

VANISH

International Magic Magazine

THE VALUE OF COMMERCIAL
MAGIC BY JC SUM

THE MAGIC OF MENTORING
BY NICK LEWIN

ANDREW GERARD TEACHES
A CLOSE-UP EFFECT

CHIPPER LOWELL INTERVIEW

AN IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW WITH ONE OF
THE FUNNIEST AND MOST TALENTED
ENTERTAINERS IN THE WORLD OF
MAGIC!

this edition

Chipper
Lowell

edition
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LEARN MAGIC FROM MENTALISM TO
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3 **MAGIC 24-7**
LIFE AS A FULL TIME PRO
WITH BEN ROBINSON

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April/May 2012

VANISH

International Magic Magazine

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Introduction

VANISH is an independent online magazine available to magicians who share an interest in the art of magic. It is a bimonthly magazine with six issues a year.

The aim of the magazine is to provide thought provoking articles to help increase magic as an art form, and to share the passion of the contributors with the rest of the world. With a potential readership of over fifteen thousand magicians the aim is to offer articles that other trade magazines do not.

This magazine is possible thanks to the sponsors who place adverts. Help keep the magazine alive by visiting their websites. If you would like to become part of this magazine either as an advertiser or contributor please contact the editor.

We would like to hear your thoughts and welcome e-mails. Please send e-mails to the editor at info@paulromhany.com

To find out when the next issue becomes available visit: www.paulromhanymagic.com and join the newsletter.

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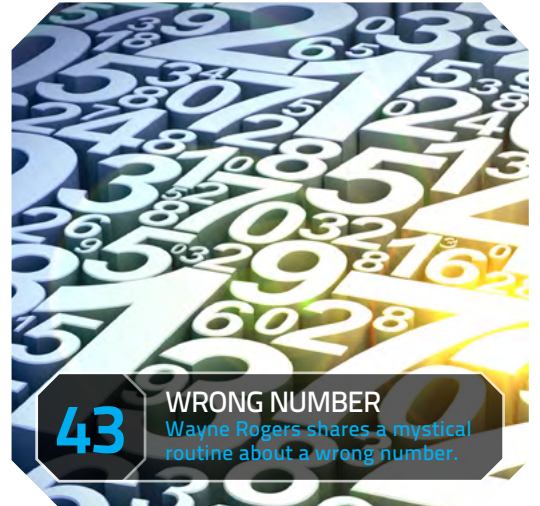
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Paul Romhany
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FROM THE EDITOR

It is the hope that **VANISH** circumvents other magazines old fashioned thinking of a standard subscription base.

The magic world has certainly changed since I grew up as a young boy in New Zealand over thirty years ago. When I wanted to order a magazine, or buy a trick from overseas I would get a postal order from the Post Office, send it overseas then wait for the order to arrive. This process could take a few months, and by the time it did I would have forgotten what it was I ordered, and the news was old.

Today everything has changed, from the way we purchase magic to the way we read magazines. The internet has made magic a 'now' generation. We have become thirsty for information, and we want it as quickly as possible. With technology it is possible to have up to the second news and updates right at our fingertips. The internet has played a major role in today's world of magic.

It has also changed the way we do business. As I write this editorial I am sitting in China having just finished a performance, and heading to Japan. The majority of my international work

now comes through agents, and clients finding my work on youtube, or from my website.

The time for change in magic trade magazines is also here, and this is where **VANISH** comes in. With an online magazine we can offer up-to-date magic reviews, more in-depth articles, and are not limited by printed pages or cost.

A few months back I got an e-mail from a major magic magazine asking about one of my effects they were going to review. I was dumbfounded they were reviewing it a year after it was released, mostly because it had almost sold out, and I was not planning on manufacturing anymore. This led me to realize that trade magazines are not as current in their news and reviews as they could be.

Producing a magazine that is internet based at least gives readers the opportunity to get fresh news, and articles that are current. A news story could break the day before we plan to

send the magazine out, and we are able to make changes easily. A magic trick could be released that is hot all over the internet, and make it into the magazine sooner than printed magazines. This is what makes our magazine special.

With a database of close to fifteen thousand magicians we know there is a demand for this new era, for the way a magic magazine is produced. It is the hope that **Vanish** entirely circumvents old fashioned thinking of standard subscription base.

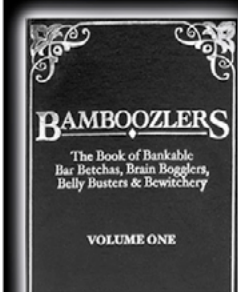
Our plan is to offer it for free, and hopefully continue to do so, or at least only charge two or three dollars an issue down the road.

A magazine like this can only be possible with friends who want to be part of it, and feel as strongly about producing a quality product as I do. My sincere thanks for the support of all contributors, and please support them, and the advertisers by visiting their websites and checking out their products. All the websites in this magazine are 'clickable', simply click on the URL and it will take you to their website.

A big thank you to Chipper Lowell for being the cover story this month. Chipper was brought up with show business parents, and continues in the family tradition with his incredibly successful show.

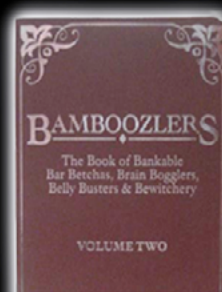
Finally, please share this magazine with all your magic friends, let club members know about it, and get it out there. Hell, even put it up on torrents.

Paul Romhany



BAMBOOZLERS- The Book of Bankable Bar Betchas, Brain Bogglers, Belly Busters & Bewitchery- VOLUME ONE

There are 75 bits of business, over 100 illustrations, 128 pages, with a foreword by Martin Gardner. Amuse and amaze your audience with these impromptu gags, betchas and magic effects. **\$20.00**



BAMBOOZLERS- The Book of Bankable Bar Betchas, Brain Bogglers, Belly Busters & Bewitchery- VOLUME TWO

75 more effects full of one-liners, with 136 pages and over 100 illustrations. Some are classics and some are seeing print for the first time. The foreword of the book was written by Tom Mullica. **\$20.00**



MIRRORS- This DVD takes the many myths that surround mirrors and spins them into several fantastic routines.

Included with the DVD you'll receive 20 special gimmicks; all of this for only **\$34.95**.



MYTHOS- While delving into the myths of mirrors the magician touches a mirror-faced card to the ordinary cards he sees before him. All of the cards, one by one, slowly become mirror cards. Surprisingly the mirrors soon shatter to further stun the audience! **\$19.95**



DIA MONTE- This DVD teaches DJ's in the hands three card monte that looks moveless and is full of surprises. The queen can never be found and even changes right before their eyes. At the end of the routine the cards are seen to all be Jokers and can be examined. No palming and easy to do! **\$25.00**



POCKETS FULL OF MIRACLES- This DVD features 23 routines from DJ's best-selling book of the same name. Much of material has garnered DJ awards from the IBM and the TAOM. Much of the video was shot in a natural restaurant setting and at the Magic Castle in Hollywood, CA. Buy it today for only **\$34.95**.



SWEET- On this DVD DJ teaches his signed coin to sealed sugar packet routine. As a bonus effect DJ teaches his signed card to sealed envelope trick titled the Birthday Card. Both of the effects are easy to do and will fast become reputation makers for you. Plus, upon seeing them your audiences will develop tourette's syndrome! Includes the necessary gizmos. **\$25.00**



COLLATERAL- On this DVD DJ teaches his award-winning Ring & String routine. Now for the first time he reveals the kicker where the magician places his ring in an envelope & asks a spectator to place it in their pocket. After he performs the routine with their ring, it vanishes and reappears in the envelope in their pocket! This one has received rave reviews from his peers. **\$25.00**



SENTIMENTAL POSTCARDS- Nine postcards are introduced. While turned away the magician asks a spectator to touch the cards at random. Incredibly, the magician predicts the spectator's every move and ultimately divines their final selection. **\$24.95**



THE ANIMATED CARDBOX- An ordinary cardbox comes to life, spins around and then stands up. The flap opens by itself and the cards are placed back into the box. The box and your hands can be completely examined! Amaze any audience for **\$15.00**.



DOOMSDAY DECK- DJ's new design features ancient imagery based on the Mayan calendar, a compass rose, sugar skulls and more. This deck manufactured by the USPC includes two duplicate Jokers, a unique Ace of Spades, a blank-faced card, a double-backed card and a secret one-way design. **\$9.95**



THE OUIJA CARD- The magician holds a small ouija board at his fingertips. Then, as if controlled by the hand of a ghost, the ouija board's planchette moves across its surface- ultimately revealing the spectator's chosen card. This eerie effect is **\$24.95**.



Z.A.P. WALLET- This thin, sleek, normal looking, pocket-sized, affordable, leather business card wallet will zap you the info needed for your favorite mind-reading routine. This is a great little secret weapon to have in your arsenal and you'll find it functional for everyday use since it holds business cards plus a packet trick or two. This is something you will use! **\$14.95**



CLOSE-UP MAGIC SECRETS- This is the soft-back Dover edition of the book *Pockets Full of Miracles* that released in 2000 and sold-out in 2001 and fast became a classic! Features 29 routines and lots of photographs. Many of the routines helped DJ win awards, play the *Magic Castle* in Hollywood and have taken him around the world. What once retailed for \$40.00 can be yours for only **\$15.00**.

MAKING NEWS

If you have a story or a news related item please email the editor at info@paulromhany.com
 We try to keep this news as current as possible and generally this is the last piece we work on prior to the magazine going live. So please excuse any errors:)

A message from Danny Archer regarding this years MINDvention. "After a lot and back and forth, we reluctantly have agreed to move the convention to November 11th - 13th (still to be held at the Palace Station).

I apologize for any grief this may have caused you, but ultimately I think the Nov. dates will be better. As some



of you may remember, we started the convention in November and then were forced to switch to October dates. October is a busy time for mentalists and mystery entertainers and I know several attendees who will be able to join us again on the new dates.

One good thing was that I was able to secure Nov. dates for 2013 of 11/10-11/12.

The website has been updated and I will start to put out the word to past registrants and attendees. Thanks for you help and support and looking forward to an outstanding convention."
www.mindvention.net

New Zealand 31st Magician's Convention 2012. Here is a chance to visit our wonderful country and take in

some real southern hospitality and magic at the same time. At a very low registration and accommodation rate and five star hotel and talent plus our friendly fellow magicians do not miss this great

Convention taking place at an excellent time to see what New Zealand has to offer. We plan to have three top line international magicians who are recognized as the best in

their field of Children's magic, Close up magic and Stage magic. Plan your trip well ahead and register NOW to come to the "Lord of the Rings Country" in 2012.

Just announced that the main headline acts for the convention are Shawn Farquhar, Ken Scott, and Mark Mason.

Pricing Details: Early Bird pricing applies until April 19th 2012 for Adults and Juniors/Youth

"A chance to visit Lord of the Rings country."

(17 years and younger on October 19th 2012) After April 19th 2012 Adults will be \$NZ345.00 and Juniors/Youth will be \$NZ245.00. Registrants who are financial members of IBM Ring 160 will receive a financial discount of \$NZ32.00 on registration fees.



Mandrake Movie in the works ...

Registrar: John Ross
 +64-3-3274481
j_ross@ihug.co.nz
www.ibmring160.com

Also check out www.magicana.co.nz for updates on the convention.

Mandrake the Magician is to be revived for cinema by Warner Bros.

The studio acquired the screen rights to Lee Falk's classic property and is working on a reboot with Atlas Entertainment producing, according to The Hollywood Reporter.

Falk created the illusionist for newspaper comic strips in 1934. The character's enduring popularity saw him appear in various TV, radio and theatre productions in the ensuing years.

Disney held the rights to Mandrake the Magician for a spell, but did not commission any projects based on the license. More recently, Baldwin Entertainment and Hyde Park tried to push forward with an ill-fated live-action adaptation.

Sarah Schechter will produce the project for Warners Bros, with Charles Roven and Andy

Horwitz of Atlas overseeing its development.

Mandrake the Magician is yet to be assigned a released date.

• Pad Magicians Show the Magic of Stockholm.

What do you get when you combine Swedish magicians and iPads? A quirky presentation about investing in Stockholm real estate, apparently.

Charlie Caper recently posted a video of himself and Erik Rosales pitching the Swedish capitol of Stockholm to a group of real estate professionals. In it, the two use iPads as magic props, showing video on the tablets that coincided with their stage actions. The well-choreographed show demonstrates that technological magic doesn't have to mean the end of "the real thing."

The presentation was performed in Cannes, France at the Marché International des Professionnels d'Immobilier (MIPIM), a trade show for international real estate professionals.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=53_qvMQf-vOE



Le Grand David Magic Show

NOW CASTING MAGIC COMPETITION FOR MAJOR NETWORK REALITY SHOW

ATTENTION MAGICIANS OF THE WORLD!!!

Do you have the talent to make it as a magician but just need your big break? Have you always wanted a career in magic but life kept getting in the way? Are you an aspiring magician who wants a shot at their own Las Vegas show?!

We are on a nationwide search for the next breakout Magician to star and compete against other talented magicians that will have America listening, and voting!

GRAND PRIZE: LAS VEGAS SHOW

If you are interested please e-mail a link of footage of yourself performing your illusion(s) to: magicroundtable@yahoo.com - Looking for amateur and pro talent worthy of being on the BIG STAGE!!!

Please include your name, contact info, and resume if possible as well.

Good Luck!

CREATING A MOBILE VERSION OF YOUR WEBSITE

Here is something many magicians who have websites aren't aware of, and should be something we all check out. Just because you can see your desktop site on a mobile phone doesn't mean it's mobile-friendly. For one, current mobile device networks don't run at the same speed as broadband devices. In addition, there are myriad ways mobile web designs are displayed in. From touch screens to netbooks.

Have you considered a mobile-friendly website for your company? Not sure of the need? Here are a few ways for testing how your website looks on Mobile Devices.

1. W3C mobileOK Checker <http://validator.w3.org/mobile/>
2. iPad Peek <http://ipadpeek.com>
3. Google Mobilizer <http://www.google.com/gwt/n>

With more people than ever using smartphones and other mobile devices, having a website that works on these devices is quickly becoming a compulsory new technology.

BROKEN WAND



BEVERLY — Cesareo Pelaez, the charismatic Cuban who escaped his native country and created the world's longest-running stage magic show in a renovated Beverly theater, died Saturday of congestive heart failure. He was 79.

Pelaez suffered a stroke in 2005 and stopped performing his role of Marco the Magi in 2006. Since then, he would appear on stage at the end of each performance of Le Grand David and His Own Spectacular Company in his wheelchair, acknowledging the cheers with a wave of his hands. He made his last appearance Feb. 18 for the company's 35th anniversary show.

Pelaez and a group of friends started Le Grand David in 1977 after pooling their money to buy the Cabot Cinema, a 1920 vaudeville theater on Cabot Street, paying \$110,000 in cash to owner E.M. Lowe.

The show featured classic magic tricks, such as a floating table and doves snatched out of the air, with the troupe performing in exotic handmade costumes amid the grand arches and ornate murals of the restored theater.

Over the years, the show drew national and international attention. The troupe performed at the White House seven times. Pelaez was named Magician

// Several prominent magicians, including Doug Henning, David Copperfield and Harry Blackstone Jr., visited Pelaez over the years and raved about his show.

of the Year by the Academy of Magic Arts in Hollywood, and the entire company performed at the awards banquet at the Beverly Hills Wilshire Hotel.

Pelaez, who also worked as a psychology professor at Salem State College for 25 years, oversaw the entire production, from the custom-made sets to ticket sales to the hot chocolate served in the balcony.

With Pelaez's health declining, Le Grand David has been on hiatus since the 35th anniversary show last month. Bull said the show will resume April 15 with the first of six previously scheduled performances, but he is not sure if it will continue beyond that.

JC SUM

J C Sum is one of the top professional illusionists in Asia and is a world-class designer of original illusions and mega illusions. The Straits Times acknowledges him as "Singapore's Most Famous Magician" and he was recognized as "one of the most celebrated magicians in Asia" by AsiaOne.

J C is also one of the most prolific modern illusion designers in the world having authored five original books on illusion designs and presentations as well as produced the best-selling "Behind the Illusions" DVD.

www.illusionbooks.com



How is the Value of a Commercial Magician Measured?

JC SUM

This is a series of articles written for the commercial magician -- that is, magicians who charge a professional fee for their shows & services.

Whether you are a stage illusionist, close-up magician or kids entertainer, the approaches, strategies and techniques to achieve commercial success are the same.

Every year, Forbes publishes a list of the world's most powerful celebrities. To generate the list, Forbes estimates celebrity earnings (earned solely from entertainment-related income), then factors in media metrics like Google hits, press mentions as compiled by Factiva, TV/radio mentions from Lexis/Nexis and the number of times an A-lister appears on the cover of more than 50 consumer magazines.

So, you might wonder what this has got to do with you, a commercial magician who may not necessarily be in the same celebrity league as an Angelina Jolie, Brad Pitt or Oprah Winfrey.

The fact is, the majority of the people who are responsible for the commercial success of a celebrity artist will also judge you based on similar criteria, just not with the same level of expectation. If you are perceived as successful, it is assumed that you must be doing something right in your field. This, in turn, adds to your credibility and commercial value.

The problem is, as creative artists, we often live in our own imaginative ideological world of fantasy. A pure artist performs for himself or for his fan base or primary audience. However, as a commercial magician, you need to recognize that your value needs to extend beyond just yourself and your primary audience. Satisfying yourself and your primary audience is perfectly fine and admirable if you are a pure artist who does not intend to make money from your craft. But a commercial magician needs to satisfy many more people in order to survive and thrive! This is usually a torment for the pure artist trying to make a living

because these artists are purely focused on satisfying themselves (to be true to themselves) and their audience. They seldom bother what the client thinks, even though it might be the most important opinion.

Here are people that you, as a commercial magician, need to create value for each and every time your work is showcased:

- Your Client AKA the person paying your fee. Sometimes, the client and the primary audience may be the same. But, many times, the client is the one booking you to showcase your craft to their guests/ audience.
- Potential New Clients
- Potential Agents, Talent Scouts, Bookers, TV Producers
- Potential Sponsors, Patrons & Investors
- Media
- Industry Peers

In order to be a commercial magician, you need to showcase your craft so that it appeals to as many of the above parties as possible. To put it bluntly, you need to have commercial appeal across a variety of demographics. Different audience groups will perceive and judge your work differently.

A Client or a Potential Client will measure their satisfaction based on their dollar spent to see if you were worth the money. Potential Agents, Talent Scouts, Bookers, TV Producers will see if you fit their talent roster and add diversity to their portfolio. Your fee may also be a factor along with how easy you seem to be able to work with. Potential Sponsors, Patrons & Investors will look for originality, uniqueness, marketability and commercialism in your work. Journalists and reporters will be looking out to see if you are an interesting individual and if there are interesting stories behind your work. Industry peers and fellow creative artists in

your field will be looking for originality and something different, often not concerned with the commercial value of your work.

The reality is – you cannot satisfy everyone all the time. It is impossible! If you try, you will be frustrated and discouraged constantly. If you accept this fact, you can concentrate on identifying how many groups you can satisfy as possible. Obviously, the more parties you can satisfy, the higher chances you have of being commercially successful. You also have to discern which parties may have more value to you as a commercial magician.

Clients, prospective new clients and agents have the potential of bringing you work (and \$) immediately. The media has an intangible benefit of raising your profile and building your brand that can transform into tangible benefit over a period of time. Industry peers are unlikely to bring you work, unless in the form of referrals, so it is more for the recognition within the industry and for awards (if available) that can be added to your portfolio.

Since each group is unique and with different benchmarks on how they judge your work, there will have to be a degree of give & take and creativity will be needed to modify, adapt and tailor your craft so different parties who look out for different values are happy.

Commercial magicians cannot survive if they are only concerned with satisfying themselves or their fans. The benchmarks of success for a commercial magician can neither be purely idealistic or based on your personal likes. Being a commercial magician means you are governed by the forces of the marketplace and societal standards of what is considered commercially successful and what is not.

So, bearing in mind how the value of a celebrity is measured can help you plan how you can achieve similar milestones as a commercial magician. Now, the milestones set out by Forbes may not be practically attainable by most commercial magicians, especially new ones in their careers. So, below are four realistic milestones, in order, that commercial magicians can confidently work towards.

1) Referrals & Testimonials

Build up your collection of testimonials and showcase the best and/ or most recent testimonials. Request clients if they can be your referrals or would be willing to make referrals for you. Referrals are your cheapest, yet most effective, form of marketing. The more referrals = more bookings and opportunities to showcase your craft. The higher the quality of your referrals will also mean that the projects you get will be of higher value.

2) Proven Track Record

The more projects you take on, the more you can add to your portfolio. But, do not just constantly take on the same type of projects over and over again. Add diversity to your track record by taking on all types of projects where you can creatively apply your art to. Having a diverse proven track record will showcase your value to many different markets and audiences that gives you potential to scale your business. The more markets you appeal to, the higher your commercial value will be.

3) Media Features

This may seem easier said than done... because it is. If you do not know how to secure PR for yourself, learn or find someone who knows how to. This article is not the place to discuss PR & media publicity techniques; but, the point is, media feature gives you credibility and is an important milestone for the commercial magician.

4) Fees Commanded

When you have worked on the preceding 3 milestones, you can work on the fee you command. The higher the fee you can command, the more perceived value you have. High value clients will use your fee as a benchmark of your value.

The great thing about the creative arts is that there is no such thing as a market price for your fee. Your fee is not determined by time, size, or scale of your work alone. Your fee is based on the value you bring to your clients. You can charge whatever you want as long as people are willing to pay that fee on a consistent basis. A singer in a lounge may command \$100 an hour but Britney Spears can command \$1 million for the same hour. Both may do exactly the same thing and even sing the exact same songs but it is the artist who brings more value to a client that will be able to command a much higher fee.

The above are only the commercial milestones for the commercial magician. It is a given that you should have a separate set of artistic milestones that ensue you continually push yourself to improve and reinvent your craft on an artistic level.

In addition, while achieving all four commercial milestones is not a 100% guarantee that you will be a very successful commercial magician, all commercial magicians who have achieved considerable success would have achieved all four milestones and would still be continually re-achieving them as their career develops. So don't pick and choose, just do it!





While comedy magic may be his hilarious forte' on stage, there's actually a lot of seriousness thinking and planning that goes into a 'chipper' performance...

It's the morning of "Day Two" of a four-day technical rehearsal for the cast of "BLINK! – An Evening of Award-Winning Comedy, Magic & Illusion!" Things are not going as smoothly as one would hope for in the rather cavernous, 950 seat theater in Anaheim, California. And yet the producer of the show shows no sign of sweat or worry as he stands in the middle of the darkened house, slurping one Diet Coke after another, watching the other magicians in the show check and double-check their blocking and lighting cues under the heavy thump of the show music playing in the background.

"We've been through this grind more than a few times in my life," the producer says with a grin. His name is Chipper Lowell, and in addition to producing this show, he also happens to be a well known, comedy magician for the past 25 years. He has been honored twice with the Merlin award for "Comedy Magician of the Year!", as well as "Specialty Act of the Year!" by the Tahoe Daily Tribune. He was also noted as one of the "Top Funniest Magicians Performing Today" by Magic magazine, and the Los Angeles Times has called him, "Feverish, Frenetic & Hilarious!" But the two hats Chipper is wearing right now is that of producer and director of "BLINK!"

"This has been a... Let's just say 'interesting' contract this time around," quips Chipper, smiling and yet allowing his eyes to roll around as large as he can make them to emphasize the point that there's so much more to the story at hand.

"Let's see. The theater's lighting designer suddenly decided to quit in order to do a television show, and we still need to build all the lighting 'looks' and cues, not to mention program the board completely before we open in just five days to the press, public, and invited guests. One of the illusions for the show's finale still needs to be painted and larger wheels attached. The theater provided us with dressing-rooms that can't be locked because they have no doors. The lighting rig above the stage, which holds over 70 moving lights is being temperamental, and is freezing up constantly. Our hazer is being blamed for the smoke alarms going off, and the fire department showing up in full gear. (Turns out a broken alarm out in the lobby was the actual culprit.) And this is all just the second day! But, you simply learn to throw on your "game face" and charge through it all. You can't take it too seriously."

Solving those issues usually requires some real world experience, which Chipper thankfully has. Other solutions are just a matter of



**The
Chipper
Experience**

Where
Comedy & Magic
Collide!

sheer dumb luck. For example, one of "BLINK!"'s stage assistants who has worked with Chipper for the past 8 years, just happens to also be a lighting designer. He was able (and willing!) to step in at a moment's notice and start designing the show from scratch. And new doors were attached to the dressing-rooms by the theater's own technical director out of the kindness of his heart because he felt embarrassed.

"It pays to be nice to everyone, because any show is the result of dozens of people helping you out, and that includes a few unexpected angels like the fantastic crew here at the theater."

Within seconds, something catches Chipper's eye and he's gone. He appears on stage in a, well, 'blink', and quickly exchanges a few ideas with illusionist Michael Giles in order to make the transition between two segments in the show as seamless as possible. A quick chat with the backstage crew, and everyone agrees to run the routine one more time. This time it clicks. Spontaneous applause erupts from those watching from the house seats, including Chipper's wife, Lisa, and their eleven year old son, Ethan.

"See? It only took like 30 tries to get it right the first time! Progress!," jokes Chipper, smiling approvingly and giving a 'thumbs up' to everyone involved. *"Alright, we're moving on! – Bring out the buffalo in a tutu, and I'd like the stage to be lit in nothing but 'plaid'! Come on, people!"* -- The stagehands laugh at the outrageous request, but dutifully bustle about, striking a large illusion and setting up the props needed for the next magician on the bill - Danny Cole. The rehearsals continue long into the night.

I sat down with Chipper here and there over the next couple of days to talk about his career both on stage and off, and to find out what drew him to the art of comedy magic as a career.

MAG:

Hi Chipper. Thanks for taking some time with us. Let's start at the beginning, shall we? You've had an unusual upbringing,

didn't you?

CHIPPER:

Well, that's certainly true. I guess I'm what you would call a second-generation entertainer. My parents were circus performers back in the 50's and 60's, having toured with Ringling Bros. for about 7 years. Then they got married, moved out to California and I soon popped into the picture. Then, just two weeks after I was born, all three of us were back out on the road, touring with various circuses and arena shows. For the next year or two, my bed was either the back seat of the car, a crib in the trailer, or a drawer pulled out from a dresser in whatever hotel we were staying at.

My mother was a dancer and gymnast. She later developed her own circus acts, doing a 'hair-hang', where your long hair gets pulled up into a single knot and you literally 'hang' several stories up in the air with your weight being distributed across your entire scalp. Her biggest claim to fame, though, was performing an "iron-jaw" act. She would bite down onto a thick leather strap, and then get hoisted up into the air as she performed various juggling tricks and spins. Unlike today with shows like Cirque du Soliel, where there are safety wires attached to the aerialists, my mother was up there with no other means of support. It was just the strength of her jaw and neck muscles holding the rest of her body. I was too young at the time to really understand just how dangerous it was. My job was to assist her in the center ring, handing her juggling balls or streamers and then pointing at her like I was showing off a brand new car in a TV game show.

MAG:

Did she ever fall?

CHIPPER:

Thank God, no. But a circus arena does have dozens of guide wires coming down here and there, supporting trapeze and/or highwire riggings, and one time a guidewire was set up in the wrong spot, crossing over the center ring where my mother worked. Nobody noticed down below because it was at least 3



"Within seconds, something catches Chipper's eye and he's gone. He appears onstage in a, well, 'blink', and quickly exchanges a few ideas with illusionist Michael Giles in order to make the transition as seamless as possible."

Chipper with Michael and Melanie Giles

stories up from the ground. My mother would end her act running in a large circle in the ring and then get hoisted up, swinging in a wide arc as she performed a 'death spin'. She couldn't see anything because she was looking up, still biting the leather strap. And as she swung around, she crashed hard into a guidewire. As hard as she hit, she still never let go. After the act, she was pretty bruised up, but being the trouper that she was, she was right back at it for the second show that same day. Amazing, but as they say – "The show must go on."



Chipper's mother in full swing

MAG:

And what did your father do?

CHIPPER:

My father was an actor back east, and was also touring with The Amazing Brandon Illusion Show until one week there was no money left to pay the cast. Turns out the advance man was skimming money off the box office receipts. Bad news. But then a friend of my dad got him a job as a clown on the Clyde Beatty Circus for 11 days. He then returned to New York, working as assistant manager for the Palace Theater.

One day he ordered a pair of clown shoes from LaRay Theatrical Boot Shop and while waiting around, there was a man in his 50's in the store who was staring at him. My Dad left the store and the next time he went to pick up his clown shoes, the store owner behind the counter told him that the man staring at him was Pat Valdo, personnel manager for Ringling Bros. Circus, which was

playing at Madison Square Gardens and he requested that my dad meet him over at the arena.

My father raced over, and saw that the entire show was rehearsing for a one hour TV show special. He figured it would be some kind of audition but soon he was being yelled at to join the other clowns in the center ring for rehearsals. That was it. He was now officially a clown for Ringling Brothers! He got to work with some of the legends such as Felix Adler, Otto Griebing, and Gene Lewis over the next 7 years. He loved everything about it – the travel, the shows the clown gags, everything. My father was sort of the last of a dying breed of clowning from that time period, long before Ringling created their own Clown College.

MAG:

So, like kids in the army or navy, you were a 'circus brat'?

CHIPPER:

(laughs) Absolutely! My 'backyard' was whatever town we happened to be in, so I always had a huge area to explore everyday. I appeared in my first show when I was 8 years old, as a clown riding around on a prop fire engine, and then a few years later I started selling souvenirs and sno-cones, and popcorn here and there. I was a ten year old kid who had his own wallet, usually with \$40 to \$100 bucks in it at any given time. The extra money helped buy comic books and clothes for myself.



Chipper at age eight with his showbusiness family

MAG:

What were the shows like that you traveled with?

CHIPPER:

Although my parents worked “under canvas”, I never did – by the time I was in the picture, the shows were either done outside at racetracks, fairs and grandstands, or inside huge arenas. It was a variety of circuses, and we even toured with “Disney On Parade” in the U.S. and in Canada, Australia and New Zealand. I remember they hired a core group of eleven performers from the U.S. for the show, and then the rest of the dancers, acts, and crew were all Australian. When the U.S. citizens got their first pay check and saw that over 55% was taken out for taxes, they threw their own ‘tea party’ and threatened to get on a plane and leave. The Australian government finally stepped in, because they hardly ever got large shows like Disney at that time coming over to their country, and they re-worked the tax code so it mirrored the U.S. so we would all stay and do the tour.

MAG:

You said you clowned a bit as a kid. Did you like it?

CHIPPER:

It was okay, but I was more drawn to the slapstick and silent comedians in film. I was a huge Buster Keaton, Stan Laurel & Oliver Hardy, and Harold Lloyd fan. Huge! Circus clowning was a little too ‘basic’ for me, at least what I had grown up with. I enjoyed watching the silent film stars, and wanted to emulate them more.



MAG:

Where did you go to school?

CHIPPER:

Well, we usually were ‘on the road’ for 8-9 months straight all over the U.S. and Canada mostly, and I was ‘home-schooled’ wherever we traveled, taking my classes through a correspondence course called Calvert School from Baltimore, Maryland. My teachers wound up being my parents, dancers and other artists in the show. The schooling was actually pretty strict and when I finally went into a regular public school in California, I was about two years ahead. My parents very smartly though, kept me in the proper grades with kids my own age.

And even then it was still pretty traumatic, because working on

the shows turned me into more of an adult. There were no kids my same age that I could hang out with. And the work ethic was always present. Being responsible, etc. So when I was suddenly pushed into a high school with 800 other kids, and HALF of them being girls...Well, this was all new territory for me. Felt like an alien checking out a new planet. I also never had to deal with peer pressure or a social pecking order. So the ‘real world’ was actually all very new and strange to me.

MAG:

How did you get over such a change?

CHIPPER:

That’s where comedy came in. I quickly discovered that I could make people laugh and diffuse most situations. I had a pretty good wit, and it helped me stay alive and one step ahead. Can’t imagine what I would have done if I couldn’t make them laugh. Stopped me from getting beat up a lot.

During my school years, I discovered several of my father’s clown trunks in the garage. They were filled to the brim with magic props – Square Circle, Fraidy-Kat Rabbit, Stratospheres, a fake skunk, vanishing candles, tear-apart dove vanish, and more. They were total treasure to me, and every day after school I played with the props and started rehearsing like crazy. I made the initial mistake of trying to be ultra serious as a magician, but it didn’t matter – I couldn’t stop getting laughs, intentional or not.

MAG:

What were your first shows?

CHIPPER:

I still remember one of my first paid shows was for a church festival – I believe I was making a whopping \$75.00 - I was 14-15 years old, and my mom still had to drive me to each gig. During the show I produced a rabbit and proudly placed him on top of this very high table. I then stepped forward to take a serious bow, but as I did, the rabbit fell off the back of the table. Embarrassed, I quickly picked up the rabbit and placed the critter again onto the table, and again it fell off the back. I wasn’t trying for laughs, but the audience was in hysterics at this point. The poor rabbit was afraid of heights and whenever it saw the edge of the tabletop in front of him, he backed away from it, and promptly fell off the opposite side. I never noticed, so I kept picking him back up. The laughs continued and that’s when a light bulb went off. I realized that I LOVED getting the laughs. I can still remember that day. Within seconds I decided to do comedy magic. Nuf said!

From that moment on, it was all about making the show as funny as possible. I must have read every joke book and theater book on the planet, including stage comedies and film scripts – Anything that would help me understand the nuts and bolts of comedy.

MAG:

Was there anyone in magic that helped you or that you watched?

CHIPPER:

Yes. My father at this point in his career, stopped performing and started working as an entertainment director for various events, shows and theme parks like Disneyland or Knott’s Berry Farm in

ON TOUR IN NEW
ZEALAND CHIPPER
RETURNS WHERE
WE ONCE TOURED
WITH HIS PARENTS
AS A YOUNG BOY.



California. Knott's was a beautiful park back then, with rides, attractions and an actual western ghost town. They also had several theaters running live stage shows of all kinds throughout each day and night. I got to hang at the park for free because of my dad, and instead of riding the rides, I watched all the shows like crazy. I was kind of a geek, I think. (laughs) During the shows, I'd also turn to watch the audience to see and hear what they were reacting to and to learn why certain jokes worked better than others. Magicians like Ricky Dunn, who was also a comedy pickpocket, performed 4-5 shows daily, and I would catch every single show to see where the comedic 'beats' were and how routines were structured. I was also a fan of a great comedy magician who worked there by the name of "Dr. Lovecraft". He was from San Francisco area and was absolutely hilarious. He was so good at working a crowd, and dealing with audience volunteers. A true 'pro' in every sense of the word. I also watched Carlton & Company who did illusions, and Carlton's stage assistant was none other than the beautiful Frances Willard! Their finale was a version of her father's famous spirit cabinet routine. Amazing.

I felt very lucky to have been surrounded by some really talented performers. I also got to hang with them, take notes, and chat about a variety of things concerning show business.

MAG:

Were you performing as well?

CHIPPER:

Still doing birthday party and church shows. My mother still drove me, and baby-sat the rabbit until it was time for his moment in the show. This would take place about every other weekend – The two of us going out and giggling.

It wasn't until I my last year in high school that I got a call from Mark Kalin. Kalin had already made a name for himself as a solo act, doing an award-winning 'pool shark' routine, using billiard balls and pool cues. After a 4-5 year hiatus, he had decided to get back into magic and focus on being an illusionist. He asked me if I would be interested in being one of his assistants in this new act, and I said yes pretty quickly. There were two female assistants as well.

Forgot to mention the fifth assistant – a full grown, Bengal tiger. Mark had rented him (along with a trainer, of course) to help spice up his audition for a summer contract at a theme park. A few months later, we had the gig. I was assisting Kalin for 4 shows each day, 5 days a week. And it was a blast. I had a large notebook I kept with me at all times, taking copious notes about putting together a show, and all the mistakes and pitfalls to avoid. This included dealing with illusion builders, costuming, lighting, routining the show, picking the right music, dealing with employees, etc. A truly, great learning opportunity.

We also wound up appearing on a



Chipper rides an elephant. All in a days work.

few television shows, including "That's Incredible!" where if you look closely at the video of our segment, you'll see that the tiger in the lion's bride cage is actually peeing all over the place. And with me, hidden underneath, I went almost unconscious because of the smell. It would burn your eyes. Now to back up a bit, at the time, the show's producers were fighting with the female host of the show – Kathie Lee Crosby. She was being quite the diva that particular day, refusing to do a second 'take' segment introduction they were taping. Instead she stormed off the set and went straight home, leaving the producers high and dry. After our performance was taped in front of a studio audience, the cage was rolled outside, and I emerged from the

trap door completely soaked in, well, cat urine. The producers looked at each other and laughed and then threw me the keys to the Crosby's personal dressing-room. "Use it! She's not here! Enjoy!" And I did! (laughs)

MAG:

How long did you work for Mark?

CHIPPER:

I think about a year. We eventually took the act to Reno, starring in an ice show at one of the casinos in town. After 4 months, I trained a new assistant to replace me and headed back to college. But two years later, I was now doing my own comedy act, and both Kalin and I soon appeared together in the same show in Atlantic City. Except that this time around, we both had our own acts. It was great to see how far we had come at that point in our careers.

The crowds in Atlantic City could be tough at times, especially if the audience was filled with old people who had taken the bus into town and were only in the theater because it was air-conditioned. One show, in particular, was so badly received that every act walked out on stage only to be greeted by crickets and hardly any applause. The stage manager looked at me because I was up next and casually yelled, "Next Christian to the lions!" That made me laugh and I think it helped me from getting 'flop sweat.'

MAG:

Where else did you work?

CHIPPER:

Tons of casinos, as well as a few cruise lines. But the next big break was from Mark Kornhauser who suggested me for a show in Lake Tahoe. I had worked there briefly with Michael Finney a year or two before, doing a show at Caesar's called "Laff-Trix". I loved Tahoe – amazing mountains and scenery and only four casinos all nestled together – nothing at all like Vegas. Kornhauser and I worked the show for a month and then the producers asked me to stay on and I agreed. The show ran for 10 more months and again, it was great to work with a terrific crew, great dancers and to hang with Mark, who was a such a good friend. Very supportive of me during my early career, which I'll always be thankful for. And we talked comedy and magic routines on a daily basis, which was so nice to have someone to bounce ideas off of back and forth.

Even though I had done gigs before this one, for some reason this was the one that got producers noticing me. I think I was finally finding my 'real voice' and personality on stage and it was starting to click. Over the next 10-15 years, I played every casino town, as well as other countries – Even Nassau in the Bahamas and also the island

of Aruba. I also made some TV appearances either with my act, or as a comedy actor, with guest roles on television shows like Empty Nest, The Tonight Show with Jay Leno, The Disney Channel and the Jerry Lewis MDA Telethon. There were a few movie appearances as well, where I could usually be seen doing some sort of variety or circus skill like juggling or slapstick.

MAG:

Your act tends to be quite a mix of things. It's not really 'traditional magic'. Did you plan it that way?

CHIPPER:

Well, I was poking fun at all the circus and variety skills that I grew up with. I felt the 'thru-line' was the way I made fun of it all, but in the early days of my career I had several agents tell me to "stop doing everything. Just pick something, will ya!" They complained that they couldn't book me with another magician or juggler, or ventriloquist, or comedian because I was doing ALL of those





Photo by Scott Tokar

things in the same act, and they thought it would conflict with the other acts out there. But after about 5 years that all changed, and now agents were telling me the exact opposite, "You know what's great about what you do? You make fun of everything, but we can still put you with another magician, juggler or comedian and there's no conflict! It all works!"

MAG:

Can you explain why the thinking changed?

CHIPPER:

I think times sort of changed and suddenly it was okay to not be pigeon-holed into only one style of variety. Movie stars were allowed to also work in television without hurting their film career. It was more accepted to try new things and think outside the box of what was considered 'standard' entertainment. It was okay to do a bit of everything, as long as a strong personality was the driving force. For me, it's ALL about the personality and persona of a performer. Because if you can win an audience over with your personality, then they will allow you to do anything you want up on stage.

As people like Steve Martin, or the Smothers Brothers, and others started popping up, doing comedy, music, juggling and other variety bits in their acts it sort of became the 'norm' and then it was okay with the public. We also had some prop comics who were making it big like Gallagher and Carrot Top and even Howie Mandell, where there was a sense of "anything goes" in their acts. We were all being accepted more and more.

MAG:

Did you hang with many magicians?

CHIPPER:

Only the ones I was working with at the time. Mostly I was hang-

ing with comedians and writers because that's what intrigued me. I was busy learning how to create new material or find a 'new voice' for the stage. I took a few years of improv classes at The Groundlings Theater in Los Angeles, because I wanted to be able to really adlib and improvise like crazy on stage during a performance. I was striving (and continue to strive) to make every show different and memorable. My goal has always been to have the audience talk about the show around the water cooler the next day and say, "The night WE caught the show, this happened..." I want my audiences to feel the show is different based on who I talk to in the audience and who I bring up on stage and interact with. Those are all very live "in the moment" elements that I don't think good performers should ever ignore.

MAG:

You've been a full time, professional comedian and magician for roughly 25 years at this point. Do you still enjoy it?

CHIPPER:

Yes, and for different reasons than when I first started. The newer routines are exciting for me, as they go from a general concept, to an outlined script, to rehearsals and then live performance. And it's usually always the live performance where you quickly learn what's organic within the routine. The funniest jokes always blossom out from a real situation on stage. Discovering where the conflict is, which gives you more situations to pull jokes and bits from. It's great.

The second part that I enjoy is routing an entire show. A 90 minute performance has so many more levels than doing a 20 minute spot. The audience wants and expects to see more sides of you during a full evening show. There's a need for highs and lows, carefully arranged to pull the audience along on an adventure before getting to the grand finale and bows. I love dealing with every aspect of it, from music, to staging, to creating material

that will hold up in a theater setting.

MAG:

Where do you normally perform these days?

CHIPPER:

Well, I still do quite a lot of corporate events throughout the year, but the last 7 years has also been annual tours for performing arts centers, either with my solo show, "The Chipper Experience! – Where Comedy & Magic Collide!" or with "BLiNK!" We'll have done 18 performances of "BLiNK!" here in southern California for December and January and I'm quite proud of the show. It's in its 5th year, and we've had some simply fantastic artists joining us, including Danny Cole, Christopher Hart, Oscar Munoz, Arthur Trace, Eric Buss, Chris Mitchell, Jade, Joe Devlin, Murray and Teresa Hatfield, and Michael & Melanie Giles. And it's important to me, personally, that in addition to being really great magicians and illusionists, they're also really nice people to hang and work with as well. We really have a blast doing these shows when we're touring. And that directly feeds into the audience reactions as well, because they too can see how much fun we're all having on stage.

MAG:

That's an amazing roster!

CHIPPER:

It really is! As I've mentioned before, the thing that's really important to me when I work is having a distinct personality on stage that your audience can really connect with. And I look for that very same thing when selecting performers for our shows. The last thing I want an audience to remember when they leave the theater is a big illusion, or a brightly colored parasol -- The true bottom line is how they 'feel' about what they saw, and that always starts with the performer's personality. Hook the audience with artists with either a point of view or a vivid personality and you're 95% percent there!

MAG:

Speaking of personalities, you're married and have an eleven year old. How do you fit a family life into your work schedule and career?

CHIPPER:

That's the hardest thing of all, I think. Juggling the two. Thankfully, my wonderful wife was a dancer on Broadway and a Radio City Rockette for many years, so she understands the business completely, while while people don't. Far too many people mistakenly think we only work a few minutes each night and that's it. And yet we all know that there's so much more to it all, from creating new material and rehearsing, to all the office work and booking the shows. Lisa has been my co-producer for several of our self-produced shows, so we get to work and play together.

MAG:

And your son?

CHIPPER:

Well, he's such a 'show business' kid that it all comes natural to him. I'll get back from doing a show and he always asks me, "So, how was the house?" "Did you try the new joke?" "Why aren't you doing the bit about 'Finding Nemo' anymore, Dad?" -- Things like that. And my wife and I love that! His passion is to write jokes and for now I post them on facebook for friends and family because they really are creative and funny for an 11 year old. Ethan was diagnosed with high-functioning autism just before age three, so our unusual show business lifestyle actually works well in making sure we're there for him. I can tour for a week or two and then be home for a month straight, which means he gets both parents pretty much 24/7. And any time that I am





Photo by Scott Tokar

away for longer than a day or two, we either use SKYPE which is AWESOME, or if he's out of school or on vacation, he and Lisa will fly out with me.

It's actually quite a lot of fun keeping the family involved while pursuing a career like this, but you have to make an effort. I've unfortunately seen far too many marriages and families break up because the dad is 'on the road' far too long and soon he and mom just don't have anything in common anymore. It can be a struggle, especially when raising a child with special needs like Ethan, but we make sure to check in with each other and we know it's all going to take just a little bit more work than a normal 9-to-5 job schedule.

MAG:

You mentioned that you took improv classes in Los Angeles during your late twenties. Could you tell us your thinking behind that decision?

CHIPPER:

As I said, I'm always trying to get my brain to think 'outside the box' so that I would be ready for anything thrown at me during a show – not physically, like beer cans or tomatoes (laughs), but in how every show can be different from the audience demographics, to the theater, the weather, etc. I think it's extremely important that magicians, or any artists for that matter, take classes that are not directly related to magic. Acting classes, voice or singing classes. Dance and movement classes. Don't just read magic

magazines and books, but study up on directing, writing, graphic design, art, and more. It will all funnel down into making you a better performer. The more well rounded you are, the better your performance, the more dynamic your personality.

MAG:

Do you feel that's missing in magic these days?

CHIPPER:

Without a doubt. I think magicians tend to get tunnel vision – working so hard on the sleight or move, but neglecting how they will connect with the audience during the actual routine. I've seen guys do amazing magic, but look frumpy on stage because they never bothered to either get fit, or at least know how to dress appropriately so it's not an issue while performing. I've seen really creative artists come up with mind boggling routines, only to fall flat because they moved awkwardly on stage, or had trouble speaking. They were stiff and fake in their delivery. Far too many magicians 'hide' behind their magic rather than letting the magic compliment their personality.

The good ones out there are creating their own paths, stepping to the beat of their own drum as the old cliché goes. They're not mimicking an attitude they saw in a youtube video, or copying a close-up routine move-for-move. They're either creating material on their own, or adapting classic routines to suit their own individual style and then the audience can really enjoy it even



Photo by Scott Tokar

more. They then wind up 'owning' the routine and 'owning' the moment on stage.

MAG:

For someone who pokes fun at magic, you seem to take it rather seriously.

CHIPPER:

I feel you have to. Comedy is serious business, and I think anyone doing comedy (or drama) for that matter, should know the history of their art. Victor Borge was hilarious as a comedy concert pianist during his day, but that was because his knowledge and experience on the subject of classical music was so great. The more you know, the more you're able to step back and see how you can tweak it to make it funny. It takes a lot of practice to appear to be 'winging' it up on stage!

With regards to the magic, yes, I do poke fun at it, but that being said, when I'm doing my larger shows there are several effects that are legitimate magic sequences where skill is involved. It also tells the audience that I have a bit of 'street cred' – that I actually do know sleight-of-hand, etc., which actually works even more in my favor because if they're laughing, they're not expecting 'real magic' to take place. And if they're watching some unreal happening, I can break the tension with a joke or two. Also, as we all know, comedy can provide some fantastic mis-direction. I take full advantage of that throughout my shows.

MAG:

What are your future plans at this point?

CHIPPER:

Last year I signed with a new agency for my touring shows, and we're playing even more theaters and performing arts centers

than ever before. It's great because I can do 'mini-tours' of 1-2 weeks in a part of the country, and then come home for a bit to be with the family. We're also taping a new dvd for sale – which will contain several live performance clips as well as some short sketches, and even teach some magic. That is something I've never done before and I wish I had made one a good 20 years ago! It certainly would have paid for my son's college tuition, or at least my fast food habit! And THAT's the hardest part of touring.....A Taco Bell at every off-ramp! The real magic is keeping the weight off! (laughs)

MAG:

Thanks so much, Chipper, for spending some time with us.

CHIPPER:

Happy to! All the best!

It's now mid-January, and Chipper and his fellow magicians of "BLiNK!" have just finished up their 18 show run to great audiences, killer reviews, and four and five star ratings posted online. No rest for the weary though, as Chipper heads back out on the road for a string of club, theater, and casino bookings. This year will also take him to Malaysia, Dubai, and England. Just like his show business parents, "The show must go on."

Professional photos and cover by Scott Tokar

Chipper taking time out between shows on his New Zealand tour to hang out with Paul Romhany.



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Question: *David Beckham, Madonna, Ellen Degneres and Leonardo DiCaprio... What exactly do they have in common?*

These stars are all hugely successful mainstream artistes who have kept themselves in the spotlight by creating their own unique brand of entertainment (sports, music, comedy/ talkshow, acting, etc) that hold a wide mass appeal. These individuals have also put much effort and thought in constantly revamping their style, image and chops to ensure they remain interesting and current to their audience.

As fellow entertainers, we magic folk can certainly learn much from our sassy commercial counterparts.

Magic performers need to do the same constant evolution, probably not at the same radical level but it is so very essential for your magic to be current, relevant and mirror mainstream pop culture entertainment.

Shift and dare to change, or be left behind in today's fast moving world where the Internet is a double-edged sword. Like with any art or entertainment form, the image of magic evolves over time. The trend of today's magic is incredibly different from the style magic from just last decade. If you are still performing for

today's audience in top hat and tails, producing silks from a classic change bag, or making a rabbit appear, you are unfortunately behind about three decades.

You're not helping change society's tragically old-school perception of the magician, when modern conjurers like Criss Angel, David Blaine and Cyril Takayama are already wearing designer jeans and a street savvy modern day attitude.

There is a great poster that was shared on Facebook recently:





Heh heh. The truth hurts but the only thing constant in life is change, and I'm sure that you would have noticed that the image of magic worldwide has always been constantly evolving.

Every two decades or so, there is a dynamic shift in the presentation of magic. The look of magic is usually set by the most influential magicians of that particular time. Top performers like Robert Houdin, Harry Houdini, Channing Pollack, Doug Henning, David Copperfield and more recently David Blaine & Criss Angel have all been responsible for creating the image of magic of their time.

If you acknowledge your show is not in line with modern audience's expectations of magic today, there is hope yet because you see the possibilities of growth. Set aside your pride and ego for a bit and challenge yourself to explore what can be done better, since you are a living reflection of the image of magic as much as any other magician.

Now, I am in no way encouraging or even suggesting that you should be a clone of David Blaine, Criss Angel or whoever that may be the hottest flavour of the time. Jumping on the fad bandwagon will just make you look like a carbon copy and part of the indistinguishable 'me-too' crowd. So, bad idea to be a cookie cutter! You owe it to yourself to be your own person.

Consider for a moment, without pride or ego... When was the last time you revamped your act or added an act that elevated your performance so that it is reflective of current times? Have you been performing the same material for the past 10 years and not given it a commercial overhaul? And, I'm not talking about technical refinements or changing the colour of your cards/ silks/ birds/ canes/ parasols, so please, don't even go there, unless you're a jackass. Then I'll personally come over to smack you in the face with your plastic appearing cane.

Thanks to globalization, our world is getting smaller and life seems to move faster every single day. Social media, the Internet, growth of new economies and countries influence pop culture trends and trends. There are fads and there are trends. Fads last months, trends last longer. Trends used to last around 5 to 10 years, now they last just 2 to 3 years due to the speed the world moves. Of course, this is dependent on your target market but I'm using international standards as a benchmark. People are easily bored and want to be wowed by the next 'in' thing.

What's needed is to identify and pick elements, which reflect the current evolved image of magic as well as pop culture and infuse it into your style and/ or act. Here's some tried and proven things I've personally utilized in my commercial magic career, that you can also use to spruce up your unique image and brand of magic. Dedicate some soul-searching time to consider...

Choice of Material: Is your choice of show material and props used considered current to your audience? If you are performing an act still using cassette tapes, Walkmans, old-fashioned bulky TVs, ancient typewriters, bulky mobile phones or other things

that society has pretty much considered "retired", your act will inevitably look dated. That is, unless you've structured your show to be themed in a "blast from the past" type of feel.

While some things may be respected as iconic and classic in magic, do bear in mind that while these are things magicians embrace, the rest of the world (i.e. mainstream public and media) may regard otherwise when they see top hats, canes, and rabbits. Don't fall into this trap because when you follow the herd, you step on a lot of crap.

Structure of Magic: Is the structure of your act just like everyone else's? Certain acts have almost a template feel to them and the only difference (to the lay public) is just the magician performing it. At one time, everyone was doing doves, zombies and cards. Then it was the incorporation of canes, silks and snowstorms. Now, one of the magic fads is the CD manipulation act.

Can you honestly say you have a uniquely different product, or does your act/ show have the same formulaic structure that other magic acts commonly have? Can you change your act or show order, so it breaks the conventional rules or typical structures of magic shows? Award-winning mainstream movies like



"Memento" and "Usual Suspects" did not follow conventional storytelling of filmmaking and stood out from the norm. Use that for inspiration, to shine out!

Dressing: What do you wear when you perform? Are you still in a 1990s Matrix-style black leather trench coat or god-forbid 1940s black tuxedo or even worse, painfully shiny 1970s sequined jacket? Are you in an obvious costume or dressed in something more normal? Where do you get your clothes from? A high-fashion retail outlet? A costumer? Does your mother/ wife/ girlfriend dress you?

Sure, I understand that magic attire has specific needs, but that is still no excuse not to have a current look that is fashionable or stylish. Consider what celebrities wear. Would they get their outfits from the same place that you do? I'm not asking you to shell out tons of money for designer wear and don't be a wise ass about Lady Gaga's Kermit the frog get-up *wink*

Hairstyle: What do you sport? Does it feel dated? Is it the same hairstyle you've had since the 1980s? On the flipside, is your hairstyle too extreme for the general audience? If you are losing hair, do something about it! Comb-overs maybe only work if you do comedy, but you really don't want your audience feeling sorry about you.

Grooming is important, and whoever said your hair is one's crowning glory, really got that right. But! Here's a tip from a female of the species. If you are seriously losing hair and can't get a good wig or hair plugs, just consider shaving it all off. Grow a nice goatee, stay in good shape, tweeze your brows... You may just look sexy and badass. Women love that. Trust me!

Music: Music is always an accurate reflection of the current time and a fitting piece of music for an act or routine makes a good act, great. Besides creating the perfect mood and feel for your magic, music also puts a time-stamp on your act. If you are doing a deliberate classical, themed, or period act to a time period, your music choice will be specific. However, if you are doing a general magic act or illusion, then your music needs to be updated every 5 years.

Please refrain from copying the music from other people's performances, though you may find it perfect for whatever your intended purpose is (a similar act or otherwise). If I collected ten bucks every time I hear that particular soundtrack from string-quartet Bond blasting in a magic performer's show or card manipulation act, and gave all the money to World Vision, I think my adopted kid in Mongolia can afford a PhD by now. LOL!

Script: How do you write your lines, plan your story, and work on your all-important script? Where do you research jokes or lines?

Unfortunately, many magicians tend use the exact same lines and this evident if you attend magic conventions or magic production shows. It does get old quickly for an educated audience and that obviously, works against the performer. Ensure that your jokes are "fresh" and your script is topical. Throwing in current buzzwords are good if they are in context because people like that.

That's something the most successful comedians and speakers use, so it'd be wise to follow in their footsteps.

Case Study

As I think it is always important for one to practice what they preach, I thought I would share with you my own process that I have used to evolve my image and magic as my stage character, 'Magic Babe' Ning.

When I first started out professionally, I was pretty clueless about most things. Dressed in a dark trench coat, I wore a white long sleeve shirt and black leather pants. Subsequently, I swapped my conservative top for something a bit more showy. It was a bareback sequined number that was held together only by 2 strings. One tied to your back and the other at the nape of your neck like a halter. Obviously it sold sexiness much more than the previous costume and I used it because my skill sets to agents and bookers were already established. Every year, I changed my wardrobe to keep it fresh; from a sleek black corset, fitted with boning within to a sexy red vinyl corset, which I had professionally customised for a better fit.

Currently, I switch between a new black corset and a purple one to match my new image and hairstyle. Earlier this year, I had my long tresses chopped off, a big sacrifice since most women regard long hair as a symbol of femininity, and instead I had my hair layered short with shocking purple streaks. I was completely comfortable being in my own skin. My attitude oozed that, and that gutsy part of me was reflected. FLY Entertainment, my artiste management company, supported the move and the media and fans loved it. Comments started coming in that they liked the fresh change.

Besides my image, my material has also evolved over the years. The illusions I perform with my partner J C Sum are constantly being tweaked, whether it is a change in choreography, update in illusion design or update in music. My favourite illusion "Crystal Metamorphosis" went through multiple changes over a 3 year period. An illusion we are quite known for "360 Sawing" is currently going through a complete redesign to make it even more deceptive. You can watch us perform the old version in the recent NYE 2011 taping of Le Plus Grand Cabaret Du Monde in Paris. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZEq0ec-vIM> We also add/replace one or two illusions every two years to our show.

However, my personal solo acts have also evolved since over time. I started with softer acts like a cut & restored rope performed under UV light and a linking coathanger routine. Now, I perform more edgy acts such as a razor blade act, but with the addition of eating a torch of fire. I also added a "Human Block Head" routine (nail up nose) but with a 4" drill bit. This fits my more matured and edgy image. For the longest time, I performed my "Straight Jacket Striptease" routine with a custom burgundy straight jacket. The routine has now been improved to a double straight jacket routine where I'm strapped up in two regulation-looking straight jackets. I still perform the "striptease" part but with two jackets "wink".

Best of luck with your journey of evolution in magic!



BAMBOOZLERS

DIAMOND JIM TYLER

FULL OF BULL

Magician, author and creator Diamond Jim is known world wide for the *Diamond Deck*, the greatest advance in trick decks in many years. His performances range from restuarants, trade-shows, television and other events for such top clients as AT&T, IBM, Mobil, Pepsi, and Time Warner.

www.diamond-jim.com

TRICK: A new full can of Red Bull® is opened and the magician's hands are shown otherwise empty. The magician places his finger(s) over the opening and turns the can upside-down. Amazingly, upon removing his finger(s) the liquid inside remains suspended. When the can is passed out for inspection the secret cannot be discerned.

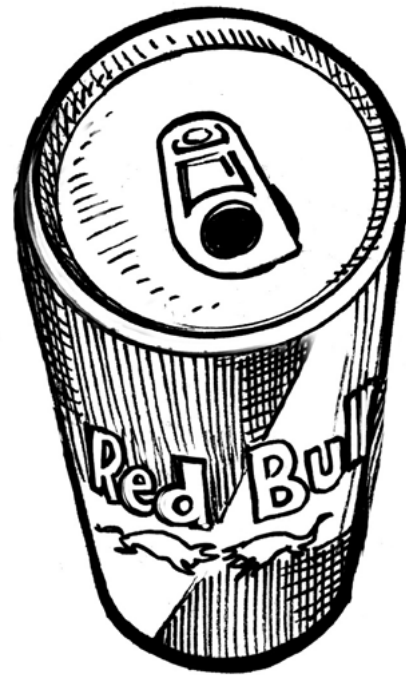


Figure 1

SECRET: This works because of the structure of the Red Bull® can. When placing your thumb on top of the filled open can, slyly spin the pull-tab around to cover the opening. Lock one of the pull-tab's corners into the mouth of the can so that it doesn't move from that position. (Fig. 1) Completely cover the hole with your fingers or thumb and turn the can upside down. When you remove your finger(s) that were covering the hole, the liquid should remain suspended.

A little bit of the liquid may trickle out, but the majority of it should remain inside the can. If the can is perpendicular to the floor I've found that the liquid may continue to trickle out. However, if you tilt the end of the can that is opposite to the mouth, slightly towards the floor, then no liquid should pour from it. If you feel the need to prove that the can is full, or that nothing is covering the mouth, then you can insert a straw, matchsticks, or toothpicks into the opening while the can is upside-down and a little bit of the liquid will spill out. Or you can even squeeze the can gently to make a little liquid drop out.

When you are ready to end your magical demonstration, place your thumb over the opening and invert the can right-side up. As you turn the can secretly spin the pull tab back to the correct and normal position (Fig. 2). The previous action will take a little practice. Once the pull-tab is returned to the normal position you can hand out the can for their inspection and encourage others to try this impossible feat.

Instead of wasting the precious Red Bull® liquid, I recommend you drink it and then to refill the can with water when executing this trick.



Figure 2

WANT TO GET YOUR
PRODUCT SEEN BY
FIFTEEN THOUSAND
READERS?

To Advertise in

VANISH

CONTACT

us via email at

info@paulromhany.com

OR SEND PRODUCT TO:

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PO Box 101473

NORTH SHORE Mail Centre

AUCKLAND 0745

New Zealand

IT'S CHILDS PLAY

TONY CHRIS A.K.A ZANY ZAK



Who is Zany Zak a.k.a Tony Chris?

This is a question worth asking. I was thrilled and honored to be invited to do this column, and at the same time I was humbled. What could an everyday, regular magician like me offer to the magic community? This was going to take a great deal of thinking.

I am a man of many personas. I am a husband, a father of two young children with autism, musician, actor, and recording artist. Oh, and a magician too. There are many hats hanging on my hat rack, and I wear each one with great passion. Some of you may know me as Tony Chris the bizarrist, creator of "Karnival of Magic", "Hamptom Falls", "The Crossroads", "Haunting", or the macabre vampire card effect, "Card of Nosferatu". Perhaps others know me for my mentalism effects such as "Bon Voyage", "The Chosen", or "The Masterpiece". Maybe some of you might know me for my children's Christmas double DVD, "A Tony Christmas Magic Show".

The hat I am now wearing as the writer of "It's Child's Play" is one I wear with great pride, for it is the hat that belongs to none other than my alter ego, children's magician Zany Zack. I would best describe my character of Zany Zack as a cross between the mad hatter, Willie Wonka, a circus ring master, court jester, and a magician, all rolled into one bigger-than-life living cartoon.

TONY CHRIS IS

A FULL TIME

PROFESSIONAL

MAGICIAN

BASED OUT OF

VANCOUVER,

CANADA

This is the hat that I have worn for the longest as a professional, full time magician and entertainer in Vancouver, BC (Canada). I, like many full time professional magicians, make a good portion of my income from performing for kids. This includes birthday parties, children's

“Kids’ magic is an art in of itself. It means to be the creator of smiles and laughter for little people.”

Perhaps it is not for all magicians, but for many of us it is our path, whether we purposely chose it or we stumbled down it by accident or necessity.

festivals, Christmas shows, corporate family summer picnics, fairs and any other family-oriented event you can think of. I have been doing this for twenty years and I am fortunate to be able to provide for my family doing mainly children and family magic shows.

To do this job one must be constantly flexible, always alert, and maybe just a little bit crazy.

So I asked myself, who am I to write a column devoted to children’s and family magic? Well, the answer is simple. I’m just a guy who loves to make children laugh. Sounds corny, doesn’t it? But I can assure you that it is 100% accurate. I learned a long time ago that of the many genres of magic that I perform, the most rewarding and the most challenging has been performing for kids.

Kids’ magic is an art in of itself. It means to be the creator of smiles and laughter for little people. Perhaps it is not for all magicians, but for many of us it is our path, whether we purposely chose it or we stumbled down it by accident or necessity. It is our bread-and-butter. It has saved me from getting a real job for over 15 years.

I decided almost two decades ago when I ventured into the realm of children’s and family entertainment that I would never use my name, Tony Chris. That was just the name I was born with. It is a fine name, just like everyone else’s, but not one that I wanted when it came to creating a children’s magic show. I knew from Day 1 I would be best suited as a zany, eccentric, off the wall, colorful character

rather than “a magician for kids”.

By the way, the transition from Tony Chris to Zany Zack was simple. You see, it is not a big leap for me as my Zany Zack character is an extension of who I really am. With wild and wacky as my personal brand of normal, sometimes I think I’m more Zany Zack than Tony Chris. My wife often reminds me when I’m disciplining the kids that I am “Dad”, not “Zany Zack”.

Before we get into the Children’s Magic Effect of the Month, I would like to spend a little time writing about the challenges and rewards of being a children’s magical entertainer. I also have what I feel are the five most important tools for a successful show. We’ll start with a few little mishaps I’ve had in my time as a soldier of silliness!

I’ve been poked, prodded, kicked in the shin and other places not to be discussed in a children’s column. I’ve had vomit (not

mine) on my costume after a couple of shows that was not there when I arrived. I have had things thrown at me, sometimes actually bouncing off my head and back into the audience for a very unexpected laugh. I’ve been smeared by bubble gum, drooled on, hugged by little children who leave with a slightly cleaner face, and called some unmentionable words from a few kids who shouldn’t have those words in their vocabularies. The list goes on – those are some minor incidents! I won’t even get into the other stuff from which horror movies are made. But then again, I have performed well over 3,000 children’s magic shows over 20 years so I guess I have pretty much seen it all. Well, at least until the next surprise.

Kids can get carried away sometimes, especially when they are all hopped up on sugar with the promise of more sugar. They can and will run wild all over the house, yell, annoy their parents or the



ZANY ZAK
THE PERCENT NAME TO MATCH HIS CHARACTER

kids beside them, and generally cause supreme havoc. Heck, for some it is their job and they are very good at it.

It is not for the faint of heart, but this is where the real skill happens. I can keep a room full of elementary school kids riveted to me for 45 minutes, too weak from laughter to be any trouble at all. Not because I am the world's greatest magician. Far from it, but because I found the balance between the world of a child's active imagination and the grown up world of reality! The tools I use for this feat are simple.

1. I create a visual presence that is straight out of their world. Colorful costume, comic book like demeanor, fantasy driven, and adventuresome. I am like no adult they have ever seen, and once I enter the performing room or area they know they are about to see something very different and unique.

2. I adopt a Mary Poppins approach. I am kind, funny, and eccentric, but also firm. They will laugh the whole time and enjoy themselves immensely, but they will also mind their p's and q's. They will understand because I make it clear we are going to have an amazing time but they won't be able to walk all over me!

3. I am the loudest, most theatrical and most vocal of all of them. This lets them know who is actually in control at all times. Think "alpha of the pack", or they will run all over you and will serve you up for desert.

4. I stay two steps ahead of them. One step is never enough these days. They are getting smarter and smarter. I can see the trouble-makers the moment I walk into the place. They make it so easy!

5. I create an everlasting childhood memory to be with them forever after. This is accomplished by having a strong magic show that is visual, funny and filled with tons of laughter.

Yes, I've had some hard shows. All entertainers have experienced an audience member of any age who wants to steal the spotlight. But they are few and far between. For nearly every kid, the rules of entertainment are simple: bright colors, silliness to the tenth degree, spontaneity, a knack for being funny, and variety. Lots of variety, because you are not holding their focus so much as making their attention chase you through all the twists and turns of your show. Generous dashes of potty humor is also a plus (at least in my show).

And now I would like to talk about the rewarding experiences that we have as children's entertainers. I cannot tell you how it warms my heart during a show, and especially at the end, when I see how much they have enjoyed themselves. This is obvious from the enormous amount of laughter I get during the performance. I also know that I have done well when at the end of my performance, especially at birthday parties, I get big "thank you" hugs and high-fives from the children. It shows in their eyes that they want to say thank you in the purest way they know. It is so uplifting and makes me realize I really made a difference to them that day, one that will likely be remembered for the rest of their lives.

Another great perk at shows is that the parents wish to express their gratitude, often with a tip. I always accept tips, and I thank them graciously. This is my opinion, but please understand that

my theory is if a parent wants to give a tip it is because they believe you provided more than they were expecting.

Some of my most rewarding experiences performing children's shows, the ones that have made this all worthwhile, have been birthday parties and fundraisers for very ill and dying children (which I choose to do for free), as well as for children who have lost one or even both parents. Although these are extremely sad circumstances, they have made me feel the most alive after the show. And I can see in the eyes of those parents or grandparents, and sometimes through their tears, that I brought everyone a window of joy. These shows cause me to reflect upon my life and I realized how truly fortunate I am to have all that I have.

Some magicians may snub their noses at kid's magic. To them, it looks like simple tricks performed while wearing bold colors. But as any kid's performer will attest, there is nothing simple about keeping a room full of hyped up young kids seated AND entertained for three-quarters of an hour. It's a pint-sized battle zone, and I am here to make sure you have the tools to get in, get the job done, and get out without any battle scars, with full payment and maybe even a tip.

Candy Coated Mouth Coils

By Zany Zack

Effect and Routine: A funny mouth coil routine for those magicians with a sweet tooth.

Ingredients: 25' multicolored mouth coil
Empty Smarties candy box
Tic Tac box, with half the Tic Tacs removed
Some double-sided sticky tape

Preparation: Cut 2 strips of the double-sided tape, approximately 2 inches in length, and place onto the front and back of the Tic Tac box. Hold the Smarties box between your thumb and fingers on the narrow sides, and gently press just enough to cause the box to bow. Carefully insert the Tic Tac box into the Smarties box, leaving a space of approximately 2 – 2.5 inches at the top. Press firmly, until the Tic Tac box is held securely by the tape. Load the mouth coil into the Smarties box so the side you will be pulling from is facing down into the box, towards the Tic Tacs.

Make sure you leave at least half an inch between the Tic Tac box and the mouth coil. Your fingers will be pressing into that space from the top and bottom of the Smarties box during performance

to force the mouth coil into your mouth. You may close the flap of the Smarties box if you wish, or fold it over slightly. You may also press the mouth coil slightly to make it flatter in the box. I like to keep this in my left hand, inside breast pocket of my performance coat, as I will be using it midway through my show.

Performance: I perform this effect about halfway through my show and present it not as a magic trick at first but as a candy break. Say, "Well kids, we've come to my favorite part of the show. It's candy break time."

This usually gets the kids very excited as they think they are all getting some candy. I now pull out the Smarties box gimmick and introduce it to them. Now I say, "Sorry kids, it looks like I only brought one box of Smarties. This should be just enough fuel to get me through the second part of the show. Have you ever wondered what happens if you eat the red ones last?"

Many children will shout responses. I now shake the Smarties box in an up-and-down motion, and the Tic Tacs will sound like Smarties in the box. This will convince the audience there is candy coated chocolate delights waiting to be eaten. I now open the Smarties box, making sure the flap side is facing the children. This way they cannot see anything behind the flap or inside the box. Using my right hand, I place the top of the Smarties box into my mouth, and start shaking up and down so they can hear more Smarties. What I am really doing is moving the mouth coil closer to my mouth. I don't load the mouth coil the first time. I lower the Smarties box and pretend that I am chewing.

I say, "Boy those were good. Very chocolatey. I will have to eat a few more." I repeat the load motions, but now I make sure to squeeze the mouth coil completely into my mouth. I put the Smarties box back into my breast pocket and pretend to chew. I then act like something is wrong. I puff my cheeks. I mumble Uh-oh in a high-pitched voice that always gets a laugh. I make my left hand into

a fist and lightly tap my chest as if something has gotten stuck. I continue to say Uh-oh in the high pitched voice. I now raise my right hand to my mouth and start to extract the mouth coil.

As each color of the mouth coil is pulled out I say Uh-oh in the same voice, acting a little silly until the end. I pull the coil very slowly, and every time I say Uh-oh I gain a laugh. When I reach the end I pull out the mouth coil, hiding the final piece in my hand as I gather the mouth coil mess. I then say, "Does anyone want a free souvenir from the show?" Kids always say yes, parents cringe and say no. Then I end the routine with, now you know what happens when you eat the red ones last!

Final Notes: I developed this routine 20 years ago. It has been one of my favorite routines in my show and is considerably different from most mouth coil loads you may be familiar with. Around Christmas time you can get Christmas-colored Smarties in red and green packaging. For My Christmas shows I use the special Smarties box with the Christmas mouth coils which come in red and green. Kids love mouth coil routines as they are very visual and magic looking.

Well, there you have it. My first offering to Vanish magazine as the children's magic column writer has concluded for this issue. Please feel free to email any of your thoughts, comments, or ideas of this routine.

I will now open the doors for you to submit your routines, effects, and ideas to me. Bring me your wackiest, your silliest, your best routine! I will feature one of your submissions every issue along with your bio and picture.

You may send your routines and ideas by writing to Zany Zack at www.zanyzack.com. Now, go forth and make those smiles happen!



Performing Mentalism for Young Minds

Volume 1

MAGIC TRICK REVIEW

HARRY MONK & FRIENDS

Harry Monk and his team take the latest magic products and test them in the 'real' world.

This section includes apps, books, DVDs and tricks.

3 The Impossible Box by Ray Roch

Effect: The performer brings out six cards and quickly makes a box. The box can then animate in the spectator's hand or on a table, the lid then taken off and an object, such as a lemon produced.

Ray also shares his complete award winning five minute box routine. This includes all four routines taught on the DVD and put together to form a single five minute close-up show. One box with A LOT of magic. This is perfect for those who perform in restaurants or are looking for something special and very different to present.

WHAT YOU GET: A very well produced 60 minute DVD.

QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION: I found Ray's verbal instruction to be a tad too quickly paced for me. He kinda breezes through some of the explanations. I was a little concerned about this, but glad they provide viewers with slow-mo clips from the magician's viewpoint of various things, particularly the construction of the box and some of the loading procedures. Happily, this makes the learning experience very easy.

DIFFICULTY: Since the crux of the effect is putting together the box in front of your spectators and then doing cool things with the box, you'll need to practice putting it together quickly and smoothly. It's not a difficult procedure, but fumbling and struggling with the box construction certainly won't be fun for the audience to watch so put in the practice to get it into your muscle memory.

The loads and animation are all relatively easy, too. On a scale from one to ten I don't think anything would be harder than a three.

ANGLES: Some of the loads are easier than others and since this is intended for a walk around performance, all of the angles are something you should be able to work with. The animation/floating part of the routine can be done surrounded, providing your lighting is right, if you get my meaning.:

VARIETY: Ray teaches viewers how to do several different handlings in terms of producing items from the box and in particular several different themes. In particular he has a routine themed with golf, a routine themed with gambling with different sized dice, etc.

There's also a handling involving making the box animate, floating, and then causing a ball to levitate out of the box. All of the handlings involve building the box in front of the audience and eventually producing things from the box.

It should also be noted that in each handling, you are clean at the end and can really give the box away at the end of the routine... though if you're doing a strolling gig where you visit 20 tables or groups of people in one night (as many restaurant/corporate magicians do) you obviously would be hard pressed to give the box away at every table.

THOUGHTS: There's a LOT I LOVE about this release and only a couple of things I did not care for. First, the positives.

There are a couple of productions that are truly magical - that slo-mo shot in the promo video of the lemon coming out of the box is soooo cool looking and with mutiple handling options, within reach of anyone. There's simply something satisfying about putting the box together and then pulling something out of it. The box itself, being made of bright white cards with splashes of black and red, is very attractive to the eye. Additionally, I'm certain this would play just wonderfully in a parlor situation. I myself plan on using it in school shows. I wear dark colors, so the white box against the background of my dark clothes will look great. Plus, the animation of the box will look great and very visible, too.

I also love the animation of the box itself, as it looks very magical turning up on it's edges. The idea of the ball floating out of the box is also wonderful. Ray also provides a signed card to box effect which is nice, too. His handling is attainable and the effect looks great too, but as the signed card to impossible location plot doesn't particularly excite me with any handling, I wasn't too taken for this, but if you like card work, this is another great idea.

Finally, the entire idea of the impossible box is open to so many different presentational pos-

sibilities that it's staggering. For instance, just to shoot an idea out there - instead of playing cards, I may use alphabet cards and build the box as I talk to school children about the possibilities opened up by reading skills and producing something thematically relevant out of the box.

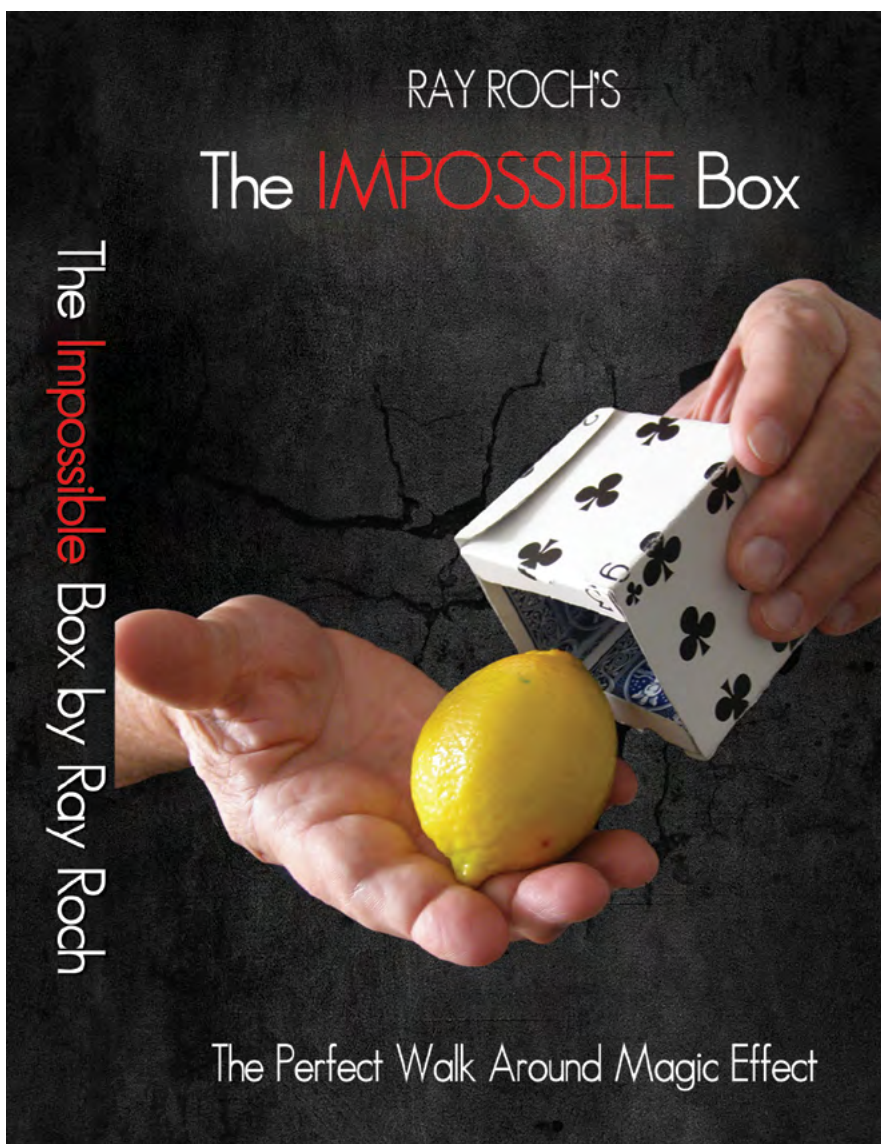
The BIGGEST thing I love about this entire release is that it's PRACTICAL. This isn't a pipe dream with severe angle problems like some of the torn & restored card releases I've seen over the years. The Impossible Box is intended for the real world.

FINAL RATING: I'm going to give this a 9 out of 10. I did not care for a couple of things, but this release is so incredibly open-ended with possibilities and so practical that this release is going on my "best of" list at the end of the year.

This is advertised as a close-up product (and it rocks) but if you work parlor gigs, I really think this will shine for you, too.

DVD available from all good magic dealers and wholesale through MAGIC CITY.

Price: \$25.00 US



2 MENAGE A 3 by Michael Afshin

EFFECT:

You will learn the following routines:

* **International 3FLY** - An elegant routine using three very different coins. Each coin visibly travels from one hand to the other. Mike teaches his beautiful '3FLY' handling performed right at the finger tips.

* **International Matrix** - Using only his bare hands the performer causes three international coins to magically collect together under one hand and then instantly return again. Great magic & very easy to perform

* **Envelope Matrix** - A very baffling matrix routine using the same three coins and three sealed envelopes to cover each one. The three coins magically collect together underneath one envelope. Mike's final surprise kicker with all three coins vanishing then appearing inside the three sealed envelopes is a real fooler.

Bonus routines:

* **Mike's in the hand two coin transpo** - Clean & baffling coin magic right in the hand of the spectator. A wonderful routine for the walk around performer.

* **Ashfin's Retention Vanish** - Mike teaches his personal handling of this beautiful coin sleight.

WHAT YOU GET: A DVD that teaches the entire routine, step-by-step without any spoken word. I like this idea because it is very easy to follow, and break the routine down for practice. This is clever on the producers part because it should sell well in any country.

You will receive eight coins in Total (five high quality gaffed coins and three regular matching.) The coins are made by renowned craftsman Roy Keppers. Anybody who works with gaff coins will know that Roy produces top quality coins, and this is an example of his work shining. I like the fact they include the non-gaffed coins should you wish to perform the entire three phase sequence.

Quality of Instruction: The instructions on the DVD are precise and the different camera angles make it easy to learn. The DVD is divided in to sections so you can learn everything at your own pace. This makes it easy to pause and take your time with each move.

ANGLES: This is a routine you couldn't perform surrounded. The matrix style routines are performed on the table, the productions and 3 fly are performed face on to your audience. It's not something you could easily perform in walk-about condition, however Michael has been performing it for so long he is comfortable working it in pretty much under any type of condition.

DIFFICULTY: To master the entire routine does require practice, which in my opinion makes it a real gem. It's not for beginners, however anybody who wants an incredibly strong routine could master this. If I had only been in magic a few years and were looking for a routine to perform at a magic competition this is what I would chose! It took me a few days to master the entire routine, and a few more weeks to really get it perfect. The most difficult part is the International 3 Fly routine, yet that is the most fun to perform. I found myself taking the coins with me everywhere and just performing it until it became second nature. The matrix and coins in envelope are easy and don't require much skill at all. I have now added this routine to my professional repertoire and it's one of the highlights of my close-up show.

PERFORMANCE: Michael performs his entire routine, complete with music. His theatre are in his hands, its as close to real magic as you could want. I perform this in my formal close-up show with a music box in which I take out the envelopes, then produce the coins as per the instructions. Michael chooses to use a set piece of music, however you could do this as a talking effect. Another positive is you can break this down and perform all of the routine or parts of it.

THOUGHTS: I've been a fan of 3 Fly routines since I first saw Chris Kenner perform his version years ago at a magic convention. Michael's routine takes it to a new level. If I had only seen it on youtube I would have thought it was a camera effect. The small effort needed to put this routine will last you for the rest of your magic career. It is priced right to keep it out of the hands of those who are just curious. The quality of coins and DVD are worth every penny. This deserves a very high 9.5 out of 10!

Price - \$250 US

Available from select dealers or direct from <http://www.roykueppers.com/>



1 PERFORMING MENTALISM FOR YOUNG MINDS VI. 1

By Paul Romhany

Over 265 pages which include a collection of essays on how to perform mentalism for children, plus over forty effects from performers around the world including:

Mark Strivings, David Kaye, Tim Mannix, Paul Romhany, Richard Webster, Andrew Gerard, Wayne Rogers, Tony Binarelli, Bev Bergeron, Jim Kleefeild, Keith Field, Danny Archer, Andrew Gerard, Jack Dean, Greg Arce, Anthony Lindan, E. Raymond Carlyle, Professor Spellbinder, Matthew Johnson, Tony Chris, Cris Johnson, Reg Blackwood, Ken Ring, Christopher Taylor, Christopher Berry, TC Tahoe, Ozzy D, Magical Michael, Magic George, Ken Dyne, Jasper Blakeley, Ray Roch.

MYTHOUGHTS: I'm skipping right to my thoughts for this review because I really cannot impress upon you how great this book is. It's what I would call a foundational book that should be in the library of every magician who has any desire to perform for kids.

While the main focus of the book is the idea of performing mentalism for kids of all ages, the real strength of the book is how many of the essays lay the groundwork for being a good children's performer.

Here are just some of my personal favorite entries in this tome: (bear in mind that modesty prevents me from listing my own contributions to this work. Don't get me wrong, I'm pleased with my contributions, but I'm in awe of a great deal of the work in this book)

- **Introduction** - right in the beginning, Paul breaks down the approximate ages of kids along with their developmental levels, giving readers an approximate blueprint of what kids can process.

- **Essay: Performing for Children** - here Paul covers the basics of performing for kids in terms of stage, warmups, control, basics of theatre, performing style and various key elements of performing such as themes, plot, characters, dialog, music and more.

He continues on with thoughts on character, acting techniques, scripting and so much more.

Oh, and we're only on page 28 of a book that's nearly 300 pages. Quite frankly I could have stopped right here and felt as though I got my money's worth.

Mark Strivings (from the wonderful *Desert Brainstorm Series* of DVDs) chimes in with several routines, essays and professional advice on performing mentalism ... for preschool age kids. I thought I was good because I performed mentalism for elementary and middle school age kids, but Strivings' thoughts on using mentalism for younger tots blew my mind away in a good way and

expanded my thoughts.

David Kaye adds his thoughts on the subject, contributing thoughts on kids show performing pertaining to good kids show tips for success and understanding the mind-set of kids.

This is all so good! Oh, and there were actual routines in the book too - a ton of great ones. Here are just a few that jumped out at me...

Around The World In 8 Minutes - a wonderful routine involving a three part prediction using three geometric shapes, a blow-up globe of the earth and references to Jules Verne.

Phantom Artist Halloween Card Routine - a paper "cut out" made by the performer in a 'trance' matches the selection of a child. Its fun and visual.

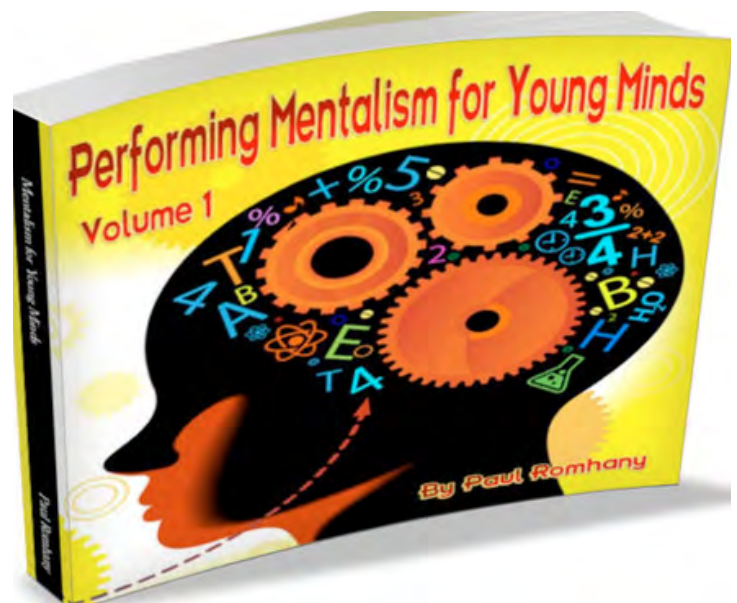
Psychic Santa - The premise: "This year, Santa brought me my gift even though I did not decide what I want yet. I think that's how he knows if you've been naughty or nice." Talk about one heck of a hook for a kids' trick!

Time Warp - A wonderful watch prediction effect involving a picture, a watch and a very fair handling. I love watch effects (I currently have three such effects in my set lists) and this one will find its way into a show very soon.)

Child's Play - an amazingly kid friendly twist on a drawing duplication that utilizes the game of tic-tac-toe. This was my favorite effect in the entire book. Simply amazing, clean and easy to do. A full-blown stage effect that requires ZERO preparation - completely impromptu and yet I couldn't figure out the method to save my life until I read the secret. Mind-blowing and yet kid friendly!

I haven't even scratched the surface in this review of just how much "A" material is in this book. Again, if you have any desire to perform for kids, you NEED this book even if you have zero desire to perform mentalism for youngsters. The essays alone show forward thinking by experienced, real-world pros.

A 10 out of 10 and my TOP PICK for the best release of the year! Available from all magic dealers world wide. \$40.00 US



APP REVIEW

MAGIC GIG SLIPS By Bruce Kalver



REQUIREMENTS: Compatible with iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad. Requires iOS 3.2 or later.

DESCRIPTION: Whether you are a performer, an event service provider, or a booking agent, Magic GigSlips® is an easy and efficient way to keep track of all the information about your booked or proposed shows. You can record information wherever you are! You have access to all the details right at your fingertips.

The forms provided can be altered for your specific needs, They can be sent to your own email and a professional letter using your own logo (if desired) can be sent to your client to confirm the details of the booking.

You can keep quotes for possible shows and have the ability to change the status of them at any time. Shows are listed chronologically within the app but can also be moved to your iCal. There is even a directions feature which shows you directions and maps. When you finish the show, go to your car and press a button to send a thank you note right away!

AN ENTIRE BOOKING SERVICE ON YOUR MOBILE DEVICE!

Book a show anytime, anywhere.

Send contracts to client with the press of a button.

E-mail each booking to your home computer.

Use your own logo or photo image for your emails.

Customizable questions for your show slips.

Cloud backup of all your information.

Perfect solution for all performers including magicians, clowns, birthday performers, musicians, bands, DJ's, face painters, agents. Ideal for anyone who books gigs!

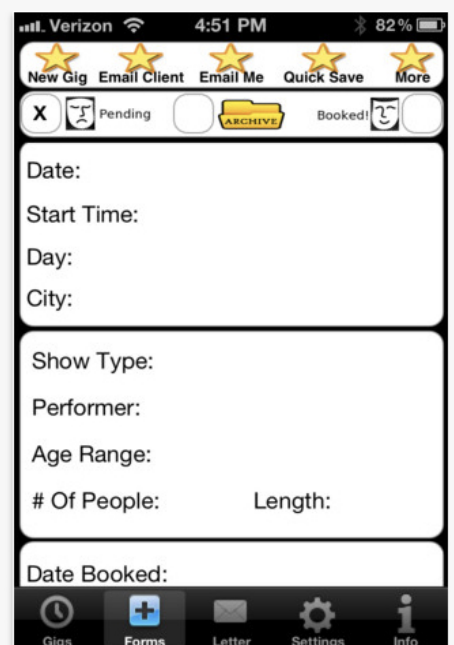
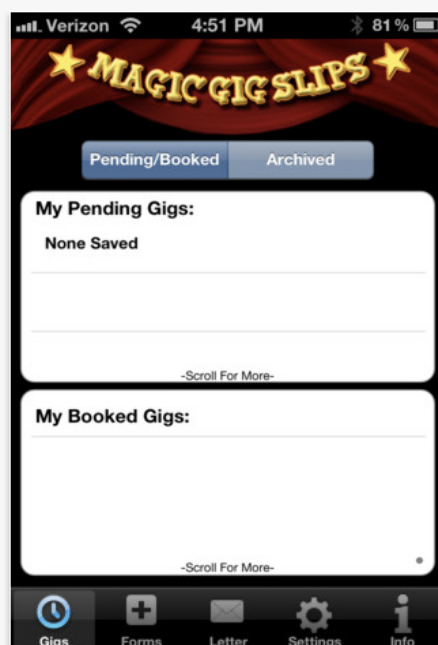
MagicGigSlips® is Real Magic!

"As a performer, I have tried all different ways to keep track of my bookings and proposals. In the early days, I started with a notebook and calendar on my wall. Computers helped a lot but if I am away from my computer and on the road, it becomes more difficult. When someone called for a show, I would have to take their number and call them back.

Now that I have an iPad, MagicGigSlips makes it easy to book a show instantly! I think you'll be surprised at all the things this nifty program can do to make the booking process easy and portable."

FINAL THOUGHTS: This is a gold mine for keeping track of gigs, sending out contracts, and follow up notes. Using my iPad makes this a dream to use. Version. 2.0.1 has fixed several issues such as adding an archived area for performed shows, more stable letter storage, and exports data to software such as Excel and FileMaker. It's extremely easy to set up, and once done easy to use. You are also able to add your own questions for specific jobs. Priced at \$5.95 US this is a must have application that you will use.

Screenshots



Are You Ready To Take Your Magic Business To The Next Level?

Here's Just a Small Sample of Testimonials for Randy Charach:

"Anyone with talent will find the lessons to be learned from Randy of the greatest importance for the formation of a successful career." **Peter Reveen**

"Randy has done a very impressive job, as well as a vital service to anyone truly interested in making a living performing magic. If you've got the passion and the skills to deliver the show, Randy's book can help you find the Business!" **Michael Ammar**

"Randy Charach not only teaches you how to make more money, a lot more money, but he also teaches you something much more valuable... namely, to value yourself and your products and services at a much higher level. By adopting his "millionaire mindset" you will can literally double or triple your income very quickly." **Dave Dee**

You really ARE "Da' Man!" All the other "so-called" magic marketing systems don't give away the REAL stuff. Thanks for sharing the inside information with us!" **Dean Hankey**

Solid advice from a proven success – my highest recommendation." **Rudy Coby**

If you're a professional looking to take that next step, or an amateur, looking to turn pro, this book (Secrets of a Millionaire Magician) will give you instant access to information that took Randy years of hard work to figure out. You will instantly gain from his experience. **Gerry McCambridge**

Read more reviews for Randy Charach from dozens of magicians and marketers, as well as Lance Burton's video testimonial at: www.MillionaireMagician.com

YOURS FREE!

There are free video tutorials and lessons at Randy's marketing agency and consulting site: www.IncomeMarketing.com

For a limited time, on a first-come, first serve basis (offer may be discontinued at any time – and that's not a marketing gimmick) – you can receive a...

Free Evaluation of Your Website, Promotional Material, Brand Positioning and Online Presence.

If you don't currently have an online presence, you can still submit any marketing material or questions.

Randy will personally review your marketing material and provide specific recommendations on how you can make more money as a magician. **This is specific to you and would normally cost \$2500.**

Visit This Site Now To Claim Your Free Magician Marketing Audit (Worth \$2500):

www.MagicianMarketing.com/vanish

NICK LEWIN PRESENTS ...

The Magic of MENTORING

Born in London, England NICK LEWIN moved to the United States in 1974 and has been performing magic ever since. He has made over 70 national TV appearances and became a fixture in Las Vegas' top showrooms.

When not performing Nick is most often found behind his MacBook Pro, writing his next column for *Magicana*. He is also working on the *ULTIMATE TREATISE*, translating the works of Bob Dylan into English.

The Nisus Thesaurus on my computer describes a mentor as: 'A wise and trusted guide and advisor.' I think that is a concise and excellent place to begin this month's column. Mentoring is a term that is used much less frequently these days than it was in my younger years. If you have a computer, Google and an Internet connection then you either already know everything or with a few clicks on the keyboard you can. If life were really that simple wouldn't it be grand with everybody an expert. However it just doesn't work that way. Computers are wonderful for giving you access to almost any information you need.



Nick and his mentor Billy McComb

From making an atom bomb to palming a card, it is all there, as long as you know the right questions to ask. There is an added ingredient necessary however.

This is where that wise, trusted, guide and advisor comes in to the picture. He is the one who can help you determine exactly what the right questions for you to ask are. As my favorite fugitive futurist and digital pioneer used to say about politics; "If you can get people to ask the wrong questions then it doesn't matter what answers you give them, even the truth!" No wonder they locked him up! It's not about the answers but the questions.

In the old days information was a very special commodity, if time was money then knowledge was the big bucks. In magic we searched through books for



our information but more often than not, actual wisdom was transferred one on one. In my younger days it was often the owner of your favorite magic shop who was the first person to help shape and develop your talents and strengths. As a young man visiting magic shops and being able to learn from Jon Tremaine, Pat Page and Ken Brooke was a very special privilege that transcended the mere act of buying a trick. When I arrived in America in 1974 you could still go to the magic shop and receive wise and trusted advice from the likes of Jay Marshall, Al Flosso, Jules Lenier or Mike Skinner. Their interest and love of magic far exceeded their desire to merely make a sale. They were advisors.

Nowadays much magic is purchased through the Internet and the personal touch is all but gone. The guys who make a good living selling magic are the good businessmen and not always the true magicians. I say this with love in my heart for them but would you really expect to get the same career guidance from Hank Lee or Joe Stevens that you would from a Ken Brooke or Patrick Page. I think not.

After I left England and Ken Brooke, the next mentor who furthered my career was the inimitable Billy McComb. Billy taught me not just what to do but how to do it and why. I remember Billy explaining to me that when performing the Gypsy Thread to a large audience that you needed to light and sell it larger than life. When you broke that tiny piece of thread your whole shoulders had to

move. It wasn't that you needed that much strength to break it but it allowed the people in the back of the auditorium to realize what you were doing, even if they couldn't see the thread they saw your shoulders move!

While I am a great believer in the act of mentoring, I am absolutely apposed to the random giving of advice that so often takes place at magic clubs and conventions. Unless you have a special bond with that 'wise and trusted advisor,' you can do yourself more harm than good by following every bit of advice given to you. The majority of it is given in the spirit of "I know something you don't, look at me, I'm cleverer than you are!"

I run a mile when someone whom I don't know and respect, comes up to me after a show to tell me how to improve a routine that is probably more carefully assembled than he can even imagine. Nine times out of ten he is going to tell me something that I already know and have dismissed for very sound personal reason. Therein is the difference between information and knowledge- a meddler and a mentor.

Magic needs more mentors to pass on the knowledge that they have accumulated. In a careful and considered fashion this is the personal 'one on one' way to improve our art. However this is only possible by understanding the person you are giving your knowledge to. Otherwise, instead of mentoring you are merely speaking about yourself, to yourself and thus pouring nothing into the void.

NICK LEWIN'S
ULTIMATE LINKING FINGER RING ROUTINE






One of my proudest moments was when Dai Vernon told me that if he wanted to perform a magic act professionally, the first thing he would do is come to me and offer me what ever I wanted to part up with the routine.

For full details or to reserve your package:
Contact Nick Lewin
nicklewin1@mac.com

This is the ultimate routine for one of the strongest tricks in magic. Over 35 years in the creation, this is a unique chance to add a reputation making effect into your repertoire.

"The most entertaining Linking Finger Ring Routine I have ever had the pleasure to witness."
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"Nick Lewin's solution for the Humber Ring routine is far and away the best one for any real **working** magician"
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This limited edition package contains:
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The cost of the entire package is \$350 plus tax & postage. Any Humber Ring can be used in the routine.



Nick Lewin's

Linking Finger Ring Routine



nicklewin.com



WRONG NUMBER

WAYNE ROGERS

T.A. Waters' prediction effect "NO/NO" appeared in *Magick* in 1990, and later in *Mind Myth & Magick* 1993. Richard Busch's version called "My Wife's Premonition" was in Peek Performances, 2001.

I adapted both to create my own handling called Wrong Number.

Effect

Pick up and display a sharpie pen and an envelope.

"I don't usually involve my family in my shows but today I made an exception. This morning I phoned my daughter at her work and asked her to write down a certain two digit number, seal it in an envelope and think about that number from time to time during the day. The envelope was later collected and brought here."

A spectator is asked to stand. *"I want you to close your eyes for a moment and I will attempt to transmit the number in the envelope to you. My daughter has also been thinking of this number today, and hopefully our combined thoughts will influence you. Call out any two digit number that jumps into your mind. Now!"* The spectator calls out number 68.

Pause, slightly taken aback, *"Mmm, that's the wrong number. I'll blame my daughter for this mistake. Let's try a different experiment ... something easier."* (This always gets a laugh)

Take the sharpie pen and write a word on the end of the envelope. Keep it hidden. Now, turning to another member of the audience

ask, "Can you honestly tell me, "Yes" or "No," without any doubt, the short word I just wrote on the envelope." The spectator will answer "No." Dramatically you tear the end off the envelope and turn it around to show the word "NO". "Correct!" After the groans subside, you turn back to the first spectator.

"You thought of the number 68 but it wasn't the number I asked my daughter to write down and think about. Please remove the card from the envelope and read out what she wrote."

He reads: Hi Dad, you asked me to write down a number but I forgot what it was. So I wrote down a different number. I hope it won't upset the experiment. (Turns card over) All day long I have been thinking of the number 68.

PREPARATION:

On a white self-seal envelope make a vertical tear 1/4 the width in from the RHS straight down the back of the envelope, including the flap, and then seal. Trim a white file card to 3/4 the width of the envelope. When inserted through the torn slit, the card will pass right into the envelope. On the envelope, to the right of the slit write with a sharpie pen the word "NO" in bold letters.

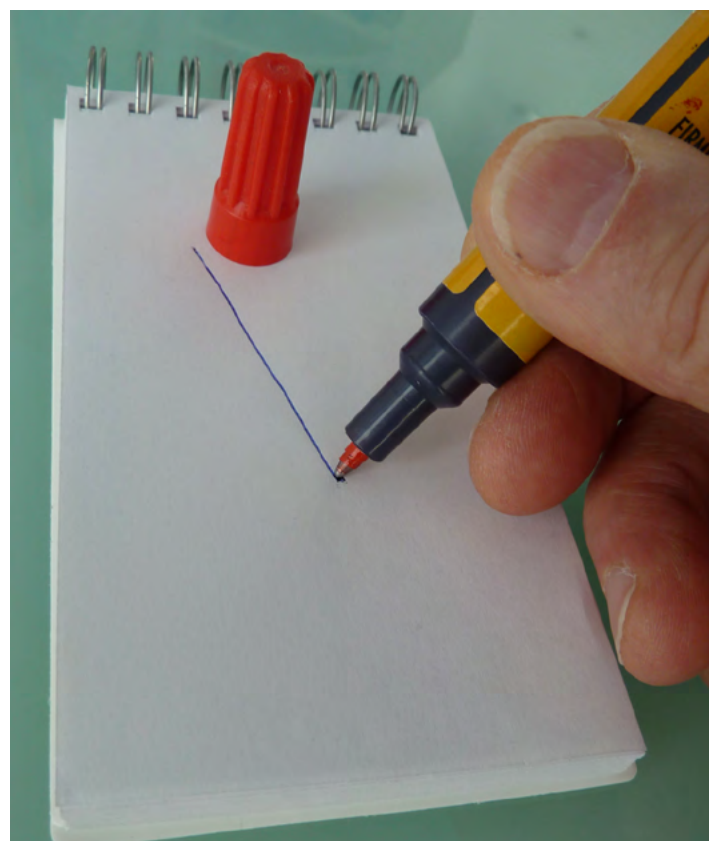
On the file card write the first part of the "Hi Dad" message. Turn it over and write the 2nd part, but leave off the number. You will write that in during the show.

Slide the card into the envelope, leaving the RH end sticking out so it hides the word "NO". Clip the sharpie onto the envelope with the barrel of the pen covering the slit. Set like this, the envelope can be casually shown both sides during your opening remarks. You are ready to go to work.

Hand the envelope to the spectator for them to remove the card and read the message. The number on the card matches the spectator's number. The prediction is correct and you finish clean.

One additional subtlety: My Sharpie pen is **RED** and has the felt ink section removed and a **BLUE** ball point pen refill inserted in its place. The RED sharpie now writes BLUE. Write the message with the blue pen.

Pre-write the word "**NO**" with a regular RED sharpie. Remember, when you remove the red pen cap hide the fact that it does not have a regular red sharpie tip.

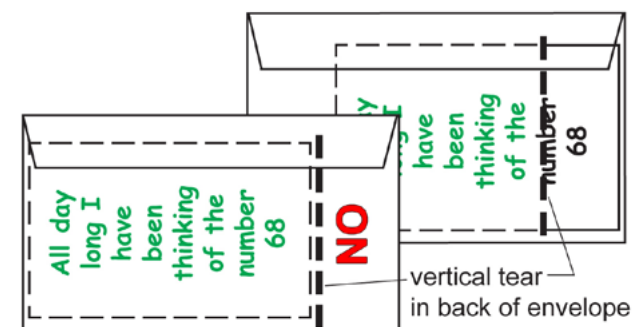


Wayne Rogers (Chicane) is a full-time professional magician and magic manufacturer based in Auckland, New Zealand. Wayne's original magic props include The Appearing Ladder from Briefcase, Missing Spade, Appearing Shovel, and Pinocchio's Nose.

Over the years Wayne has won most major competitions at New Zealand magic conventions, and in 2004 was honored with the supreme award for excellence for a New Zealand magician . . . The Grand Master of Magic Award.

Contact Wayne at chicane@nzmagic.com or visit his website

<http://www.nzmagic.com>



PERFORMANCE:

Ask for the number, and it will be "The wrong one." Next, you pretend to write a word, but actually fill in the number on the card and slide it fully into the envelope. This uncovers the previously written word "NO".

After the build up you reveal the word by ripping down the line of the already torn envelope, and turning the torn off piece around. This opens the envelope and hides the secret at the same time.

THE SUCCESS SERIES

CRIS JOHNSON



Cris Johnson is a full time professional magician living in Buffalo New York. Cris has been delivering motivational and fun-filled programs to clients in 32 states across the U.S. for over 15 years.

So many magicians I meet who want to achieve success with their magic struggle to book more shows. I've learned a lot over the years and want to pass along a little tidbit I feel is worth so much more than so many so-called marketing experts' books.

The idea is simple: build rapport with your prospects!

Let me illustrate what I mean with a recent story...

A prospect recently contacted me for a gig during a month I wasn't really "top heavy" with shows, meaning I could really use the work. Trouble is, it's for a fundraiser for an autism awareness foundation that she started a few years ago.

I say "trouble" because first of all, she really wanted me to perform my hypnosis show, and for reasons beyond the scope of this article, I did not feel it was in her best interest to have a hypnosis show for this event. Secondly, I had very little knowledge of autism.

As we talked, I knew the best way to get the gig was twofold: first, let her talk. This woman is a wonderful person and after speaking with her for a few minutes, I had the impression she

led a somewhat lonely life and wanted to connect with people whenever she could.

So, I listened. I just let her talk and responded appropriately. So many people, in their quest to book a gig, want to talk the client's ear off by yapping about how great they are and their great magic.

By simply listening, you'll be separating yourself from the pack. By listening, you'll also be able to pick up little kernels of information you can then use later in the conversation.

As our conversation progressed, she talked about the insensitivities many people exhibited when dealing with autistic children. Many people, myself included until recently, incorrectly assumed that an autistic person had a lower than normal intelligence.

When we ventured into that territory, that's when I made a risky move: I admitted that was my feelings until late last year, a good friend of mine told me a story about his autistic teen step-son and how this kid could hack into security-protected websites (member sites you have to pay to access) in mere seconds. As a teen, he naturally used these skills to access several...ah, 'adult' sites with...ummm...explicit content.



Obviously this is a smart kid! I was amazed...and then saddened upon realizing my own ignorance caused me to judge him as unintelligent.

I related this story to my prospect and we immediately had a connection and she hired me on the spot, gave me her credit card information for the deposit, and we spent the next 20 minutes discussing the magic show (not the hypnosis show) I'd be performing at her event.

The moral of the story is simple: listen to your prospects and look for ways you can form that connection. If they mention their car and you have the same car, play into that. If they have a small dog and you have a small dog, you can compare breeds and/or funny stories regarding housebreaking.

Those are all just a few examples, but all of this comes with a warning...

Be SINCERE.

Don't make up stories. That should go without saying! Beyond that, if your prospect goes on and on about her adorable 10 pound poodle and you happen to live with your wife's little dog (but would rather kick it out the door) don't start talking about how much you love the dog. People are not stupid and the prospect will sense your dishonesty.

The reason why this entire technique works is because people make decisions with their emotions and then try to justify with their intellect. When you 'connect' with a client in this way, you're forming an emotional bond. Granted, it's a relatively small one, but it IS there and it can help you.

I took a big chance by telling the client that story because I was revealing my ignorance. Fortunately, the client realized I learned from the experience and more importantly, she appreciated my openness and honesty.

Another word of caution: don't try to force the issue. Some people will not want to chit-chat and merely want to get right to business.

Learn to 'read' your prospects and give what they crave back to them, as long as it's sincere on your part.

5 Tips for a Successful Sales Call

1 Develop a professional greeting. Don't just say hello and jump into your telephone presentation without taking a breath or allowing the other party to participate. Your greeting should err on the side of formality. Begin with Mr., Mrs. or Ms, as in "Good morning, Mr. Smith." Or "Good evening, Mrs. Jones." Everyone else says, "Hello." Be different. Be professional.

2 Introduce yourself and your business. "My name is John-Smith with ABC Magic Company. I'm a magician that specializes in helping businesses like yours attract more people to a booth at trade shows." Don't get too specific yet. If you do, that allows the other party to say, "Oh, we're happy with what we've got. Thanks anyway," and hang up. By keeping your introduction general, yet mentioning a benefit, you'll peak your prospect's curiosity and keep them on the line longer.

3 Express gratitude. Always thank the potential client for allowing you a few moments in his busy day. Tell him that you won't waste a second of his time. "I want to thank you for taking my call. This will only involve a moment of your time so you can get back to your busy schedule." Don't say that you'll "just take a moment." The feeling evoked by them hearing that you'll take anything from them will put them off.

4 State the purpose of your call. It's best if you can provide the purpose within a question. "If I can show you a way to attract a larger number of potential clients to your booth, would you be interested to know more?" This is very likely to get a yes response. At this point, you're ready to start selling an opportunity to meet this person or to get their permission to provide them with more information. You're not selling your product yet—you're selling what your product will do for him.

5 Schedule a meeting. Get a confirmation to meet, either in person or to teleconference to get the information you need in order to give a solid presentation. If he's so interested that he wants to do it right then and there, that's OK.

MAGIC FACE-LIFT

Mark Parker is a full time designer of stage illusions and magic consultant to some of the major stars of TV and theatre. He is the author of two illusions books *4E Illusion Design* and *Vivify*.

CLOTHING PREDICTION & THE CHEATS QUICKCHANGE

Years ago I was hired by a magician to create an eight-minute spot for the launch of a new clothing line. The requirements from the client included highlighting some of the new product line, audience participation and keeping it light hearted. I dusted off the Zimmerman Prediction System, and set about working on the routine. This is an example of how, with a little creative brainstorming, you can create something that elevates a popular trick to something that is innovative and fresh.

EFFECT

Hanging above the stage is a small wooden chest, which the performer explains contains a prediction he made prior to the show.

On stage is a small wardrobe, a mannequin wearing large dark glasses and a clothes rail/rack. The wardrobe is opened and some clothes are removed, and hung onto the rack.

A large hat is thrown 'frisbee' style out into the audience. The performer instructs them to catch the hat and hold onto it. The lucky spectator verbally chooses an item of clothing to put on the mannequin, the hat is then thrown across the audience for another random spectator to catch, and name another item of clothing. This is repeated several times until the mannequin is dressed with a variety of clothes, lending itself to some very visual comedy. The last spectator to catch the hat is invited up onto the stage to help the magician.

For the final touch, the spectator chooses a necktie to place on the mannequin and finally the hat is perched on its head. The prediction box is lowered, unlocked and lastly the prediction is removed & unrolled in front of the magician. It shows a drawing of a mannequin wearing the same clothes as the one dressed by the spectators on stage, but missing the chosen tie. The magician lowers the picture and is now wearing the matching tie.

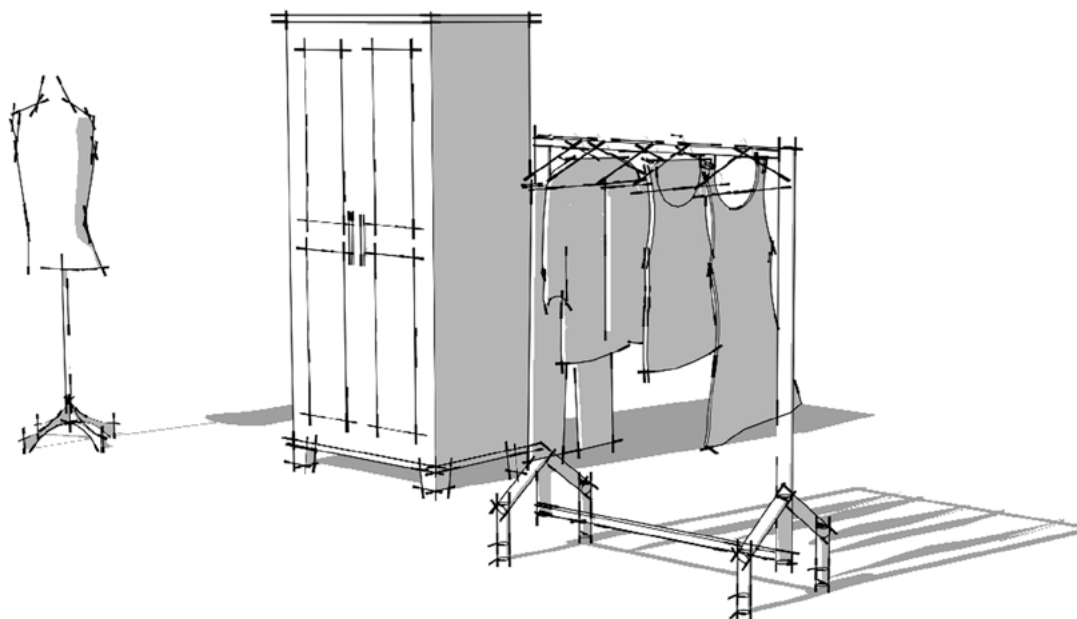
The spectator is thanked and sent back to their seat.

For the final kicker the magician places on the hat and sunglasses, and quickly removes the clothes from the mannequin. Holding the clothes in a loose bundle the magician runs behind the wardrobe, and in a split second comes out the other side now wearing the chosen outfit.

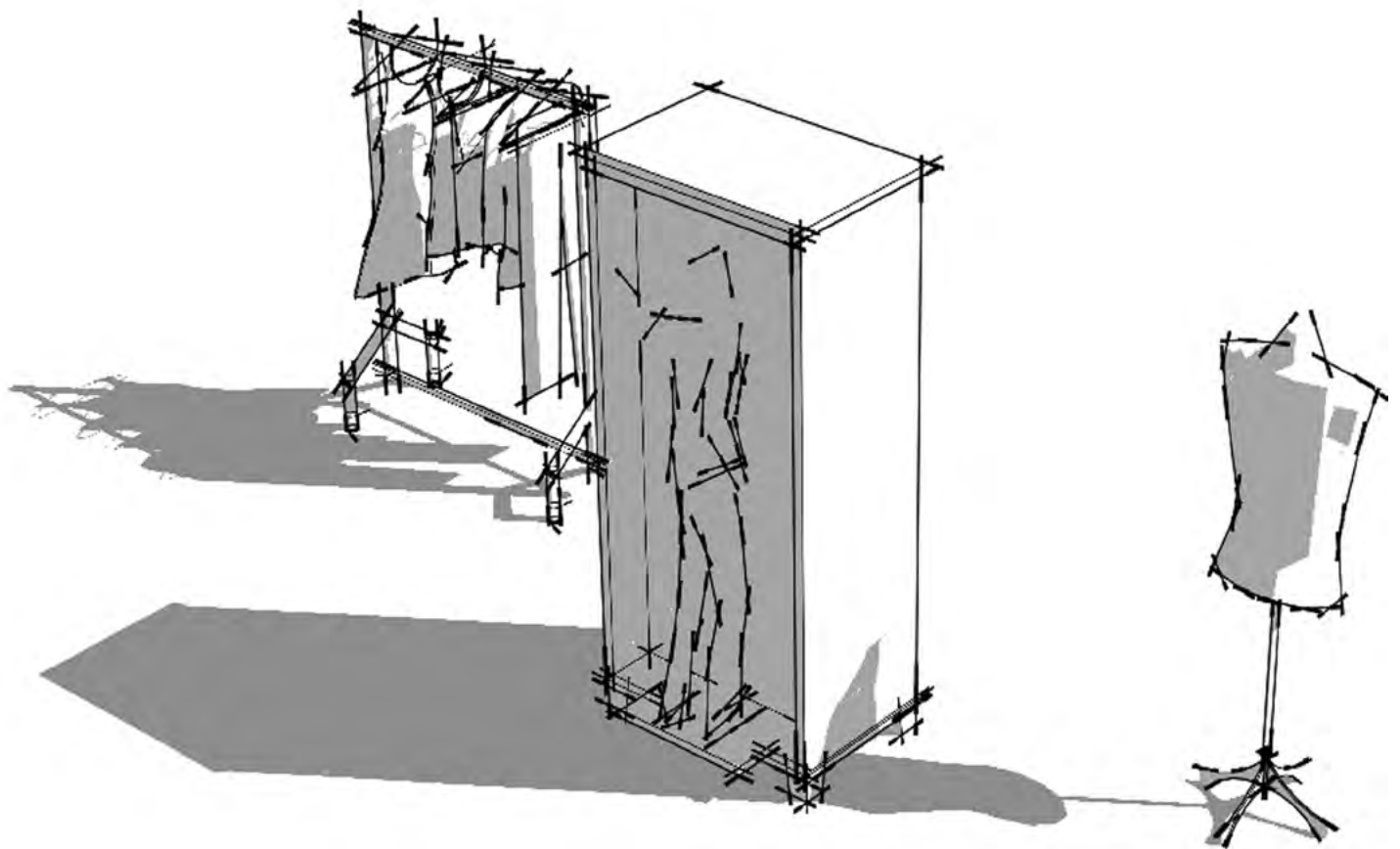
He takes his applause...lights goes to blackout. ..

SET UP & METHOD

The idea of a costume change at the end is what sold the clients on hiring us for their event. During the performance we were able to highlight the new line of clothing, have humor by dressing the dummy up with a variety of clothes that didn't match, involve the audience, and finally finishing off with two very strong effects; a prediction and an impossible costume change.



"I hope that this series will get those creative juices flowing, and show how, with a little thought and planning, it is possible to take a popular effect, and give it a face-lift so it becomes innovative and fresh"
Mark Parker



You will need an assistant who is the same body size and similar to your looks. This person will be wearing a very large hat (matching the one used to throw out to the audience) and dark glasses ready for the finale. The assistant is hidden behind the wardrobe in a small secret recess as shown in the diagram. The back panel of the wardrobe can slide open to allow the hidden assistant to enter the wardrobe when its doors are closed.

The wardrobe contains many clothes, some of which are a duplicate set of clothes of those being used in the routine. It is these that the assistant quietly puts on as the audience calls out the items for the mannequin.

The mannequin should have a head, and is wearing large dark glasses from the start of the routine.

We used the Zimmerman Prediction chest, and had an offstage assistant fill in the necessary clothes on the picture of the mannequin (Mark did this as he can

draw!!). We used a large clear force bag full of neckties to force one particular design.

The magician has a matching tie to the forced one, which is a clip on type. This is unseen and under his jacket ready for the appearance during the unrolling of the prediction

THE PREDICTION REVEAL

This will depend on the prop you choose to use. In the case of the Zimmerman Prediction the offstage assistant is filling in the picture of the mannequin. The prediction is loaded into the table and brought on with the force bag containing ties.

One of my pet peeves with any type of routine that involves something coming on stage only for the final reveal, is the lack of any time gap. By bringing the table out with something on it, such as a bunch of ties, and doing one more 'force' you create a distance in time, which creates an impression in the audience's

mind that the table was on stage the entire show. This is a strong point to note even if you do not use this particular routine.

COSTUME CHANGE

As each clothing item is chosen by the audience, the assistant is able to quietly dress in the same outfit inside the wardrobe, then he returns to the rear of the wardrobe via the sliding door on the back panel.

He is now ready to switch with the performer in the matching outfit complete with hat and large glasses, which help cover most of his face.

The switch takes place after the spectator heads back to their seat.

The performer states he wants to do one more thing, and quickly moves behind the wardrobe, one foot goes on to the back ledge as the doubles foot comes down keeping the feet in continuous motion, likewise with the

second foot. The effect being the performer takes the clothes from the mannequin, and walks around the wardrobe completely dressed in a matter of seconds to the chosen outfit.

The mannequin and rack act as nice sightline blockers so the recess at the rear of wardrobe to hide the assistant can be a slim as possible. Attention to sightlines is something over-

looked by many performers especially those who rely on video to study their own performances.

I have used the same style 'pants' 'short dresses' 'shirts,' etc. all in a variety of colours so the clothing style matches the drawing outlines and the offstage helper washes colour in the blank areas with large tipped marker pens.

www.paulromhanymagic.com

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If you do for magic for money; it will really help you to get a better grip on your marketing. Sure, we do magic because we love performing – – and not everyone cares about making money as a Magician. Also, some people do magic as a hobby and wouldn't want to spoil that fun by charging for their shows or focusing on their marketing. That's all good and fine, and this article is only for you if you now or would like to in the future fall into the category of Magicians performing magic as a means to generate income.

I earned a good portion of my wealth as a professional Magician from 1981 to 2001. In 2001 I wrote a book called *"Secrets of a Millionaire Magician"* (www.MillionaireMagician.com). The success of my marketing campaign for that book caught the eye of Internet marketing seminar producers and launched a whole new career for me.

In fact, my focus during the past decade has been on marketing and I've just very recently started to perform as a Magician

again (www.ComedyPsychic.com). My wife and I have had three daughters (yeah, I know – karma) during the past ten years and not only do I miss performing, I need a new excuse to get out of the house a bit more often!

Since then, I've formalized my marketing system and have applied it to many new businesses (www.RandyCharach.com) of my own and for clients of my marketing and consulting agency (www.IncomeMarketing.com).

Anyway, I really cut my teeth on the foundation of this system during my many years of marketing myself as a professional Magician. It has evolved from pre-Internet era to now and it's my pleasure to share how this system can bring more income to your magic business.

The actual methods or tactics are different today than they were even a year ago. In fact, many of the methods when it comes to the marketing of your magic act online change from month to month. Some become obsolete while many completely new methods spring up during the course of the year.

New technologies, websites, and even the way we as a society interact among each other is changing rapidly. Our basic human needs and desires remain somewhat constant though. While the six steps of the Income Marketing System for Magicians will remain constant; as you dig deeper into the layers of the steps you'll discover mere knowledge of the information is insufficient in moving your show-business to the next level.

For you to fully take advantage of the Income Marketing System for Magicians, you must first understand the overall concept before applying any of the tactics. Understanding the six steps will open your mind to a new way of thinking about marketing your show-business.

It will likely (and should) even affect the quality of your performance as it will help you find or create your uniqueness so you're not just like any other Magician in your city. Perhaps your show is already perfect and you are unique in what you do – it will still help you to be better!

If you follow through with the information

INCOME MARKETING SYSTEM FOR MAGICIANS

BY RANDY CHARACH



you receive, you'll earn more income as a Magician. It's my sincere desire and mission in my business life to help you raise the bar in your marketing efforts and harness the immense power of this new digital marketing age.

The bottom line purpose of the Income Marketing System for Magicians is to position you as a brand and the only logical choice of performer for your perfect client. Once you are properly positioned, the system empowers you to spend less money on marketing while increasing your income.

Here are the 6 Steps of the Income Marketing System for Magicians:

- Step 1)** Identify The Perfect Client to book Your Show
- Step 2)** Name Yourself As The 'Only' Magician to Hire
- Step 3)** Create Your Magician Marketing Plan
- Step 4)** Offer Various Forms of your Show to Clients
- Step 5)** Measure Your Results from your Marketing Plan
- Step 6)** Expand On Marketing That Brings You the Best Gigs

This issue we'll talk about step one, and then cover each of the other 5 steps in the issues of this publication to follow.

Step 1: Identify The Perfect Client to Book Your Show

I have found over the years, the best way to do this is to look for common characteristics among your current best clients. In order to do this you must set criteria as to what makes up your best client. This starts with gathering data about your customers.

You'll need to combine research, intuition and experience when you set about the task of creating your perfect client profile.

Your best clients are likely ones who create the greatest direct profits to your magic business while acting as loyal advocates and staunch supporters of your show. They book you often, love what you do for them, and are quick to spread the word among their circle of influence on how you are the only Magician they would ever consider hiring for their event

Hopefully your personality matches the demo/psychographic of your perfect client. This being the case, all you have to do is look in the mirror and ask yourself questions. What questions you ask? Good question! Start with these:

What 3 things would matter to me most when booking a Magician?

Uniqueness of the act?

Cost to book the show?

Reputation of the Magician?

What turns me on about booking talent...and what turns me off?

What websites do I visit?

Where do I hang out?

What do I read?

Who are my friends?

Understanding the answers to these and many other questions about your perfect client form the foundation of your Magician marketing plan. You'll utilize the information gathered during this process to help you reach more perfect clients.

You must articulate for yourself and communicate to advocates of your show exactly who you want your service exposed to. This is the only way you build a predictable source of referral business as well as cost effective and highly efficient marketing.

There are many layers and this is just a starting point to get you thinking. Realize, there are many things you can do to build your income as a Magician. Like performing magic; marketing is part 'art' and part 'science'. Neither can be learned overnight, and there is no limit to what you can accomplish!

Get started today by making a list of the characteristics and habits of your perfect client. I promise, the pieces of the puzzle will come together once we get through all six steps. In the meantime...

Subscribe to my free newsletter at www.MagicianMarketing.com. I plan to make time in the near future to help you more by providing worksheets and more useful information and advice. It's kind of tough to do everything I want to do - with my marketing agency, new show, wife and four kids; as well as other businesses and interests. If there's genuine interest for my help among the magic community; I'll make time to help you even more.

About Randy

Randy started performing magic at the age of five; inspired by his uncle, a Las Vegas Magician. He became a full-time professional entertainer at age 17 and has since performed over 5000 shows.

His first shows were aimed toward a young audience...he even performed as the famous hamburger clown...Ronald McDonald! But don't tell anyone as it's a secret...

Randy has performed in every major city in Canada and the United States, as well as in Australia, Asia, Mexico, and Europe. He's a Comedian and Mentalist providing a unique brand of entertainment.

Randy then went on to performing his magic and comedy show for hundreds of corporate events all over the World. He worked his magic at conventions, trade-shows, hospitality suites, boat cruises, holiday parties and a variety of special events. Combining magic with a message is Randy's way to powerfully convey motivational and other custom messages to management, employees, clients and prospects.

FROM THE DESK OF KEITH FIELDS

"There is an old saying that goes 'some are born great, some become great and some have greatness thrust upon them.'"

I agree with parts two and three of that saying but I am not sure that the first part is correct. Greatness is not a genetic gift to give, it is an achievement. The result of circumstance, practice, study and hard work. Whether you are pushed by circumstance or pulled by an emotional need is not significant. What is significant is that greatness is the result of one thing – How much work you are prepared to put in to achieve it. That alone is directly proportional to how good you will get. This is true in every field of endeavor including the performance arts in general and the art of magic in particular.

It is true that we all start off with a different skill base that has been growing with every experience and every challenge that we have been through since childhood. So some of us may have an unfair advantage and start our journey towards magical mastery with a few extra gifts that are the result of our life's experience thus far. Confidence in front of a crowd, acting ability, digital dexterity, etc. all improve our chances of early success but the desire to succeed and commitment to practice and learn will trump all.

To be great at anything you need to practice and practice a lot. How much? Ten thousand times for each move, that's how much. Modern sports psychologists studying golf tennis and other activities have been researching and shown that it takes ten thousand repetitions of any stroke to achieve mastery. By mastery they mean that moment when muscle memory takes over and you are doing it without thinking. How many of us are prepared to put that much work into a double lift or an invisible pass?

I was once quite good at the classic force. This is a skill that I have sadly lost through lack of use. I used to do a lot of card tricks and would use the classic force every time I had a card chosen weather it was required for the effect or not. I probably had several thousand cards chosen and had achieved a level of mastery. Nowadays I work purely on stage and only do the occasional card trick, the words 'pick a card' have almost dropped from my vocabulary and lack of practice has resulted in losing that once precious skill.

But sleights moves and methodology are only one part of the magicians arsenal. There is another side to our art and that is our performance skills. I think it is often easier for us to spend the required time to learn

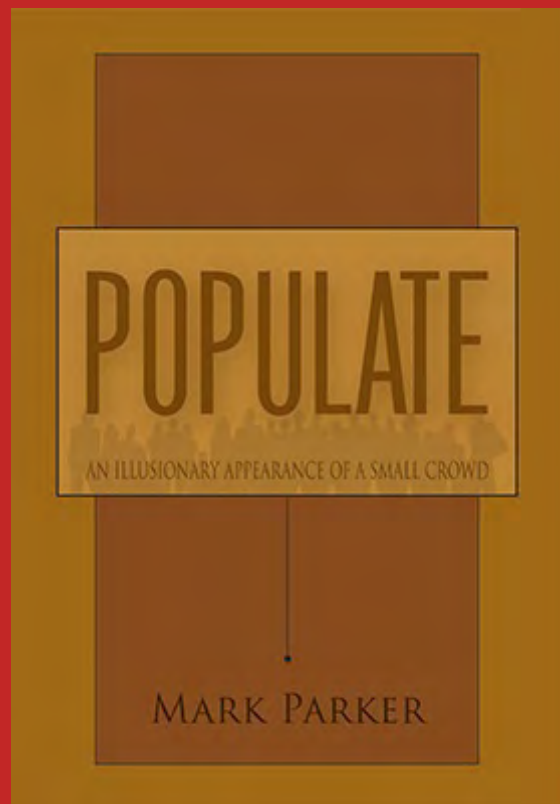
a new piece of manipulation than it is to learn how to entertain and we often assume that the former will make up for the latter. Truth is that it doesn't. It does not matter how well we can do an Ascanio spread or an Elmsley count, in itself our wonderful and very clever technical ability will never make up for our lack of ability to entertain.

So what are the important skills that turn us from technicians to entertainers and can we learn them? Can we develop charisma? Can we learn to walk into a room and command the attention of all and sundry? I believe we can. The bigger question is are we prepared to do what we have to learn?

We can learn a move and then dissect it with our friends and make the necessary improvements to perfect it without threatening our inner selves. Moves are things we do, they are external, they are not part of who we are. Learning about charisma, how to stand, how to move, how to speak, how to relate to other people, these are all much more personal. These are areas of our personality that when analyzed make us question who we are. As a result we can feel threatened so we don't like to go there.

If we want to grow as performers we need to be prepared to enter this territory. We will sometimes need to hear things that we may not want to hear, personal comments that may initially be uncomfortable but they will make us better performers. Learning and listening are the route to growth.

And we should never stop learning. I was recently performing in a show and some of the lines that I used were questioned by the producer. Were they right? Were they right for this audience? Did they really add anything to the show? These were lines that I had been using for many years and they were not only a part of the routine, they were a part of my routine, a part of me. I had to force myself to listen and learn. It is not always easy to admit that someone else is more right than you. No pain no gain as the other old saying goes. There was pain but there was also gain – because after the show I realized that the producer was right and I'm glad I listened.'



Populate - An illusionary appearance of a small crowd.
Introduction by Eric Olsen of EDF Magic

This is the first in a series of single illusion publications by renowned Illusion designer Mark Parker, author of illusion books 'Vivify' & 4E Illusion Design. Populate is Parkers take on the Guy Jarrett 21 person cabinet.

In this version an elevated framework structure, screened with fabric is shown completely empty & revolved 360 degrees. In an instant the fabric is stripped away revealing the surprise appearance of 26 people. The illusion is self contained, performed away from any backdrops and requires no black art. A stunning and surprising appearance of a small crowd of people.

The illusion is described in detail complete with dimensions and construction notes. The apparatus required is designed to break down into individual sections for easy transport. Printed in glorious full color throughout, complete with detailed 3 dimensional illustrations.

"Mark has a devilishly creative mind that scares me!"
-Lu Chen

"Populate is a wonderful & surprising illusion. Mark's elegant design solution to this plot is a must read."
- Charles Bach - Las Vegas

"Mark Parker is an explosive creative genius of illusion design! Fascinating excellence!"
- Brett Daniels - USA

Available from all major magic dealers.

UNPREPARED AND IMPROMPTU

KEN DYNE



Creative madman and mind reader. Performing a combination of corporate shows, theatre appearances and speaking on the subject of real persuasion, Ken is one of the UK's most sought after live acts.

It's a constant discussion on the forums, at magic club meetings and in conversation over a pint. "What do you perform in an impromptu situation?"

Picture the scene; you're out with friends. The sound of good times fills your ears and you feel someone pinch you on the arm.

"You're that mind-reader bloke, aren't you? Go on then, do something."

We've all been there. So what do you do?

Imagine you saw the real Harry Potter. He's standing at the bar in your local drinking house. You walk up to him and say ask him to show you something cool, "put a spell on her to make her fall in love with me." Harry looks around at you and says, "sorry I haven't got anything on me."

In that short sentence Harry went from the coolest person at the party to, worse than just another part of the crowd, to metamor-

phosised in to a disappointment.

As a mentalist I should be able to use my abilities in persuasion at any given moment. Without warning I should be able to take control of an entire situation and demonstrate my uncanny ability to influence every decision you make.

My magician friends should be able to conjure up miracles right under our noses and astound us right there and then.

Musing on this one night I decided that there is a difference between Impromptu and Unprepared. I never want to be caught unprepared. However impromptu is bound to happen.

It's worth spending a few moments, hours and even days considering what you can build in to your life, your clothing and the natural properties you don when leaving the house.

In my case I have a wallet, it contains business cards. I also have my mobile phone.

More than just looking cool.

Of course there is more to polished and perfected impromptu performance than just looking good.

I cannot begin to count the number of free meals, drinks and even highly paid bookings I have secured by performing impromptu at the right time.

In a nasty Chinese all-you-can-eat buffet restaurant in Newcastle a bunch of years ago some friends asked me to do 'something cool'.

Out came the wallet, the pen and business cards. Within minutes the nearby tables were looking in to what all the fuss was about, then they were involved, holding predictions, loaning me their personal objects and suddenly my 'circle of influence' the people I was affecting had grown to almost half of the restaurant.

As I concluded this performance waiters and waitresses were among the spectators, the manager was called over and joined in too.

The meal for me and my friends was on the house. The husband of the woman who's watch I borrowed asked for my card and later booked me for quite a nice corporate event and all in all...a lot of people had a lot of fun.

Why? I was prepared. I have 30 minutes of solid, rehearsed and structured stuff on me at all times. I'm ready to burst in to action at a moment's notice.

I thought I'd take some column space to ask you to think about your impromptu act. And it is an act. More incredibly still, it should be our most powerful and polished act, and for a couple of great reasons.

It's our shop window. It's our audition in front of potential bookers.

It is the act we should be performing most often.

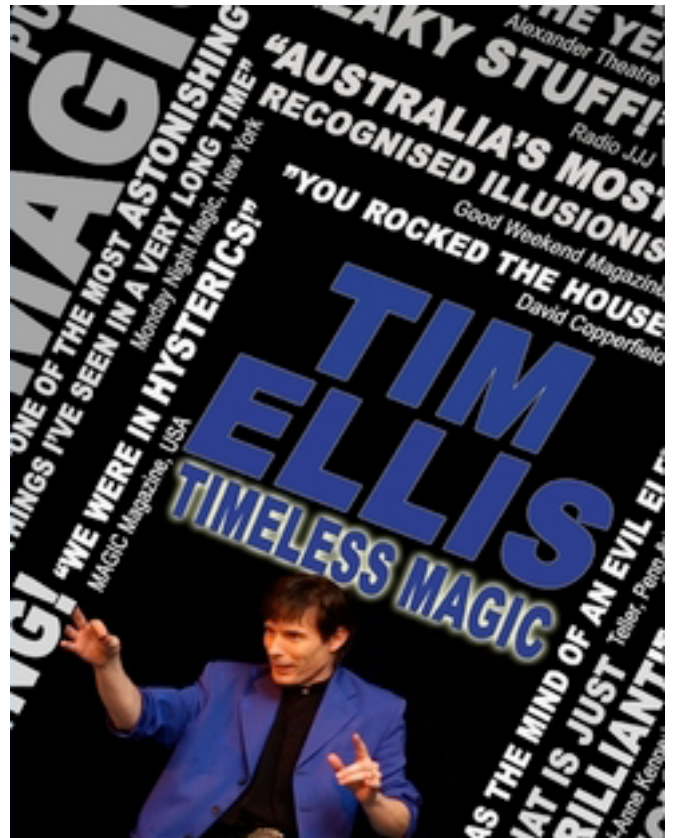
I perform my impromptu act in the bar after my shows. I'm all dressed down, I'm sat on the bar stool and folks come over for a chat. You'll know yourself that it's never long until they ask you to perform something for them. Bang! you're in. It's time to make this moment special for them.

More about impromptu performing here:

<http://impromptumystifier.blogspot.com>

Mensa (the high IQ society) say that Ken is 'a popular must-have on the business circuit'. As well as performing for corporate audiences, Ken has released a plethora of incredible material to the mentalism community, most of which is exclusively available direct from Ken himself.

For more information on Ken and his exclusive releases, head to <http://www.mentalunderground.com>



Timeless Magic - by Tim Ellis Book review by Paul Romhany

Timeless Magic is a collection of magic that ranges from close-up to stand-up from Tim's personal repertoire he has developed over a thirty five year period. A wonderfully presented book that is hard cover and 148 pages this has something that will appeal to every style of performer.

What makes this book so great is that there are no pipe dreams in here. Every routine is tested over time, and Tim has performed them all in his professional career. Having a book that is filled with real world, and highly commercial magic really makes this a stand-out book for me. I could take any one of the effects and see it working in my own repertoire! There aren't too many books out there that somebody could say that about.

A variety of magic from close-up to stage to mentalism. The book also includes essays that every performer should read. There is a great section on How To Win A Magic Competition. Tim has been a judge at many conventions including FISM. If you are looking at competition work this is a MUST READ.

One of my favorite effects is the Razor Blade Routine. A really easy and effective way to perform this well known routine. For the card magicians there are several routines in there for you ranging from gimmick effects to non-gimmick.

This is a book that is very highly recommended and comes in two choices; soft cover or hard cover.

<http://www.lulu.com/spotlight/TimEllis>



DEAR PAMELA

RICHARD WEBSTER

Richard Webster has written over thirty five books for psychic entertainers and magicians, and dozens more for the general public that have been translated into twenty two languages.
<http://www.psychic.co.nz>

The Mage shows a deck of Waite Tarot Cards to the audience. "Arthur Edward Waite achieved most of the credit for developing these cards," he says. "He studied the Tarot for many years, and it must have been a wonderful opportunity for him to develop his own deck when Pamela Colman Smith, a talented artist, joined the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. When this split up, Pamela left and joined a new organization started by Arthur Edward Waite called the Independent and Rectified Rite. They became good friends, and in 1909 he commissioned her to illustrate a new deck of Tarot cards. These were published a year later, and quickly became the most popular Tarot deck in the world. Despite the numerous decks available nowadays, the Waite deck is still far and away the most popular."

"So far, so good. What most people don't know is that just one year later, Pamela Colman Smith lost interest in the occult and joined the Roman Catholic Church. She eked out a modest living painting, illustrating books, and storytelling, something she was extremely good at. Unfortunately, she was not a good businesswoman. She and Nora Lake, a close friend, lived modestly in a tiny flat in a small town in Cornwall. When she died in 1951, the sale of her possessions provided just a quarter of the money needed to pay off her debts. It's sad to think that a person with such a huge influence on modern day occultism died penniless and forgotten."

The magician pauses to see what affect this sad, true story has on his audience.

"It occurred to me," the magician continues, "that we could use Pamela's own deck to pierce the veil and see if she is happy on the other side." He looks through the deck and shows several cards to the audience, commenting

on them as he does so. *"One of these is "The World" card."* The Mage explains that this is the most fortunate card in the deck, as it symbolizes success and happiness. He then hands the Tarot deck to a volunteer and asks her to mix the cards. The Mage continues talking as she shuffles the cards. *"We're going to use a combination of the two occult sciences of tarot and Numerology to choose a card for Pamela. The card could be any one of the 78 cards in the deck."* The Mage takes the cards back and spreads them to show they have been well mixed. He then holds the deck face down.

"Thanks for mixing the cards so well," he tells his volunteer. *"We're now going to branch into Numerology. Would you name a number between one and seven?"*

"Six."

"Excellent." The Mage deals six cards face down onto the table, and places the next card face down in the centre of the table. The six dealt cards are replaced on top of the deck. The Mage turns to someone else and asks him to name a number between eight and thirteen. Let's assume the man chooses ten. The Mage deals ten cards in a face down pile, and then places the next card to the right of the card that is already face down in the centre of the table. Again the ten dealt cards are picked up and placed back onto the deck.

"We are halfway there," the Mage says. *"These two cards were freely chosen by my two assistants. I deliberately used the mystical number seven and the superstitious number thirteen. Now we'll use Numerology to find another two cards. You chose number six, and you, sir, chose number ten. Ten minus six is four."* The Mage deals four cards face down on the table, and the next card is placed face down on the table below the two cards that are already there. Again the pile of dealt cards is placed back on top of the deck.

"We need one more card. Using Numerology we simply add the six to the ten, which gives us sixteen." The Mage deals sixteen cards face down in a pile, and places the next card face down beside the third card on the table. The pile of dealt cards is put back onto the deck of cards, which is placed to one side.

"Interesting, isn't it?" muses the Mage. *"From a deck of 78 cards, we have selected four, using a process of random selection and Numerology. I now have to put you two to work once more."*

The Mage separates the first two cards that were dealt from the final two.

"Madam, would you please indicate one of these two groups." No matter which group she selects, the Mage reads it as if she wants the first two cards to be eliminated. He then separates the two remaining cards, and asks the man to place his hand on top of one of them. If he places his hand on the third card dealt, the Mage takes the fourth card and discards it. If the man puts his hand on the fourth card dealt, the Mage takes it that he wants to eliminate it. Either way, the third card dealt is left on the table.


"Now for the moment of truth," the Mage says. *"Let's see how Pamela is getting on the other side."* He turns the card over to reveal "The World." The Mage gives a big sigh. *"Wonderful! Pamela has found happiness and peace on the other side."*

METHOD

This is entirely self-working. All you need do is get "The World" card to the top of the facedown deck before starting the dealing. You do this by casually cutting the cards above "The World" card when showing them to be well mixed after the shuffle. This means that "The World" card is the first card dealt on to the table. These cards are placed back on top of the deck, and this card gets dealt again with the next selection. When the first number chosen is deducted from the second number chosen, "The World" card will automatically be the card chosen for the third position. The fourth dealing does nothing except choose a random fourth card. All you need do now is use equivoque to force the card in the number three position. The effect is easy to perform, but the story is the key to the effectiveness of the trick. Even people who use the Tarot regularly do not know the sad story of Pamela Colman Smith.

I have written this using a complete deck of Tarot cards. It is possible to buy a large deck of the 22 Major Arcana cards of the Waite Tarot deck, and I usually perform this effect with these





Bizzaro has performed from coast to coast and appeared on FOX, NBC, America's Got Talent, and Travel Channel's Extreme Conventions. He has even been seen multiple times at the Magic Castle. He creates much of his own magic that is sold around the world to performers. To Bizzaro, normal is just a setting on the dryer.

YOU CAN'T BUY PERSONALITY

BIZZARO

It's a shame too. So many performers spend thousands of dollars on the tools to make themselves look good when all they really need to do is work on themselves. Ah but throwing money at a problem is what some people do best. We lie to ourselves way too often... but what do you expect from people who are dishonest for a living?

I was recently helping a friend of mine with a bottle production effect (Kozak's "That"). He was doing it the standard way. Waving three brightly colored pieces of cloth up and down and then producing the bottle. Just... like... every-one-else.

So we decided some doctoring of the effect. First we eliminated the bright blue and pink foulards as those are not really his colors. (He's more of an autumn.) He found some fabric that more matched his performing outfit and had those made into the exact same specs as the ones he ditched. Then we worked on the choreography. Ways to show the three pieces of cloth empty without repeating the same action over and over again. We also made it more his presentational style by making the actions playful. Using all of these things that showcased who he is on stage.

I tell you all of this because it got me thinking about all of the effects out there that are great for personality interjection. Magic that, because it is technically easier than others or redundant, leaves all this open space to fill up with personality!

"Balls From Mouth" is a prime example. (Hey, things that sound dirty, but aren't!) The idea is very basic but it leaves so much

open to interpretation. The classic "Razor Blade Illusion" is another one. Anything where you know the beginning and end is up to you to make it interesting in the middle.

One of the biggest problems is we start looking for tricks that are laid out from start to finish for us. You are handed a full routine with all of the kinks worked out. The problem is that it was THEIR kinks, not yours. Now you are performing something in a way that is not who you are. I mean why spend tons of money on someone else's idea that has their personality in it when you can make it your own? (Aside from the fact magicians are lazy bastards of course.)

So look thru your magic. See if there is something that, like a heroin addict, needs a little shot in the arm. Something to pep it up and make it sparkle just a little bit more. Something that will show off who you are and can set the tone for your whole show.

You might not be willing to spend your money on acting or movement lessons, but at least that fire hazard of magic props in your closet might be of some use to you now.

Get crackin'!

www.smappdooda.com

KARATE SHADOW GERARD

The explanation for an effect you can perform using any wooden stir trick.

A great effect that can be performed using any wooden stir stick and plays well for kids, teenagers and adults. I've been playing with ideas using shadows for many years, and a few of my ideas have appeared on various TV shows. This one came about while in a Starbucks one day playing around with a stir stick. I knew I was on to something when a group of kids watched me break the stick with my shadow, and freaked out! The secret is based on the classic "Jumping Tooth Pick Trick."

Effect:

The performer takes two wooden stir sticks and asks the spectator which one they would like to use. The chosen stick is held at the finger tips of the right hand, with the left hand casting a shadow over it. The performer uses the shadow to karate chop the stick which instantly breaks in half.

Live Performance: Visit:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DysAhGZd6d8> to watch a performance of this effect.

Secret:

You can use any stir stick. The only preparation you need to do is secretly 'break' the stick in the middle. From one side it will look fine, underneath however will be the break. How you break the stick is very important. When you break it you want to do it slowly until it cracks, bend it back a little, and straighten it out. What you end up with is a stir stick that looks fine on one side, and broken on the other. Figure 7 shows the stick broken underneath.

Routine:

Bring out two sticks, one unprepared and the other gimmicked. Hold one stick in each hand, making sure the broken side is on the bottom so the spectator has no idea it is already cracked.

You then give them an option as to which one they would like. In this case you use the words, "*Pick one, it doesn't matter which one, just pick one.*"

'Pick one' is very open ended and it doesn't matter which one they point to. If they choose the normal stick hand it to them and say, "*Okay, I'll use this one* (holding on to the broken one)." If they point to the broken one say, "*Okay, I'll use this one.*" Hand them the normal one. Either way YOU end up holding the gimmick stir stick and they end up with the normal one. This is nice because at the end of the trick, they will want to try it themselves with the stick left on the table. They can try but it won't work.

Holding the gimmick stick in such a way that it doesn't bend, bring it down to your fingertips with the broken part underneath. Figure 3 and 4 show this. Holding it in one hand, use the other to ask them if they have seen karate experts chop a piece of wood.

You now re-grip the stick with your hand holding it in the 'toothpick trick' grip. The fingernail goes underneath the stick. What happens is that by pulling the finger nail off the stick it will cause the stick to 'snap' in half. You patter about the power of shadows, and if the lighting is correct your hand will cast a shadow over the stick. It looks as though the shadow actually breaks the stick.

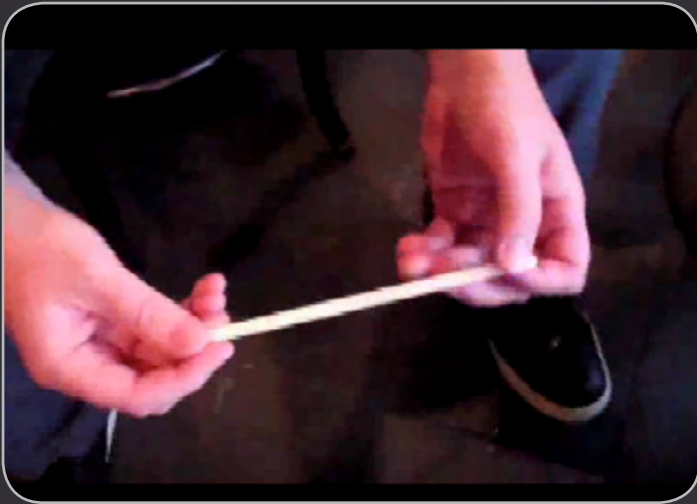
GERARD has consulted for television stars such as Cris Angel, David Blayne and Keith Barry. He continues to write, perform and consult for other magicians around the world. He is also involved heavily with his band Dahna.



1 SHOW TWO WOODEN STIR STICKS
Borrow two sticks and show them to the spectator.



2 SPECTATOR CHOOSES ONE
They 'point' to any stick.



3 SHOW THE STICK
Show the stick to the spectator by holding at the tips of your fingers.



4 PREPARE FOR THE CHOP
The right fingers hold the end of the stick, while the left hand moves to the middle

KARATE SHADOW BY GERARD

An effect by Andrew Gerard that can be performed using wooden stir sticks. The perfect effect when you next find yourself at your favorite coffee shop with friends, and they demand to see a trick!



5 THE SHADOW
First finger raises above the stick and casts a shadow - it then performs a little chop.



6 THE STICK INSTANTLY BREAKS IN HALF
Without touching the stick it instantly breaks in half.



7 SET UP
Take one stick and bend it back and forth until it breaks. The broken side is underneath when performing



8 THE SECRET
The secret to make it work lies in the 2nd finger nail of the left hand.



9 NOTICE THE SECOND FINGER
Again notice the position of 2nd finger nail. By letting it slide off stick makes this work.

TRICKS ARE FOR MAGICIANS, SILLY RABBIT TC TAHOE



So I walk up to a table in the restaurant. A lady, sitting alone, not looking particularly happy, picking at her dinner and sipping a glass of vino.

I forgo my usual *"Hey I am the house magician, and I am here to entertain you whether you want to be or not!"*

Instead I opt for a more subdued approach.

"Hello, sorry to interrupt your meal, but the management wants me to make sure you are enjoying yourself."

"You're the magician, right" she says with a hint of disdain.

"I am TC and I am different things to different people." I reply

"What do you mean?" she answers.

"If it is in fact wacky magical entertainment you want, I can certainly provide that... but I don't think that is what you are looking for tonight." I say, slipping the color-changing knife back into my pocket, unseen.

The lady sets her fork down and looks at me, *"And just what is it you think I need?"* she says.

"I think, you need a reminder of how you unique and special you are..."

"Really?" she says

Connecting with the audience.

"Yes, I do. If you will permit me to demonstrate." I brought out a deck of cards, I could sense more than see a slight rolling of the lady's eyes.

I lay the cards face up in front of her, along with a sharpie.

"If you would please go through there and find a card you like and sign your name on it." I said.

"You want me to write on the card?" She asked.

"Yes please."

She selected the nine of diamonds and signed her name to it.

While she was doing that I had retrieved the remainder of the deck and shuffle it.

"Diamonds reflect your sense of financial and emotional security along with issues concerning structure and stability. Diamonds will reveal what brings you comfort. While nines generally represent completion and self-fulfillment, i.e. letting go and moving to a new level of experience. They suggest a time of attainment and 'clearing the decks' to make way for new opportunities."

I "shuffled" her card into the deck.

"What you need to remember is that you really are unique, just like there is not another nine of diamonds named Lesley..."

I turned over the top card to show her signed card. Her forehead wrinkled a bit.

I placed her card back in the center of the deck and shuffled.

"I sense that you can be usually successful in the business world, because you are so driven. You are a born leader."

I shuffled a bit more the made her card appear back on top.

"You dislike to seeing mistakes repeated, and have no patience with inefficiency."

She smiled.

I lost her card in the deck again.

"I think you may have difficulty seeing things from outside your own perspective."

Her card appeared on the bottom of the deck.

I had Lesley place her card the deck and give the deck a shuffle.

"Remember Lesley, not matter how lost you may feel. No matter, how the deck may seem to be stacked against you..."



I showed my hands empty, picked up the cards case from the table.

...you must remember that you are strong, intelligent and have the power to always bring yourself back to where you need to be."

I dumped her signed card from the card box.

She looked at the cards in her hands, and then to her signed card, she stood and shook my hand with out a word.

I left her signed card on the table, as she was leaving I saw her put it in her purse. I know that she will remember our encounter and remember it more than just a card trick.

This could just as easily been a coin routine or thumb tip and scarf...make your magic about the audience, make a connection and you will be remembered.


About TC

TC Tahoe is a Intuitive who uses Tarot Cards, Pendulums, Hpnotherapy, and more. He is a Speaker, Entertainer, Author, Facilitator and Teacher. Utilizing all his unique skills, TC assists individuals and groups into understanding and reaching their true potential.

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MAGIC 24-7

BEN ROBINSON

A full time professional Ben is based out of New York. His performances have taken him from Mt. Everest to Amsterdam.

I often feel guilty that I begin by writing about myself. But, the only thing I know is what I dreamed of doing when I was a boy. Now I am a middle-aged man and the editor of this magazine has asked that I recollect some story that others will find instructional, if not entertaining.

I saw Fred Kaps on TV in 1968. He blew my mind! When I was 14, I saw Doug Henning in The Magic Show on Broadway.

What's missing from all this is: the why?

Why do you want to do magic on TV or Broadway?

A producer of some renown once said to me, "OK you've learnt it. OK, you've got it. You know magic, inside and out. Now, what are you going to do with it? Get laid? Become rich?"

Neither was my goal, yet both have happened! I just signed my Will. I'm worth over a million dollars dead I am told by an attorney I've met exactly once.



I'm married happily, yet last weekend at my show, a man who had flown from San Francisco to watch my show at his party said after I did something noteworthy and dramatic, "If I were a single young girl, I'd so have sex with you right now."

It reminded me of another experience. I was entertaining after a show of a musician I had never before met, and when I did the exact same trick (no I won't tell which one), this woman musician fell to her knees and clutched her hands together and anxiously pled, "Will you marry me?!"

Magic is not only my profession; it is my daily currency. I get a lot of things for free because I can do magic. I've been given round trip first class airplane tickets; many free cab rides; free metalwork in Israel; comps to many shows, and most of all, recommendations.

But, honestly, I can tell you, I did not become a magician to: get rich, laid or a ton of free services. Yet, I do not complain. Hardly.



"I became a magician because Fred Kaps and Doug Henning both made me believe in magic. That was a blissful, airy feeling as I too could float. (Now, when I make something float, I am told I transfer the wonder I feel to my audience.)"



I've also been broke in every city in the US, and I am proud of that. Solving problems is the currency of the creative and I want to be counted on that team.

I became a magician because Fred Kaps and Doug Henning both made me believe in magic. That was a blissful, airy feeling – as if I too could float. (Now, when I make something float, I am told I transfer the wonder I feel to my audience.) I do magic to spread wonder to others. Period. Kill me, I stand with a wand in my hand and a tale to tell. Believe it; you'll have a nicer day. (Don't you live swaddled in credit card bills, what your doctor called "The debt of Damocles"?)

I wonder how many magicians – that is working magicians – read books? I have a library of about 3000 titles, and I can honestly say I've read almost everything I own, and if I did not read it all, then I have surely looked in it when I acquired it and am familiar with the contents. Reading magic books proves you can always learn more.

I'll tell you why I bring up reading. Once I

took an acting class with a brilliant teacher named Phil Stewart. He taught at Horace Greeley High School (Bedford, NY) in the 1970's when I met him and studied with him. The class was an elective; you chose to take it.

One young actor told Mr. Stewart that he had acted in many productions of Shakespeare's plays. After the pompous 18 yr. old was done impressing himself all over again, Mr. Stewart looked him up and down, and then slowly said, "Fine. We're all impressed. Shakespeare. That's interesting. One question: how well did you play Shakespeare?"

Why you become a magician is as important as how well you do magic. These notions are intricately connected. Read that sentence again and chew on it. You will really need to understand that if we are to go on hand-in-hand.

So, I use why I became a magician to slash like a sword as I move forward. I don't ever distort my work, and my principles have



Photos

Page 40 top right - An and Ben with Debbie and Paul Daniels.
Page 40 bottom - Ben in action at a private show in NY.
Top 41 - Ben performing close-up.



offered me a way to make money for nearly 38 years. Now, how well I do it is the rudder to my ship after I have chosen what gigs I want to play. I am at the stage of my career, where, luckily, I can pick and choose what it is I want to do with the rest of my life. I DO NOT take that for granted. At the moment of this writing, I am a man who spends a lot of time alone, has the network of creative people, some I have worked with for over 30 years. Many of them call me weekly to check in and see if there is a place in my orbit for their talents. Why? They like working with me. It's a great place to live.

The man I primarily learned magic from, Milbourne Christopher, said he wanted to do magic so he could "sleep late and see the world." You can read of his travels in *The Linking Ring* where he had a column titled *One Wizard's Wanderings*. So, you may have wondered by now: "OK, Ben, why did you become a magician? (Since you seem to think that is so important!)"

Reveal intimacies to strangers? Not me. But here's a clue:

Me mum once said, "Son, never lose your love of your work, because no one can ever take that from you."

It's true; I love doing magic and making people happy. I love showing them the construction of something truly impossible – like a soap bubble that changes to glass in mid air. I recently did that illusion at the Museum of the Moving Image during a big stage show and in the middle of an orchestrated sequence, the audience erupted in laughter, awe and applause...and I was in the middle of my routine. Such is an audience letting you – the performer – know they like your work for more reasons than they have been fooled. You need to transport the audience to a point of view.

I've often felt that the magician must take a spoonful of the metaphysical in order to present this to our audience. Creating wonder is our job. Tearing out the secret to illusion, or demeaning your audience as stupid, is the work of cynics who do not convey a feeling of magic. Creating that feeling, I contend, is the work of poets.

So, who are you? An entertainer? Storyteller? A poet? An artist? Do you have something to say? I've struggled many years to at least have an answer ready if I am asked; otherwise I keep this

material to myself. It usually never comes up, but I think it is important to know. (That is, if you present yourself as a magician.) It's simple: if you respect the Art of Magic, so will the audience. That is a fine truth. Never forget it. All the greats knew this: it was Thurston's creed; Nicola's mantra and LeRoy's dictum. Thurston even bounced up and down on his toes before the curtain opened and repeatedly said to himself "I love that audience. I love that audience."

Recently, at a dinner party, I was asked by a woman who desperately wanted to be a performer, how does one go about making a living as a magician? I admired her enthusiasm in that she began her performing career in her 30's. It was refreshing to meet someone who prized the \$12 manuscript she bought on eBay, a publication of Magic Inc. She actually asked if it would be all right if she let me look at it! She was what magicians were like over 150 years ago. She prized secrecy and did not know if one who did not buy the manuscript should be allowed to see it. I told her that a solid core act that she could perform close up or on stage was the center of my answer to her question. The magician has only one thing to do: deliver. If you entertain and make the audience smile and feel wonder – that most precious of all emotions – then I think you cannot be questioned as to having done your job.

Those who sell secrets are at odds with we who keep secrets. I know Paul Romhany has never once given anyone the secret of his prized floating broom. In fact, I understand that it was manufactured by several different sources so no one person can possibly reconstruct it.

Why mention this? Marvyn Roy, the great Mr. Electric, said it best: "If you do original work THAT they can ONLY get from you, and they want that act, it's yours.. What I feel is important to instill in modern magicians is something that was common just 75 years ago. The writers of *Modern Magic Manual*, Hardeen, Jean Hugard and Julien Proskauer all contended that we must appreciate the past to create the future.

Continued in next issue.

Photos above L to R: Ben performing at The Hamtlet Club, and at Montauk Manor.



Real Coin in Bottle

Ken Ring takes a refreshing look at a classic with a twist

Coin-in-bottle is now a classic in magic, and it never fails to please. But it is not without potential stuff-ups, like bands breaking around the folding coin. And you can't allow the coin to be examined afterwards without doing a switch. But how would it be if you used a real coin all along? How good would it be to be able to put the coin in the bottle, shake the bottle and tip it upside down showing that the coin is too big to get past the opening, and then present the bottle+coin to your subject as their souvenir? The routine developed from the many tricks that employ an earth magnet inside a "magician's" ring's hidden cavity for a variety of effects, for example retaining a coin in a vanish, or forcing the choice of a magnetized colored ball. I usually like to get away from the idea of a ring, because it can be a bit of a giveaway if you don't usually wear one or if people know you are not married.

What you need:

You require a thumb-tip and a tiny earth magnet that can fit inside the thumb-tip, and sit snugly above your digit when that digit is inserted. You also require a large-size plastic "Chi" soft-drink bottle and a 50cent coin. The 50cent coin in New Zealand is magnetic. If you don't have a magnetic coin of your own currency you can use a 'shim' coin. (Editor's note: I discovered a smaller "Chi" bottle and made this up using this. You can try this with **any** plastic pop or soda bottle that is tinted. I found green works best.)

Preparation:

You have to get the coin into the bottle beforehand. It is a simple matter with a plastic bottle. Simply boil a kettle, fill a smallish container like a teacup with boiling water, then plunge the opening of the bottle upside down into it. Leave it there for

about 3 minutes. Remove it from the boiling water and force the coin inside the bottle before the plastic hardens again as it cools. The softened bottle opening will distort enough to allow the coin to drop in. Immediately insert the end of a broom handle into the neck opening, twist it around a little, and the opening will be restored to its perfectly round shape. Tipping the bottle upside down, the coin will not be able to come out again. It is in there now forever. If the bottle cools before you can get the coin in you may have to reheat the water and try again.





Casually turn the bottle upside down and back the right way again, which silently convinces the audience the bottle is empty. *"Can someone please lend me a 50c coin? Thank you sir. I suggest to you all that it is impossible to put this coin in the bottle because the coin is too big for the opening."*

Vainly, but with a lot of false grunting, attempt to put the coin in the opening and show it won't go.

"Of course folks there may be a slit in the bottom of this bottle" - hit the bottom with the borrowed coin - "but I assure you there is not. There may be a slit in the side. I assure you that is not the case either. It is impossible - but I do believe nothing is impossible. Please watch carefully, in case I cheat, because maybe I will do the impossible." Now comes the fun part. You do three things almost at once. It isn't hard and you will master it after 2 or 3 tries. You bang the coin against the underside of the bottle. As you do this, you slide your right-hand (with the thumb-tip) down the side of the bottle and the coin inside the bottle will be released and fall to the inside bottom of the bottle. As well, bring your pinky+thumb-tip into your left hand that is still holding the borrowed coin, and a very satisfying clunk will tell you that the borrowed coin has jumped onto the end of the thumb-tip, all out of sight inside the hand that is cupped under the bottle. You are still holding the bottle with your right hand, in fact it doesn't let the bottle go during the whole routine until the end.

You casually open your left hand to silently announce to the audience that the borrowed coin is no longer in that hand. The question in their minds now is, where is the coin? Shake the bottle with the right hand that is still holding it. The coin will bounce around inside.

You are almost done but you have to ditch the coin and thumb-tip asap. While there is general gasping at your brilliance you simply transfer the bottle to your empty left hand as your right hand (with pinky+coin on end) dives inside your bag for a pen. Inside my bag I have a small strip of metal sewed into the lining, which 'grabs' the thumb-tip, coin and all, retaining it within the bag, enabling me to instantly take my pinky from it - and as I lift my hand from the bag I bring out a marker that has been lying in readiness. It is all one smooth movement. I remove the cap from the marker and ask the subject's name. With the marker I write on the label of the bottle, "To Bob, keep this bottle and you will never be penniless ever again, not ever. Best wishes, Ken Ring". Hand him the bottle with the coin inside. Of course the guy won't be penniless - he'll always have the 50c.

Extra

Most magic tricks utilise a principle that the lay person is unaware of. The beauty of this routine is that it rides on three things the audience will probably not know about;

1. The existence of thumb-tips, especially ones worn on pinkies
2. That modern coins are magnetic.
3. That you can heat a plastic bottle up, force a coin in the top then restore its perfectly round shape again.

Now, you could get the coin 'back out' again (yeah right), by putting your pinky with the borrowed coin still sticking on its end, into your left hand, pinching it off with the cup of the left hand, and at the same time giving the bottle a gentle shake so the inside coin slides up to meet the magnet. You are then back in the starting position. But I feel this is milking the trick too



Before the show you have to set up the bottle in position. Put the thumb-tip(+magnet) on your right-hand pinky, not your thumb. Hold the bottle horizontal with the other fingers of the right hand, and gently shake and slide the coin in the bottle until the magnet "holds" the coin through the plastic. Edge the coin halfway up the side of the bottle. I like to position the coin somewhere behind the label. Remove your pinky and now the coin will hold the thumb-tip to it and it will not move. Put the bottle out of sight in your bag, ready to be accessed when needed.

Routine:

When the time comes to do the trick go to your bag where the bottle is, insert your pinky in the tip and grip the bottle with the other fingers of the right hand, bring out the bottle with that hand and commence the routine. To the audience it seems you are just holding an empty bottle. Your pinky is quite naturally out of sight and there is nothing to be suspicious of.

much. Better to get the coin "in" and give the whole thing away, before the audience has a chance to see you do the "insertion" a second time.

Why the pinky? Because it is always out of sight in this routine. Any other finger may be seen to have something artificial on it.

Why use a "Chi" bottle? Because it is clear enough to see a coin inside, yet green enough that the audience can't see the coin if you accidentally flash it before it is released. Also, you can say "Feng-Shui talks about a magical internal energy called Chi. I find the power of Chi can be helpful in the dematerializing and rematerializing of coins, and as I need all the help I can get when working in other dimensions, so I prefer these bottles."

Sometimes I say, "As you can plainly see, that is your coin." They never say no. They can't plainly see anyway, because the plastic distorts the clarity, but they don't have time to tell you.

Sometimes someone will say afterwards, OK, but can you do it with a glass bottle? I say of course. And you could. But that is another story and involves going to a glassblower and paying him to build a thin-walled bottle around a coin. As I said folks, nothing is impossible.



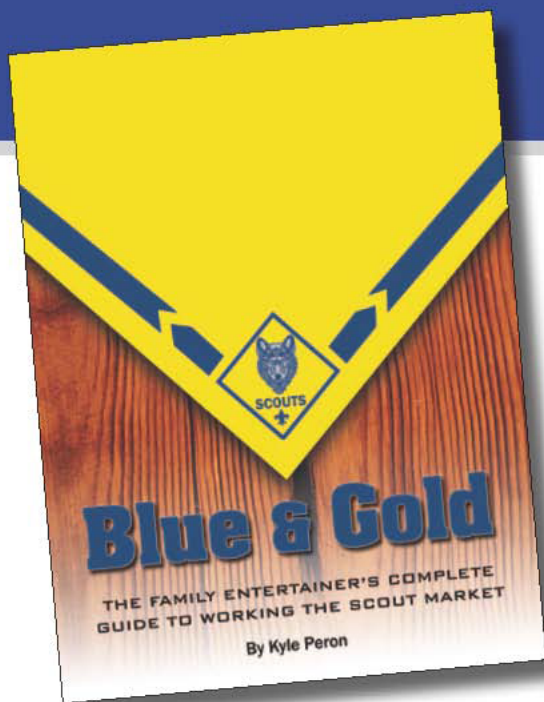
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FLYING CARPET/CHAIR SUSPENSION TIPS

KYLE PERON

Kyle is author of the "Chair Suspension" e-book available from kpmagicproducts.com. It is one of the key books on performing a solid chair suspension routine.

I received this question the other day and felt it is probably a situation that effects many of us. I wanted to address it here in the hopes that my information, tips and techniques may help you as well.

Question:

"I was just after any advice people would like to share while performing the Flying Carpet or Chair Suspension Illusion. Best way to get the child on as it is quite high, avoiding movement when child gets on and off."

First I would like to say that this is a great question. It happens to a lot of entertainers and this key element alone can make or break a great performance of either illusion.

I would start by utilizing a small step stool in the front of the illusion. This way it makes getting on and off very easy for the child and easier for you. As the child step up on the stool, they then turn to face the audience. They usually can just sit down on the illusion. As they sit, hold on to the back part of the illu-



sion for added support as your hand (closest to the audience) guides and helps the child up.

If the child is too small and can not easily sit on the illusion with the usage of the step stool, then have them come and stand on the stool. then ask them to hold their arms out straight to the side. This is to help them imagine they are like an airplane and lighter than air.

Then at this point ASK if it is ok for you to help the child up. I always ask as you never want to touch a child without permission first. They will say yes and then I reach under the arms (since they have them out any ways, and I gently lift them up and down onto the illusion.



Left is a photo of Jay Leslie who makes one of the best chair suspensions on the market. This model has enough improvements to be considered "An advancement of the arts". All improvements were made by Jay Leslie, so you know a lot of time and effort was invested into thinking them out completely. All in all there are several never-before available improvements made to this standard illusion making it the NEW standard of the industry.

The key is to take this in parts or steps and do not rush it. Rushing it only makes the child nervous and causes too much movement. So I would always do this in a few key moves:

- have the child stand on stool
- have them place arms out to side and imagine they are an airplane and lighter than air.
- have them sit down on the illusion facing audience and feet still hanging down. If they can not sit easily, then ask them if you can assist them.
- as they sit, hold onto the back of the illusion for stability
- when they are seated, then ask them to bring their legs up one at a time and sit criss cross applesauce.
- remove the stool once they are seated properly.
- reverse the process at the end.

This usually works very well and allows the child to trust you and gives you a much easier and better looking presentation. As always, as you are doing this, watch the child, if the child becomes nervous or scared, then you must be willing to handle it and not force the child.

If a child gets too scared or nervous, I have them stand there and I make them the magician. I bring up another child (older) to do the trick and the first child becomes the magician that makes the magic happen. This way everyone ends up looking like a star and no ones feelings are hurt in the process.

Hope this helps. although I do the chair suspension a lot, these steps work ideal for the flying carpet illusion also. I cover off on a lot of this information and more in my chair suspension ebook available at www.kpmagicproducts.com.

As always, I encourage you the readers to let me know your thoughts. So if you have any thoughts on my articles or suggestions or comments, please feel free to e-mail me directly at magic4u02@aol.com. I would love to hear from you.



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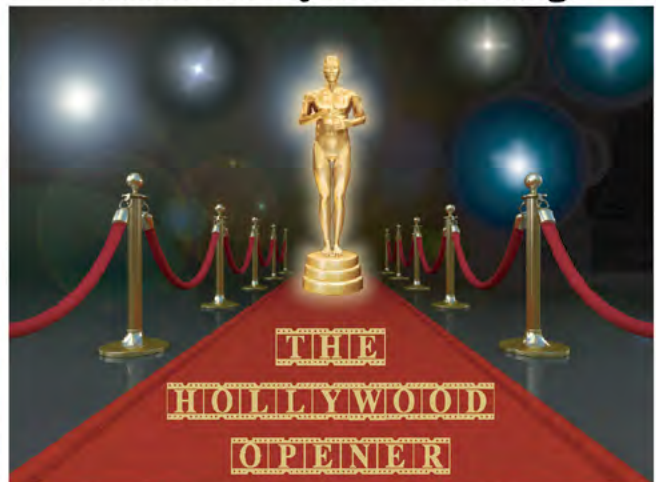
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