IAIN MORAN

why after the meal has been ordered is a good time. "I feel this is when I'm going to be most appreciated by the diners and the manager: I'm filling the gap while they wait for their food and, from the management's perspective, I'm not keeping them from leaving, which I would be if they'd finished eating and paid the bill."

So working after they have ordered but before the meal arrives is a good option. The only problem can be that you may not know how long ago the table placed their order, and therefore how soon the meal may arrive. At dinner functions you don't get this problem so much as everyone is being served the same meal at the same time, but in a restaurant, there are all sorts of different meals being brought out at all manner of different times. Matthew has some good advice if you get caught mid-trick by the arrival of the meal. "Simply finish that effect and tell them you'll let them enjoy their food and come back later if they have time. Don't rush your effect as typically they won't mind waiting a minute or two if they are enjoying the magic. However, if you're doing a routine that you can end at any phase, maybe miss out a few phases and cut to the climax."

Of course, when you perform may vary depending on the type of restaurant you are working in, as Shaun explains. "It all depends

upon how fast tables are turned and the style of the restaurant you work in - one Chinese restaurant I worked for almost ten years considered me an asset after the meal to encourage patrons to remain at the table and have a brandy or a liquor, increasing their margins. Knowing the type of dining experience your restaurant is offering to their patrons is important in keeping your residency, I think."

### HERE'S A TIP

Tippling is an interesting aspect of the job which can be more of an issue in a restaurant than it is at a dinner function. At the function, the guests have probably paid a premium for the entertainment that they receive, and so they usually consider that they 'already gave'. But in a restaurant, where the magic is perhaps seen as an unexpected extra, there are occasions where people feel sufficiently moved to slip a folded note into the performer's hand. But should performers agree to work just for tips, or indeed be encouraged to try and get tips?

In part, tipping is a cultural thing. In the US, tipping is totally the norm. It's not a reward for extra good service as a rule, but an expectation on the part of the waiter or waitress. But in the UK, this is no longer the case. Tipping is rare, and usually only as a reward for something

exceptional, so the chances of a performer being able to work just for gratuities in the UK are poor. All of our experts feel it is wrong to try to encourage tips, especially if you are already being paid a reasonable amount to perform, although they do feel that it is also rude to turn it down if someone feels strongly enough to offer one.

Shaun has an interesting view on it, when he says: "Personally, I've never solicited tips at all - that's not to say I haven't had them, but in general I'd rather they took a card and considered booking me for an event than handed me a couple of quid. There's also an interesting point I noticed years ago and that is that the tables who enjoyed my performance leave bigger tips for the staff than tables I haven't performed at - that makes staff happier because they know they'll do better out of it if they work with me, which is worth more to me in the long run."

Matthew feels that if you charge a sensible fee for your services it removes the need to try and supplement the earnings through receiving tips. He states: "I have always gone in quite high price wise in my residencies. This means that you don't really feel the need to get extra money and any tips you do get are a bonus. I have had a guy tip me £50 over the course of an evening in one of my restaurants, tipping me once to come back, then again when I'd finished my second set and then again as he was leaving. I do find it hilarious though when a parent sends their child over with a pound coin for you. I mean, how desperate do they think you are? :-)"

Maybe that's it. We want to be taken seriously as quality entertainers and that is a harder sell if it becomes clear that the only reason you are working the table is in the hope of extracting payment from them. It also changes the dynamic of your relationship with the audience - they may feel uneasy at the thought of having to tip you and not relax or even refuse to let you perform at all in order to avoid the situation. Which is why it is so much easier and more dignified if you can state at the outset that the magic comes with the compliments of the restaurant itself.

### JOB SEEKERS

Want to get out there and work? Don't know how to start? Here's the advice of our top team. Take your pick and see what seems right for you.

David: "It's very hard to try and sell yourself to a venue. Most of my restaurant jobs have come about by meeting restaurateurs when I've been performing magic at a different venue. Most restaurants have a very high turn over of staff and managers, so the top decision makers are hardly ever there."

Shaun: "I used to say that if you were just beginning in the restaurant/bar field that it's worthwhile making an arrangement with a local eatery to perform, say, every Sunday for a month as a charity fundraising exercise - set up a little collection box at the desk on the way out and collect money for Comic Relief or whatever. This works on several levels - first it's a low pressure way to learn the craft

- people cut you much more slack when it's for charity. Second, you can find out whether the venue is a good one for you (or whether the whole area of restaurant magic suits you in the first place). Third, you can mention to diners that the restaurant are trying something new and that if they've enjoyed it could they mention it to the staff? Finally, you can expand your chances of converting it into a paying gig by trying to get publicity in the local press, getting friends to come in to dine specifically on the day you are there - having first rung the restaurant to find out 'is the magician in this Sunday.....what time.....okay, could we book a table for then, please' - ideally

of a venue. Make sure that this is a good venue for you, not only performance wise but for potential bookings you might get from its customers. Explain to the manager how much you would normally charge for 2 hours at a private gig then impress him with the discount you are willing to give him/her. Don't shoot too low here. Remember that you might end up being at this residency for a few years. It's better to aim slightly higher and then work out a compromise than to go too low at the outset. It needs to be a price that is going to make it worthwhile for you. Arrange a time to come in and do a free demonstration. Show the manager a trick if they ask to see one but

love to come back to see the magician. Also if there is a problem in the kitchen or if someone has been dissatisfied with something, the magic goes a long way to appease those situations. I have literally had people say that I have turned a bad night into a good night. This is invaluable to a restaurant as those customers would not have come back had it not been for me. The major tip that I will give is this. If you are a good performer you will be getting good reactions from the tables when you are doing your free demonstration. At each table explain that this is a trial to see if the magic works in the restaurant. Ask kindly if they wouldn't mind telling the manager (point him/her out) what a great idea it is to have a magician. I usually ask them to say (in a tongue in cheek manner) that they aren't coming back unless I'm there. Now try to see this from a manager's point of view. If he has people coming up to him saying how great you are and what a good idea it is, how can he not hire you?"

Jayne: "Approach them direct and if they are reticent possibly offer to do a night or two either free or at a reduced rate so they can judge its success."

lain: "I've always found it useful to go to the restaurant a few times as a customer, before approaching the manager about working there. This enables you to see if it is the kind of restaurant you want to work in (is the service good, nice food?). It also gives you the opportunity to get to know some of the staff, which will give you a bit of a head-start when the time comes to talk to the manager about your magic."

**So there you are, loads of great advice. We could go on more about all this but we're right out of space. If you want to learn more about the art of performing in restaurants, here's a list of further information sources provided by our six experts. Enjoy! **MS****



you'd like to get the restaurant manager to come to see you as an asset and ask you what your rates would be to stay on. Whether this approach would work today when people are much more acclimatised to close-up magic I couldn't say, but it might still be worth a try. It certainly could give you some working photos, maybe a press cutting and perhaps a letter from the manager - a track record you could use to approach another venue with."

Harry: "Source one or two restaurants you would like to work in and go to see them. Offer to work free of charge for a night, that way both you and the restaurant will see if it is beneficial to both of you."

Matthew: "The best way is to firstly set up a meeting with the manager

make this short and to the point. Don't go through your whole repertoire as this is a business meeting. The time for you to do a demo should be their busiest time which will probably be a Friday or Saturday between about 7pm and 10pm. Do an hour as this is all it takes to give them a flavour of what you do. Don't say that you will come in on a quiet night in order to boost business on that night. In my experience this doesn't generally happen unless they do a major advertising campaign and it puts way too much pressure on your position there. Stress that your job is to ensure that they remember having a great time as well as great food and that they are more likely to come back. Explain that you make it a better choice of venue for celebrations, parties and kids always

## USEFUL RESOURCES

**The Magic Menu** - Jim Sisti (Book)



**The Strolling Magician** - Mark Leveridge (Book)

**Restaurant Worker's Handbook** - Jim Pace and Jerry MacGregor (book)

**Live At The Jailhouse** - Kosmo (DVD)

**Mix and Mingle** - Shaun McCree (DVD)

**Party Animal** - Matthew Dowden (DVD)



**Flying Tonight, Pseudo Pickpocket and Pocket This** - Gary Jones and Chris Congreave (DVD)

**Supercharged Classics** - Mark James (DVD)

**Menu Of Miracles** - James Prince (DVD)

**Magical Arts Journal** - Michael Ammar (Book)

**Art Of Astonishment** - Paul Harris (Book)



**Simon Says** - Simon Lovell (Book)

**One Degree** - John Guastafiero (Book)

**Everything You Wanted To Know About Table Hopping But Were Afraid To Ask** - John Hotowka (Book)

**Manual of Restaurant Magic** - Kirk Charles (Book)

**The Art Of Hopping Tables** - Mark Leveridge (DVD)

**The Real Secrets of Magic** - David Stone (Book and DVD)

**Professional Repertoire of Etienne Pradier** - Etienne Pradier (DVD)

**Find The Stuff That's You** - Chris Carey (Book)



**Strong Magic** - Darwin Ortiz (Book)

**Real World Magic** - Jerry MacGregor (Book)



**MEANDERING MATCHBOXES**

**Bob Solari**

Available from:  
www.bobsolarimagic.com

**Price: \$10 + shipping**

This is a cute little novelty magic effect for the hobbyist magician which uses a box of wooden matches. A box full of matches is shown and placed on the performer's hand. Slowly the box starts to rotate itself until it has made a 90 degree turn on the flat of the magician's fingers without any apparent aid from the

performer. Then, while steadying the box with his thumb, the draw starts to eerily open to reveal the matches inside.

The blurb for this effect says "no threads, no wires, no magnets, no elastics, no body attachments", all of which is true. What the method does use is a specially prepared matchbox which enables you to fairly easily create the illusion of unaided movement. The amount of movement is relatively small - one quarter turn and then the box half opens - so this is not going to make people freak out with amazement, but done well it is a nice little novelty. There are some slight angle problems with the second phase as the box opens which you would need to cover for, but the thing is

self contained and does not require any reset.

In order to make this truly baffling magically, you would want to give the box out at the end for examination. Well, you are supplied with an ungimmicked matching box which Bob Solari suggests you secretly get out of your pocket at the end of the effect and by means of a Shuttle Pass switch and then give out. I seriously doubt whether the sort of magician to whom this effect will appeal is going to have the skill or nerve to do such a move at a moment when all attention is on the box, especially since this still leaves the performer palming the fake box and needing to secretly ditch it. However, the possibility is there.

You receive the two matchboxes and a single page of printed instructions which take you through the simple mechanics of the handling. If you are looking for something to do off the cuff say, down the pub, where there is no pressure to produce something hugely magical, I think this would probably go OK and create a little laugh and a bit of surprise. But be prepared to move straight on to something else to prevent any awkward questions! **ML**

**WHAT'S HOT:** self contained, no re reset, straightforward to do

**WHAT'S NOT:** necessity for a switch of boxes at a critical moment to make it truly fooling

★★★



**SLIM**

**Craig Petty**

Available from your local magic dealer

**Price: £20 + p&p**

It has to be said that some of the products that Craig has released onto the market have not been fantastic but it looks like something drastic has

changed as his latest DVD, Slim, is, without a doubt, his best release to date.

When you see the performances, it becomes clear that each one of the routines could easily fit into a working repertoire which gives good value for money.

The DVD consists of seven routines and in addition to that, one bonus routine.

The idea of the project was to create a DVD which was dedicated to effects using small packets of cards and this has been accomplished with flair.

However, don't worry, these are not packet tricks. These are effects which involve taking cards out of the deck and then using them.

I think that this is definitely a positive as spectators do sometimes want a little break from following the whole deck.

For me, the highlight was 'Mr Ts Knock Out' which is a lovely sandwich routine which is incredibly deceptive, even to magicians. It is a four phase sandwich routine ending with a 'reverse' kicker when the whole deck ends between the sandwich cards. For me, this was worth the cost of the DVD alone. Having said that, each routine has positives and although I would not use all of them, there are many kicker endings, and in each, there is at least one thing, even if it is a sleight, that you will gain.

Everything has a visual aspect to it which is nice.

Unfortunately, World Magic Store, have let themselves down on the production side of things. The performances were shot in a Gym to fit in with the 'Slim' theme but this became fairly distracting from the effects especially when Craig and his spectator were topless in the tanning booths. Having said that, the instruction, shot in the studio, is excellent and the setting of the performances is the only real negative. **GL**

**WHAT'S HOT:** Nice visual magic.

**WHAT'S NOT:** Where the performances were filmed.

★★★

**AT A GLANCE...**



**LUNCH DATE**

**Paul Romhany**

Available from your local magic dealer

**Price: £23 (approx)**

Paul Romhany performs and explains his favourite routines from his book Lunch Is Served. The routines in this DVD range from close-up to stand-up, with access to all the graphics needed so you can easily make up your own gimmicked business cards. There are some nice effects taught using the Out To Lunch principle. Worth a look.

★★★★



**STEAL THIS DVD**

**Eric Ross**

Available from your local magic dealer

**Price: £20 (approx)**

Steal This DVD is a collection of 7 effects from the mind of Eric Ross which are sure to stun even the most perceptive spectators. On this DVD, Eric utilises everything from playing cards to rubber bands to a needle and thread. All the effects are taught in great detail with multiple real life performances.

★★★



## THE MASTER PUSHOFF

Andi Gladwin

Available from: Vanishing Inc./Big Blind Media

Price: £24.99 + p&p

Ed Marlo taught this move in 25 pages. Andi Gladwin took that teaching and many years of his own expertise and put them together in this 2 DVD set.

The double pushoff is a move that many of us have either never heard of, or

never bothered to learn. It is a tricky move and with no real teaching on it, besides Marlo's Magazine Vol. 3, which is very hard to get hold of. This all changes with The Master Pushoff.

The first disc is dedicated to teaching the move and several of its applications. This includes the perfect double lift, second dealing, double dealing, 3rd, 4th and up to 10th dealing. Although even Andi says he has no real use for a tenth deal. He teaches this move very thoroughly, and the fact that he has practised and used this move regularly really shows.

Towards the end of the first disc, Andi is joined by Ben Earl. It is a refreshing change to see another

magician on a DVD giving some thoroughly good advice as opposed to standing there asking all the scripted questions and pretending to be impressed. And whilst Ben Earl's second deals didn't use the Pushoff move, it was a delight to watch a real master at work.

The teaching of the move was interrupted with other moves that Andi has come up with such as controls or colour changes - each using the Pushoff idea. These were nice ideas, and will remind you how it feels to be a layman. Being fooled by the same move over and over again. This is because the tell tale signs of a double lift are removed completely.

The second disc features tricks using the move.

Some of these are good. 'Passion of the Christ' is a four ace routine which is truly stunning, whereas others - 'Red Black to the Future' - is clearly just a trick for the sake of using the move itself. That was a feeling with a lot of the tricks on disc 2, but watching through it was worth it for the odd gem.

Credit should go to Andi for creating what will surely be the only source material on this move for the next century. **TC**

**WHAT'S HOT** you get a real feel for this move and very professional teaching on disc 1

**WHAT'S NOT** he should have stopped at disc 1

★★★★



## FLEXION

Jon Allen

Available from: www.onlinemagicshop.co.uk

Price: £35.00 plus p+p

The first thing you notice when receiving Jon Allen's latest magical offering is the packaging. You are presented with a very nice looking velvet covered box. Inside the box is an instructional DVD, 4 practise keys, a Sharpie marker and the gimmick that helps do all the hard work. The nice

thing about the gimmick too is that it could be left in plain sight and no one would suspect a thing.

The basic routine taught by Jon is where a key is introduced and signed by a spectator. It is a genuine key and not gimmicked in any way. The spectator now draws an image of the key on the back of a business card. Placing the real key behind the business card the picture is given a bend. When the card is removed the signed key now has a bend in it. Everything can now be examined.

When I first watched the DVD I thought it was going to be really hard to bend a key as with some other

metal bending effects. But to my surprise, the first key I tried bending actually snapped it was that easy. Jon actually covers what to do if the key snaps in performance, and to be honest it probably even adds to the overall effect if it does break in my opinion.

The way the routine is structured too gives you ample misdirection to bend the key.

To perform Flexion in a tablehopping situation you will have to get your hands on plenty of keys as you ruin one each time this is performed. It is also cheaper to use blank keys too as Jon points out.

As a bonus, Jon has also included a strange looking balancing marker effect utilising the gimmick. Whether many people chose to use this or not it is fun to watch.

If you are new to metal bending effects or have even been put off by some of the more expensive gimmicks on the market I would highly recommend giving Flexion a try. It is a great effect that you will carry around with you all the time. **PS**

**WHAT'S HOT** easy to do.

Well made gimmick.

**WHAT'S NOT** nothing really.

★★★★★

## AT A GLANCE...



## SHOOT FORCE

Shoot Ogawa

Available from your local magic dealer

Price: £20 (approx)

Shoot Ogawa is one of the finest sleight of hand magicians in the world. His technique is flawless and his pace is perfect and this DVD contains techniques and tricks by the man himself! Learn one of the most important sleights in pasteboards, the force, and learn it from one of the best magicians around today!

★★★★



## MAGIC AT THE BAR

Chris Randle

Available www.jbvtv.co.uk

Price: £17.50

Learn killer magic to perform in front of or behind the bar. That's what the box says but in reality it's almost cringe worthy when watching it. The effects are nothing special and the production values of the DVD are not much better. May appeal to some but it certainly wasn't my cup of tea.

★★



*Paul talks*

# MENTALISM!

*Part 2*

**The world class mentalist gives us a second taste of his excellent new book: *Mentalism My Way*. This issue, Paul talks about something we all dread: working a difficult audience, and also how to use 'storytelling' in your act....**



## **WORKING A DIFFICULT AUDIENCE**

There comes a time in every performer's career when we will encounter a problem audience. It may be the entire audience or just a few individuals, but the fact is the more people you are playing to, the more chance you may encounter problems.

As a rule, I very rarely have difficulties when I perform in the formal setting of a theatre. There you will find an audience that have paid to see you perform and have come along just to be entertained.

There are few distractions and the etiquette of the theatre prevents people from being disruptive and noisy. The cabaret room however can be a very different experience, as can any casual venue that has large groups of people seated for a social type gathering. After dinner entertainment, show rooms and corporate events can all be included in this. The use of alcohol will also change the mind set of most people and we all need to be aware of how to deal with situations that may arise on these evenings.

The following advice is based on my personal experiences and I hope may help if you ever find yourself in similar situations.

It's a Saturday night and I am about to go on stage to perform my forty-five minute cabaret show to approximately seven hundred people. The dancers have left the stage and the house band is closing the opening set.

It's nine o'clock so I'm not expecting a drunken crowd but one that is up and ready to be entertained.

The compere makes my introduction and I walk out on stage. When the applause dies down I begin my show. Within twenty seconds, a guy shouts over from the bar area "get on with it". Although I am not happy with the interruption, I continue as if nothing had happened, giving him the benefit of the doubt. He's had something to drink and the dancing girls are much nicer to look at than me, so I will give him a little time to adjust. I continue for a moment and he decides to pipe up again. This time he requested, in a very loud voice, that he wanted the dancing girls back on stage as this was boring. People are now starting to look around to see who is causing the disruptions. I also need to make some eye contact with this guy and when I do I become aware that he is not alone. There are fifteen to twenty of his best drinking pals there with him.



**“AS A RULE, I VERY RARELY  
HAVE DIFFICULTIES WHEN I  
PERFORM IN THE FORMAL  
SETTING OF A THEATRE.  
THERE YOU WILL FIND AN  
AUDIENCE THAT HAVE PAID  
TO SEE YOU PERFORM AND  
HAVE COME ALONG JUST  
TO BE ENTERTAINED.”**



This gentleman is not only distracting me but also my audience. It's the beginning of the show and I have work to do. This guy is not going to go away so how will I deal with him?

There is obviously more than one way to skin a cat. However depending on your personality and stage persona, here are a couple of suggestions.

1) The Pleasant Approach. This is usually the best way to go for a performer who relies on the help and assistance of the audience throughout his show. Once again try to portray yourself as a nice person that truly would not want to embarrass anyone. Even the load mouthed fool who wants to ruin your show. Handle him well and you have the audience in the palm of your hand for the rest of the evening.

### HERE IS MY TAKE ON THE NICE APPROACH.

At the next convenient point in my show, a point that will not disrupt my flow, I turn to the person who is causing the stir and if possible make eye contact with him. " Good evening Sir. How are you this evening?" However he replies, I tell him that I am pleased to be performing for him this evening and that I hope we can work on something together a little later in the show. This will very often get a chuckle from the audience and his mates, if he has any.

I suggest I have some demonstrations coming up that will be perfect for him. I will always keep this very vague but in a fun and friendly tone. This will suggest to the audience as a whole that it could be something dangerous, or silly. You may feel this is a strange approach to someone who has caused you to disrupt the flow of your performance. However by dealing with him in this way, I have found that it generally has the effect of shutting them up. The



## “ADDING AN INTERESTING STORYLINE CAN AND WILL, LIFT IT TO NEW HEIGHTS, ALMOST MAKING THE TRICK SECONDARY TO THE EXPERIENCE THE AUDIENCE RECEIVE FROM WATCHING YOUR PERFORMANCE.”

psychology behind this is threefold.

- a) You have drawn attention to him and by being very nice about it have made him feel like the bad guy. This should be enough to embarrass him into keeping quiet for the remainder of the show.
- b) If he has the type of personality that wants to be the centre of attention, by suggesting he will play a part in your show and in doing so drawing the attention of the audience to him, he has achieved his goal and if he truly wants to take part, will be on his best behaviour from now on. However if he really does not want to take part, he will also be on best behaviour as to not draw any more attention to himself and so reminding me to get him on stage.
- c) By pointing him out, he has now

lost his anonymity and is no longer the jerk in the darkness. If this approach fails...

### STORY TELLING

The art of involving your audience emotionally, is one that can change the simplest trick into a breathtaking and thought provoking miracle.

Story telling will provide the vehicle for this emotion, lifting the experience for you and your audience and more importantly, adding entertainment value to your act.

Now I would like to talk about the content of those stories and the reactions that can come from them. If you are already a stage performer working to large audiences, you will be aware that often simplicity in method and routine is your best

and most successful option.

This, as you should know by now, is most definitely my ethos when it comes to my show. Adding an interesting storyline can and will, lift it to new heights, almost making the trick secondary to the experience the audience receive from watching your performance.

Before I continue, I would like to point out that story telling and emotion building in your show is not for every performer or indeed every audience either. You will know better than anyone how you feel about story telling and if it fits your character. It's a very subjective thing and is not for everyone, and I will cover this a little more in a moment. However I do encourage you to try it, even if that means a very short story type introduction to a routine. It really doesn't have to be long and a sixty second tale can



**“YOUR STORYLINE LINE SHOULD HAVE THE ABILITY TO PUT EACH AND EVERY PERSON IN THE ROOM IN YOUR SHOES, AS THEY IMAGINE THIS HAPPENING TO THEM AND HOW PAINFUL IT WOULD BE.”**

set up just as much feeling and emotion in your audience as a ten minute story can. In fact I recommend you start with a short, uncomplicated narrative to

introduce a piece. This will give you a chance to experiment without making it too much a part of your show.

## CREATING THE EMOTION

Take for instance my nail roulette routine from my cabaret show. I could perform it by simply explaining the props and performing the routine without narrative or reasoning. The trick is still exciting and the tension will be enjoyed by the audience. However, there is no real emotional attachment from the audience, other than that of fear for your safety. Many would be happy with that alone and I don't deny it is a strong piece of mentalism. You can increase that emotional attachment by involving your audience with your storyline and presentation.

I will not repeat my script verbatim, but I would like to share my basic plot for this particular routine.

I open by talking a little about fears and phobias and how most people in the audience would be scared of something. Psychologically many of those fears would have come from childhood. After a little section of by play and fun with the audience, I continue with my storyline.

Many people in the room will be scared of snakes or spiders, for me it's nails. Not fingers nails. I am not that weird. Sharp steel builder's nails I am talking about. I can tell you precisely when I acquired that fear too. It was my 12th birthday. Myself and a few friends were out playing. My Mum called us in for my birthday lunch. As we ran to my house I tripped, putting my hand out to save my fall.

On the floor was a piece of wood. And in the piece of wood was a nail about 6 inches in length and very rusty.

As I hit the ground, the nail pushed right through the palm of my hand. It was the most painful experience I had ever had in my twelve years of life.

I went to the hospital with a piece of wood nailed to my hand.

After years of carrying this fear around with me, I decided to face it head on.

The demonstration you are about to see is part of my recovery process. This is my basic story. It's not word for word but you get the idea. The entire thing, with some acting out, takes no more than TWO minutes. But in that time, when performed well, it will work on your audience emotionally on many levels.

Firstly, it may strike up memories of their childhood, perhaps even a similar accident they had. We can certainly all remember birthday parties we had as children and the disappointment we all felt when it didn't all go to plan for one reason or another. If you are graphic or descriptive enough with your story, this will produce a stronger, more real fear in your audience and that the nail could once more, push through your hand in one bloody and painful moment.

Your storyline line should have the ability to put each and every person in the room in your shoes, as they imagine this happening to them and how painful it would be. It will get them wincing now and it will add new heights to your smash and stab or nail roulette when you begin that section of your routine. This personalised storyline will also help you gain a connection with your audience.

They now feel they know more about you and that in itself will induce more fear for your safety. You have created an important connection with your audience on so many levels and I guarantee a story written and told properly, will lift any routine to new and exciting heights of enjoyment for you and the audience.

**Mentalism My Way is available directly from [www.paulstockman.com](http://www.paulstockman.com)**



LUIS DE MATOS

# Luis de Matos

Portuguese, Proud & Perfecto!

Some people just have it all. There are very few magicians in the world today that have reached the level of success whereby they can hardly walk down the street without being mobbed. Luis de Matos of Portugal is a world class performer who has become a genuine TV celebrity and star. In 1998 he was awarded the highest award in the world of magic: “Magician of the Year” from the Hollywood Academy of Magical Arts. As a magician, he has had several television series of his own, performed mind-blowing illusions on a grand scale, and even toured his home country in a mobile theatre in a bid to bring magic to the masses. On top of all this, Luis has received acclaim from many of the world’s leading magicians in praise of his artistic approach and classy style. Oh, and he looks like a movie star.

Graham Hey talked to Luis de Matos about his fantastic career, his brilliant team...and his coloured underwear!

With sustained success on a national and international level, I ask Luis if he has to work even harder to eclipse his previous shows - do the public expect even greater miracles? “I believe we should be our own, most demanding critics,” says Luis. “I always strive to be better today than I was yesterday. The good thing is that when you enjoy every minute of what you do in your working life you tend not to count up the endless hours of work and lack of sleep. I love what I do...As far as the “level of success” you mention, I believe we are a bit like the gladiators of ancient Rome. When they won the fight with the lion what reward did they get? The right to fight with another lion the next day...”

For those not totally familiar with the work of Luis, he is a truly brilliant magician – perhaps one of the greatest all-round performers in the world. He is a brilliant close-up magician, manipulator, an expert at cabaret, illusions and an amazing escapologist. A single area of magic would be enough for most of us, yet Luis has not only attempted many different forms, he has excelled at each! I wonder which area of magic Luis holds closest to his heart?

Says Luis: “I prefer to separate my involvement with magic in another way: researching, creating, producing, marketing and, of course, performing. Because I do all of these aspects of my magic I have more control over the final product and consequently over the perception the public has about my work”.

Twelve years ago Luis formed Luis de Matos Productions Ltd. (LMP). This move gave him the opportunity to build a team of people to work with him, and the results have paid dividends as he now has a wonderful



Don't look into his eyes, Luis!

company of talented individuals, all striving to make outstanding magical entertainment.

“The opening show for FC Porto's new stadium, all the television series, the corporate events, the arena show and the one man theatre shows, these are all the result of the work of my team, a team that I am incredibly proud of” says Luis, who is always singing the praises of those around him, as he genuinely believes that his achievements are a collective effort. “We come to work everyday from 9am to 6pm (many times much, much longer). This team builds the props and the sets. It operates the lights and sound. It designs the posters and, many times, sticks them on the walls! We are a family”. We'd all love to work for someone like Luis de Matos!

For most magicians, having the luxury of putting together a hand-picked team is a

dream come true. I ask Luis to introduce his team who continue to play such a vital role in his success. “This is the absolutely permanent team that I work with everyday of my life. They are: Joaquin Moreno (my technical director for 15 years), Alexandre Luis Mamede (electronics wizard), Fátima Oliveira (production director), José Emídio Silva (logistics and maintenance), Vanessa Viana (graphic designer and more), Helder Monteiro (lighting), João Pedro Cezanne (video), Luis Ribeiro (public relations) and JJ who works with Noel Britten on the Bizarre Bath Comedy Walk in England and who works here in the winter handling our overseas relations as well as working on the shows. And of course I must mention Mike Caveney, an amazing man and incredible friend, who runs the LMP West Coast (of America) Office.”



If you talk to most, if not all of the magic performers that Luis has invited onto his TV shows, it is apparent that Luis has a reputation for really looking after his guest artistes – making sure they are totally happy with their performances and offering them a re-shoot if they are not fully satisfied. I asked him how important this aspect of production is to him?

“I believe that once a performance is on tape it is there forever so it is better to be as good as one can at that moment”, says Luis who Paul Daniels describes as ‘one of the genuine good guys’. “As I said before, I think that we never stop learning, so looking after my guests is a way of showing my appreciation for what I have always learned from them. They have always been incredibly generous with me giving me ideas, material and most important friendship. What I am is a result of that to a great extent. My guests are, or will probably end up being, my new friends and I always want them to come back”.

With an incredible back-catalogue of TV work to his name, it is almost second-nature for Luis to perform in front of cameras and a studio-audience, but what special skills does working in this environment develop?

“I think that the relationship with the crew is vital. Doing a good job on screen depends on establishing a good rapport with the studio team,” says the stylish Luis. “I believe that working on television gets you trained into having a number of ‘plan B’s’, as well as getting your magic straight to the point. Because of audience shares and demographic analyses, I have come up with what I called the “frame theory”... every one of

each of the 24 frames per second should be an “interesting picture”, otherwise zapping will kill you! And do I prefer Live stage or TV? The answer is ‘both’...and as much as possible!”

Most performers who attain the level of success that Luis de Matos has achieved, will inevitably find that at some stage of their career they have either suffered from over-exposure or have failed to move with the times. At one point in his career, Luis made the brave decision to stop performing on TV



for a while, despite the offer of another TV series on the table. Did this break from TV prove beneficial?

“Those who know me know that I like to think I'm in control of my career. I won't do a series if I don't think it's the right moment. At the same time I love to do television so it is difficult for me to find a good balance. For the last couple of years I've been doing television in Spain. First with a show called Shalakabula in which I had 3 spots in each of the 21 episodes. Also, last year I started appearing every week on a live show called

LUAR as well as producing and performing in a ninety-minute special in 3D for television. ‘Luis de Matos 3D’, (the name of that special) was entirely produced by us for RTP1, which is the Portuguese equivalent to BBC1, with an American company called Dimension 3, taped in our almost finished new facility... Estúdio 33! (Studio 33).

“And yes, we are now preparing a new television series...”

Most stars at the top of their profession will tell you that it has been a long journey of self-sacrifice to get there. In this respect, Luis tells me that he is no different. “Yes I have made, and continue to make, big sacrifices but it is worth it, otherwise I wouldn't be making them. As I said before, I work in something that I love everyday (and night...). Outside magic I like to make contact with all branches of the arts. That's how I try to get inspiration – and that's why I try to keep up with pop culture. I believe that every artiste should look outside his own art for inspiration - otherwise they will get dragged into a negative spiral. I prefer to look outside the box and I try to be as contemporary as I can”.

At the peak of his success in the UK, Paul Daniels moved over to be a presenter of other shows, such as the quiz show ‘Every Second Counts’ – not performing magic. I wondered whether Luis would ever consider moving in to the role of TV presenter? After all, he's a celebrity, popular and is a good looking guy. I shouldn't have been surprised when Luis tells me he has already done it – back in 1996. So much for my extensive research! However, he only took the job after





stipulating a number of conditions. "I hosted a talk show on Sunday night RTP1. It was called Domingo em Cheio and I only accepted the job after agreeing to a certain number of conditions...it had to be live, contain no magic and would be only for one series. I don't think you should mess with people's perception of what you are! I am a magician and I hope I always will be."

**Are you married? children? Partner? Tell us a little about your family life and your early upbringing in Portugal...**

Regarding brothers and sisters... easy answer: I'm a single child. My parents are school teachers and they always accepted my magic as long as it was in conjunction with good school results! That is why I ended up being an Agricultural Engineer. I finished my degree with a thesis on in-vitro breeding of *Strelitzia Reginae*. I was invited to stay at the university on the staff which I did for two years while, at the same time, I was beginning to become popular due to my first television series. After those lovely years doing both television and teaching I made a decision to leave my steady job at the university at the age of 22. Luis de Matos Productions was established 3 years later in 1995.

Not to run away from the first part of your question... yes, I have a girlfriend for six years now. She is called Vanessa, and she is a very talented graphic designer - and Paul Daniels keeps saying that she's too good for me!!

**Is there a tradition of magic in Portugal – and how did you develop your skills – were you coached? Did you spend your youth constantly practising when your friends were out having a good time!?**

When I started there was not much going on in Portugal apart from the normal magic club activity. From the very beginning I thought I would like to do magic for lay audiences. I wanted to try to bring dignity to the art of magic in the eyes of the public and also to bring in the influence of pop culture as much as I could. I learned my first tricks with a friend called Serafim Afonso and later, when I went to study in Coimbra (the most important student town in Portugal), I met another magician called Hortiny and learned more with him. As I started going to magic festivals I met other magicians who became, and still are, my friends such as Paulino Gil from Spain.

I believe in constant learning. That is why people like Topper Martyn, Mike Caveney, Gary Ouellet, Channing Pollock, Lennart Green, Vito Lupo and Tomsoni were always such great inspirations and always will be.

I believe in constant learning. That is why people like Topper Martyn, Mike Caveney, Gary Ouellet, Channing Pollock, Lennart Green, Vito Lupo and Tomsoni were always such great inspirations and always will be.





**Do the TV companies give you big budgets? Big illusions are not cheap!! And do you have editorial and artistic control over the style of show?**

When you try to do the best out of the available money, there is no such thing as big budgets. Everything changes with time but budgets are always short. Regarding editorial and artistic control, that is something else. I always fought for that. Nowadays I can say if it's good - it was us doing it, and if it's not good - it was still us doing it! No excuses.

**You are now 36. What are your thoughts on your career so far, and what does the future hold for you? What direction are you going in?**

I'm always looking for consistency. I like to grow and change but always keep on the same kind of ride. If you are a good horse rider there is not much chance that you'll end up on a race car track. On the other hand it's great to have a better horse and a nicer hat!

When I think about the future there is only one rule: I try not to sell my youth today so that it won't be missing tomorrow.

**What do you think has been the most exciting development in magic over the past 10-20 years?**

The Internet!

**As a performer, what do you think are your greatest strengths? And what are the most important attributes to have, in your opinion?**

As a performer I think my greatest strength is a combination of three things: a bit of talent, a bit of luck and an enormous amount of hard work, which I enjoy!

The most important thing is that you love what you do. Second, understand that everything is about communication! Maybe verbal, maybe non verbal, but always communication - and a bit of wonderment.

**You enjoy performing 'manipulation' - do you think that this is a dying art? Not many young performers seem to devote time to this specialist area. Why do you enjoy it so much?**

I believe it is a barometer of your love and dedication to the art! It's easy to push a button but it is more difficult to do a pass. I like to do magic that an actor couldn't do.

Apart from that I think manipulation and personality are the future! Only human nature will still be able to amaze in the future.

**When you are not involved in magic, how do you like to spend your leisure time?**

I'm always involved with magic but... I love to look for inspiration out of the magic world

# Tell us **five things** about yourself that **people do not know!!!**

1. I have a big magic library.
2. I'm finishing building **Estúdio 33** (our theatre, studio, home and hotel for friends).
3. I always travel with my two dogs: Black and Ace of Spades.
4. **I was born in Mozambique!** (When it was a Portuguese colony).
5. No-one knows the meaning of the badge I always use on and off stage...

**Extra: I wear coloured underwear...**



(positive spiral versus negative spiral): arts, sports, news, etc.

## **Which magicians have been your greatest inspiration?**

Paul Daniels, definitely. I grew up watching Paul's videos over and over again. I believe he is the most complete magician I ever saw. When seeing Paul in action over the years you can only be amazed. I respect and I admire him, and I have done since the very first time I saw him. Great life story! Great life lesson!

My love for books came from my close friendship with Topper Martyn (I'm currently reading his life story, written by him). My love for history came from Mike Caveney.

## **What is your favourite magic effect you perform at the moment?**

At the moment I love doing the egg bag. For ten years I have studied the effect and finally I have found my way of presenting it. The bag I use is my real pocket and at the end the egg becomes a live baby chick that I give away to a child, in a proper carrying case.

But the one effect that gives the most pleasure to the entire team is the 'vanishing a spectator's car'. I do it during my solo show, ENIGMA. It is a spectator's car. No stooges, no wires, no magnets... it's a miracle! Come and see the show!!!

## **Do you have further ambitions?**

Yes! Being alive tomorrow!

## **Do you develop your own original effects?**

All the time. Not so many original effects but customised presentations. Not many music composers have invented new instruments or new notes at all, but still everyday they come up with new melodies...

## **Has your career developed outside Portugal?**

Over the years I was lucky enough to make appearances in shows like World's Greatest Magic or Champions of Magic from Monte Carlo as well as other European channels, in France and Sweden. My own television shows have been sold abroad and Spain in particular is proving to be a welcoming market.

## **Do you keep an eye on new artistes? Who was the last magician that really impressed you?**

All the time! That's why I love to go to FISM and keep my eye on the latest television productions. Can I mention two names that have really impressed me? Derren Brown and David Sousa! For completely different reasons but both made me feel proud of dedicating my life to this art form. **IMS**



It says press any key to continue... "Now which one's the 'any' key?"



Look no hands!!