

MAC **SEEN** C *Lite*

Issue 9




THE SANDWICH-EFFECT THAT CANNOT BE EXPLAINED!

HANDS-OFF, THE SPECTATOR DOES THE MAGIC.

ONE CARD COLLECTOR

BY ALEXANDER KÖLLE



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Hello again everyone! We are delighted to be back with another Lite edition of Magicseen, the contents of this edition being extracted from the full issue 94 (Sept 2020). Our main feature is on cover star Nathan Kranzo, a man who has toughed it out in some of the USA's meanest club venues as well as lent his skills and knowledge to other top performers as a consultant. Never dull, you can learn more about the Kranzilla right here.

Sometimes it can be hard to get advice on magic topics relevant to today's world, but in A Little Bit Of Business, Ian Brennan dishes out some great pointers to help you to get your magical social media presence and website in order.

We also offer you a selection of the emails we received recently on the Letters page, provide a clever card effect from Greg Webb selected from the Masterclass, and we introduce you to Sebastian Midtvaage, a great close upper who hails from Norway but who lives in Texas!

Finally, we dip into our comprehensive reviews section and select a number of products that have been assessed by our experienced team of reviewers, thus hopefully helping you to decide the direction in which to send your money.

We really hope you enjoy this dip into the well of wonder that is Magicseen Magazine, but to get the real full monte you need to subscribe. We currently offer printed copy or download subs for 6 months, 1 year or 2 years, so there's plenty of choice, either if you want a quick burst of Magicseen goodness, or whether you prefer to hunker down for the long haul. Whatever you choose, Magicseen is here to brighten your magic day every two months, so join us!

Mark Leveridge

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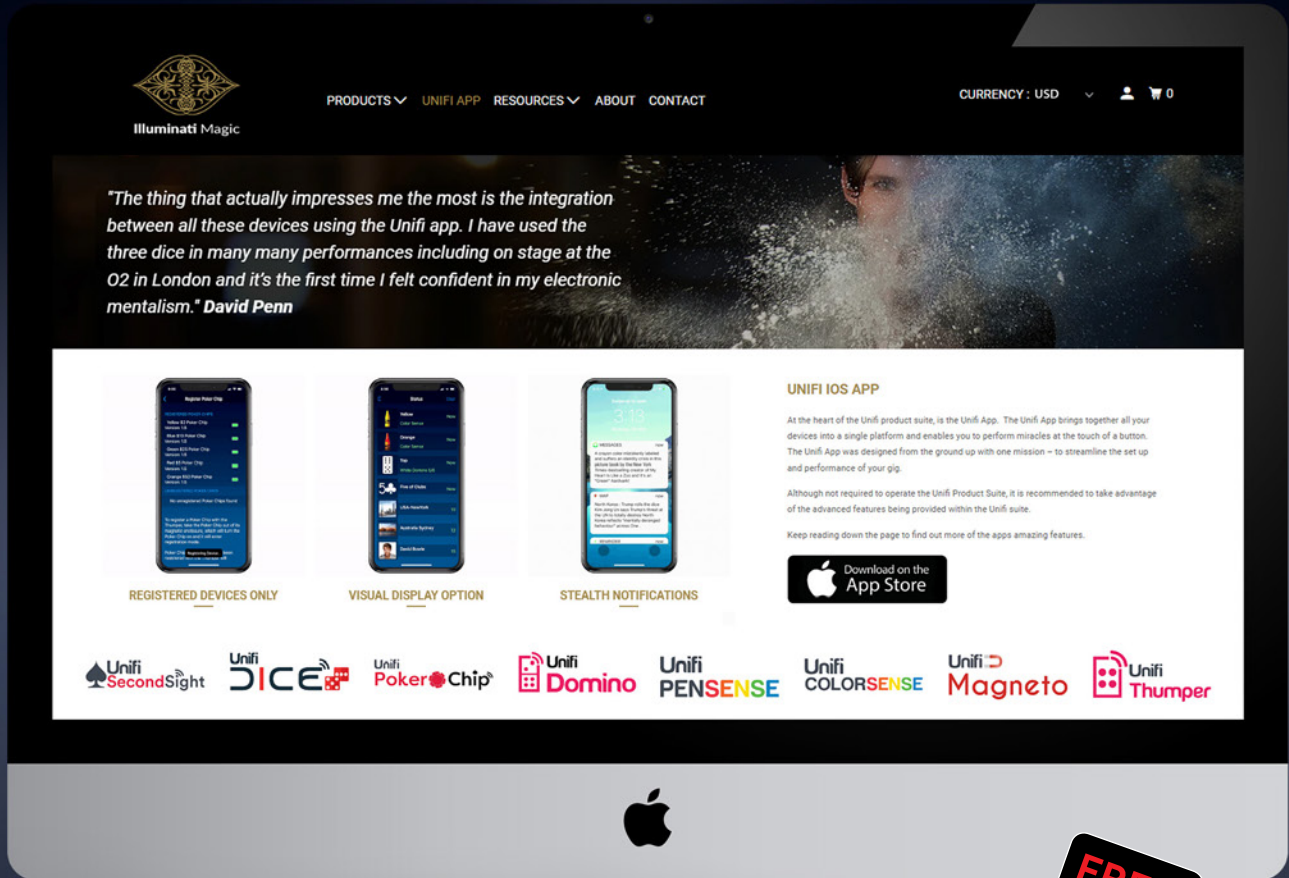
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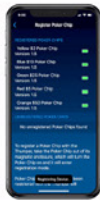
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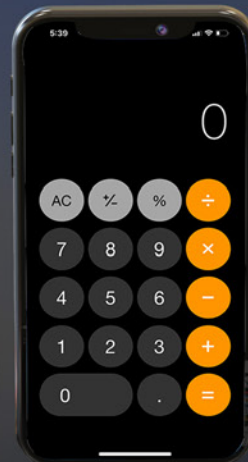
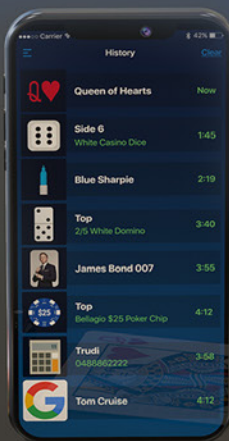
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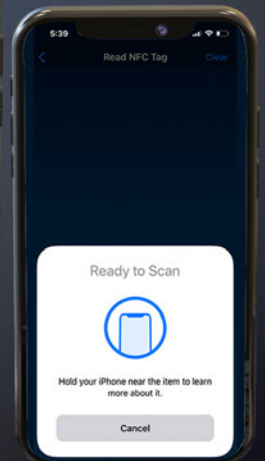
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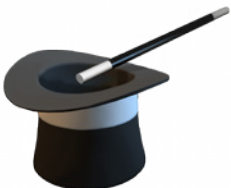
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IT'S THE KRANZILLA!

NATHAN KRANZO

There are not many genuinely hilarious magic performers around, but Nathan Kranzo is right up there. With a background of performing in comedy clubs, he's not only survived to tell the tale, but become a much-loved headline act performing in some of the toughest, meanest clubs in the USA. Nathan has also worked as a magic consultant on some of the world's top magic shows including on Penn & Teller's NBC Special.

His original effects are clever and commercial, but it's his natural gift for comedy which makes him stand out from the rest.

Magicseen's Graham Hey talks to the fabulous comedy magician and mentalist Nathan Kranzo.


I begin by asking Nathan how he's coped during the virus? 'At first I was going a little crazy being cooped up inside but now that it's summer and we can go outside it's not so bad,' he says. 'At first I had all this pressure to do something important or productive, but now I just think I guess I'll eat another pizza and binge watch another season on OZARK!

'Honestly I've welcomed the time off. I was nearing a burn out mode with travel and what not. Being home and spending time with my family has been a blessing.'

How has it affected the area where you live, and what exactly have you been doing during lockdown with all your free time? 'Pizza and Netflix!! Lots of weed and time spent at the beach. Also spending lots of time with my kids boating on the lakes of Northern Michigan:-) I've also been writing a lot. My area has been very strict with lockdown requirements so we haven't been hit as hard because of it.'

What were your original plans for 2020, were you looking forward to doing anything in particular that you've had to cancel or put on hold? 'Yes I was very looking forward to performing at a convention in Italy but I had to cancel due to Covid scheduling conflicts,' says Nathan who tells me he's had his entire calendar for the year cancelled, although he's managed to do a few Zoom things here and there.

Moving away from Covid disaster, I ask him what he remembers from his first ever stand-up gig? Nathan goes pale. 'Being absolutely terrified and looking back now

A stylized, high-contrast illustration of a man in a fedora and suit, holding a small object in his hands. The background is a grid pattern, suggesting a city or a stage. The man is looking down at the object in his hands. The overall style is reminiscent of a graphic novel or a stylized photograph.

***DON'T YOU JUST
LOVE IT WHEN
YOU GET HIRED
TO DO AN HOUR
OF CLOSE UP AND
YOU SHOW UP
AND EVERYONE
IS GATHERED
AROUND WAITING
FOR YOU TO
PERFORM A
STAND-UP SHOW?***



**YOU NEED TO
HAVE SEVERAL
LAUGHS PER
MINUTE IF YOU'RE
GOING TO BE
ON STAGE AT A
COMEDY CLUB.
SO BE PREPARED
TO STUMBLE
THROUGH SOME
REALLY AWKWARD
TIME IF YOU
DON'T!**

absolutely unprepared. Also, it wasn't supposed to be a stand-up gig.... It was supposed to be a close up gig that turned into a stand-up gig, like so many do. Party planners just don't get it right LOL.

'Don't you just love it when you get hired to do an hour of close up and you show up and everyone is gathered around waiting for you to perform a stand-up show?'

At Magicseen, we get regular questions from readers asking for advice when putting together a brand new show. What are the main considerations you have when together a brand-new show? 'What's the audience? And what is the purpose? I can't tell you how many times I've seen a great act fail because it was for the wrong audience. Or they just didn't make adjustments to fit the crowd or the "vibe" of the room.'

How long do you usually give effects to bed-in before you know if they're going to work or not? And how do you put in a new routine - do you place it between sure-fire winners? Says Nathan, 'I tend to give things a little bit more time than other people. If I really believe in something, I'll keep failing with it painfully until I see a little glimmer of hope!'

'With new routines, I'm pretty bold and will just throw it in anytime at the drop of a hat. There's no better time than now. Especially if you have a paying audience in front of you. As long as you have a solid act of material that you know will work and you know will entertain it's not a problem to throw in a new routine even if I completely fail, I know I can make a joke about it and move on!'

How much thought do you put into your opening? 'Lots!' says Nathan, 'Well, maybe not so much thought as much as time. I will work on an opening routine for years until it's just right. I had an opening bit that I did for maybe 10 years until I changed one little moment one little gesture and it made it 100 times funnier and now it plays huge and it's hard not to use it as an opener because it's so effective!'

I ask him what he looks to achieve in the first few minutes? 'I want them to laugh, relax and be interested. I want them to first just laugh and laughter is so magical in itself - if they laugh then they are letting their guard down instantly and so if they let their guard down, they will relax and not be so uptight and judgemental. They'll be more likely to just let themselves go, be in the moment and suspender disbelief.'



Nathan tells me about his favourite opener. It's the old trick of blowing up a balloon and then letting the air out – then when the air is coming out you start squeaking the balloon at a really high-pitched squeak. Only the balloon keeps squeaking and squeaking long after the air has escaped. He says, 'I have combined this with a funny script about breaking up with my ex-girlfriend and it ends with a very, very, funny climax.'

Do comedy clubs still give a chance to magicians? 'Yes, definitely! The clubs are usually pretty great, but the other comedians are often cynical about magicians because they look at them as using a crutch or having less writing skills. I have often been called "the prop guy" when performing at clubs.'

'I dealt with a lot of being talked-down to as a magician performing in comedy clubs but once you prove that you are funny and you can actually get laughs that don't rely on simple hack magician jokes, they will start to respect you. Either that or hate you (jealousy, after all, if you can make people laugh AND produce a thought of card from your crotch.... You're a double threat!). But either way, you've proved your worth!'

What mistakes do magicians/mentalists usually make when doing comedy clubs? Nathan laughs, 'They show up! Seriously I think many performers have no place showing up at a comedy club. They think that they have a couple of laughs in their show and that they are now ready for a comedy club. Just because you have two or three big laughs and a 20-minute set does not make you a comedy performer at all.'

'You need to have several laughs per minute if you're going to be on stage at a comedy club. So be prepared to stumble through some really awkward time if you don't! Do you have to be topical in the clubs? 'I don't think there are any hard or fast rules but I think it's definitely a good thing to be topical or at least regional. That's something that I really focus on - making jokes about particular things in the immediate area geographically or certain things in the local social lexicon.'

Like many funny performers, Nathan says he wasn't the class clown, but actually a pretty shy kid who kept to himself for the most part. 'I started to open up a little bit more when I got involved with the school band organisation because I then had a big crew of fellow drummers who I could band about with, like a little gang!'

Nathan got in to magic first, and then the comedy followed. 'Yes. I first got interested in coin magic and card magic and then started doing restaurant gigs very regularly', says Nathan, 'and as I started to perform a lot for real people and bar situations the natural comedy just started to come out in my performances. I've always been a huge sarcastic smart ass. And that comes out a lot!'

So how do you get from enthusiastic amateur, to semi-pro to fully-fledged professional? 'Lots and lots of gigs. I always said yes to every gig for years and years. Now I say "no" to most gigs just because I'm very picky and I have worked very hard to put myself in a position where I can actually do that!'

I ask Nathan to tell me what has been his most rewarding magic experience? 'Well that's easy,' laughs Nathan, who was born in Detroit and raised there till age three. 'It



I ALWAYS SAID YES TO EVERY GIG FOR YEARS AND YEARS. NOW I SAY "NO" TO MOST GIGS JUST BECAUSE I'M VERY PICKY...

involves working with one of my favorite humans, Lee Asher, on a show called "The Amazing Magicians."

'I got a call from Lee one morning and he asked me if I would be interested in doing a gig in China. I said of course I had always wanted to go to China. And then he said can you come tomorrow? And I was like what?????

'He was dead serious. They were in a bind and needed another experienced magician to help with a huge project for a TV show they were working on in Nanjing, China.

'It was an offer, an opportunity I couldn't refuse. I love working with Lee and the opportunity to hang out with him in a new country and a new culture and be paid to do it! What an opportunity!

'So I quickly jumped through all the hoops to get a visa and next thing I knew I was on my way to China and stayed for 3 months.

'Initially I was brought on to the show to help as a consultant.

'It was kind of an "America's Got Talent" style show. They were basically using that same model only it was all magic. There would be teams of magicians that would compete against each other and a panel of celebrity judges would judge every performance.

'That was one of the reasons why the show was so popular. Not only was there amazing magic from all over the world, but the celebrity judges on the show were the most famous celebrities in China.

'For instance, Fan Bing Bing is arguably the most famous and most recognisable female Chinese movie star and she was one of the judges. Not only was she a judge but she took a great interest in magic and was a great asset to many of the magicians. Working in this very exciting environment and being immersed in a completely new culture was absolutely invigorating.

'To work on such a big production was both an honour and quite a learning experience. The show was watched by over 80 million viewers and the production stage was equipped with over 40 cameras - It was staggering.

'Being a part of this huge production and being part of an amazing crew was so much fun. It was also a ton of hard work. They don't take days off and they work long hours. But we created some amazing magic and became the number one show on Chinese television - and I now have a huge family of Chinese friends!

'Like I said initially I was brought on to work as a consultant but after being on the show for a while they were looking for more Magicians to perform on the show. At one point the casting producer turned to me and said, "What about you?" Next thing you know I am actually one of the contestants on the show. It was pretty wild!

I did well and performed on two episodes and loved the experience. I performed magic on International TV which was seen by over 100 million people!!!! That's crazy.'

QUICKIES WITH THE KRANZILLA

Which performers inspired you along the way?

Paul Harris, Jay Sankey, David Harkey, Daryl and Michael Ammar were all huge influences early on.

And how did they influence you?

Mainly through their writing because I didn't see a live magician until I was in college. Or at least a live lecture.

Which of your own creations has proved the most successful as far as reaction goes? And why do you think there aren't many good comedy stand-up effects/routines released?

I think mainly because they are so hard to come up with and once you have a really good script and routine like that you don't want to share it. It's like writing someone a cheque :-)

It takes a lot of time and hard work to come up with a good comedy magic piece.

Are you happy with how your career has panned out so far?

Yes!!! I feel like I am living a dream. I have been able to travel the world and continue to perform magic, have fun and make people laugh :-)

Would you change anything?

Maybe add a couple supermodels to my bedroom but other than that I think I wouldn't change a thing.

What do you get up to when you're chilling at home?

I love anything to do with the beach or the water. Living in Michigan we are very lucky as we have more lakes than any other state in the country. I've grown up living on the lake and spending lots of time on boats. I also read constantly. I would like to consume anything I can about magic or comedy or any type of world history or art.

Any hobbies?

I play the drums and I've done so since I was a kid been in a couple of rubbish heavy metal bands and even a classic rock band. I love to be active and love to be outside.

What are you into?

Probably my favorite thing is to smoke a fat joint and sit in the hot tub and read a good magic book

What's your fav comedy series on TV?

I'm a huge fan of David Spade and he recently came out with a new TV show called "Lights Out" where he has several of his favorite comedians on each episode and they just talk about current events. David also write a monologue and several jokes for each episode. I think he is one of the most amazing joke writers in the world and I love his comedy - and his sarcasm is brilliant.



Fav comedy movie?

Oh man that's so hard. Lemme think. Oh!!! Windy City Heat. Just turned onto this recently. It's a movie created by Bobcat Goldthwait (stand up comedian and famous character actor). The entire movie is a big ploy to mess with his best fiend. Although his friend has NO clue. It's brilliant and will make you cry laughing

What are your most annoying habits?

Eating too much.

Worst thing about the magic world?

Thieves...

And social media magicians like Jibrizy. Is he a hip hop artist doing magic? Or a homeless kid? Or a walking meme!??

Fav effect of ALL TIME?

Robert Houdin's Light and Heavy Chest. I think to see it performed, during that time period would have been amazing. At one point he performed a version where several spectators were trying to pull the box off the ground by pulling down on a rope that was levered high above the stage. The box would apparently become so heavy that it would start to pull audience members up into the air that were holding onto the rope!!

Last time you cried laughing?

After seeing a post where Justin Miller was promoted as being "creative".

Oh and also after watching Big Mouth on Netflix. Oh and one more!!!! The Cheech and Chong Roast. You can find it on YouTube. There are a couple of really hilarious magic references on there. Worth watching and crying over...

My favourite travelling tale by Nathan Kranzo?

Oh man I have 1 million travelling tales... But I can think of one that's really funny that happened at a magic convention.



It was actually at FISM in Dan Haag back in 2003. I had always wanted to go to a FISM and I always wanted to go to the sex shows and legal weed shops, lots of weed, oh my god so much weed!!!

**Side note. It's absolutely legal for recreational use here in Michigan where I live - and I am smoking a bowl as I speak!*

Anyway...

The tale of two Mathews

One of my best friends and I saved up money to go to FISM in den Haag. We were both so damn excited to go because we both loved magic and couldn't wait to see all the great performances, be involved in the late night sessions and all the debauchery we could get ourselves into with the locals.

We met two locals in particular, both with the same name - Mathew and Mathew. (To differentiate them we'll call one Matt for short). Matt came from the north and he was a hobbyist magician and Matthew was a little more advanced and was a part time performer who had some incredible chops and performed amazing magic. Matt not so much, but he was a cool guy. Not only was he a cool guy but both Matt and Mathew seemed to be the best of friends, and the endless supply of weed that Matt supplied was very welcoming to me and my buddy. They were quite the odd couple. One being a very straight-laced social worker by day, and Matt made his living doing illegal activity that he openly bragged about.

Ahh, the characters you meet through magic?!!!!

We were two young dumb magic-loving Americans soaking it up and loving it...

So we're in den Haag. We were having a session in the convention hotel and Mathew runs out of the bathroom looking sick and dripping sweat... the two Mathews start to argue furiously and it's getting so intense I'm starting to freak out...

They are arguing in Dutch.

So, my buddy Aaron and myself have no idea what they are saying but it seems like they are about to fight each other and we are both looking at each other confused and scared.

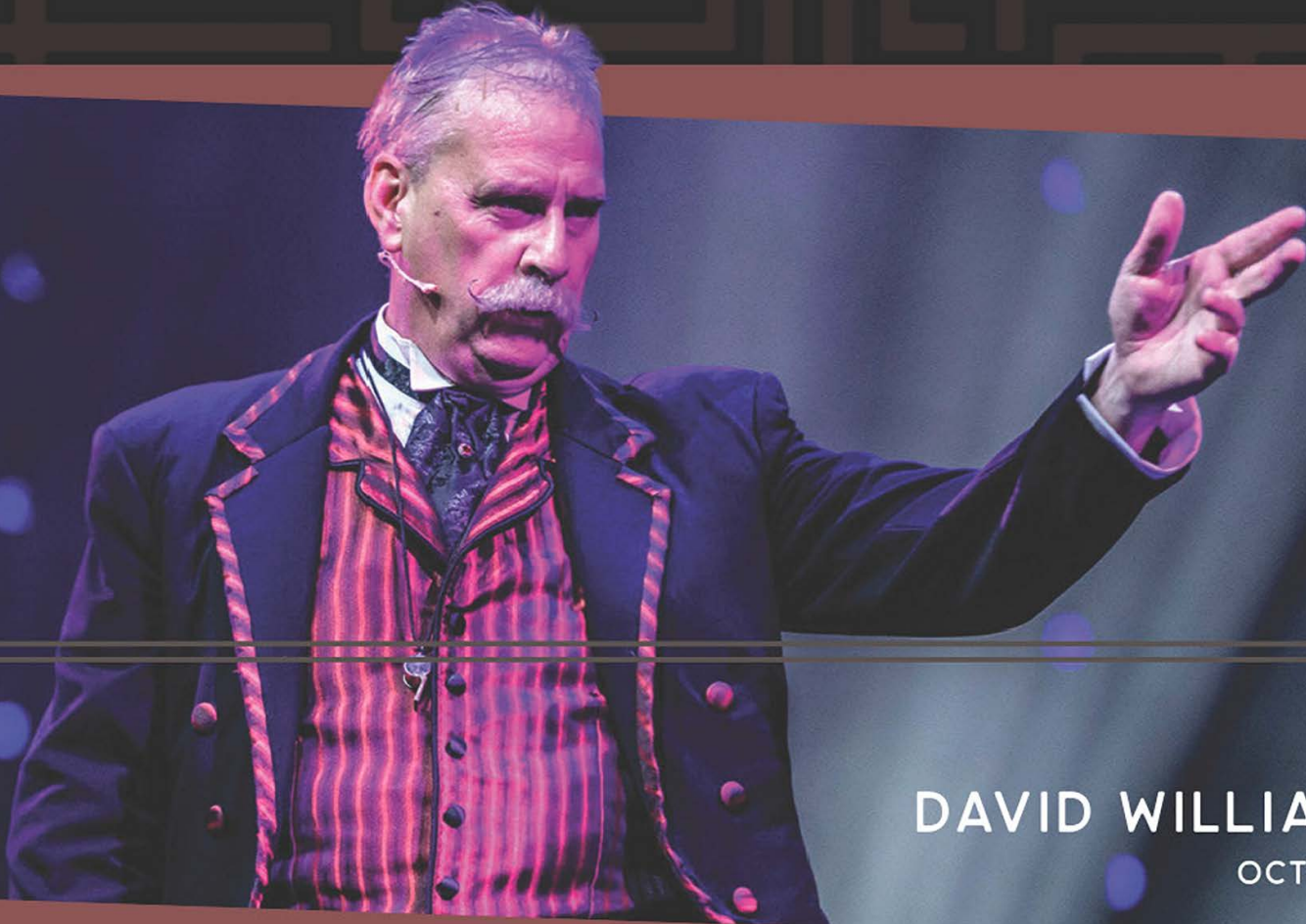
Finally, I beg to Mathew: "Please man tell us what's wrong - we don't understand what you are saying and what you are fighting about!???"

Mathew then proceeds to explain to me in broken English that Matt was doing heroin and some of the heroin residue was left on the table and Mathew rolled a cigarette in the same spot. Unbeknownst to him he accidentally rolled up heroin into his cigarette. This man who was a straight-laced social worker, a father of four and never tried a drug in his life, had just accidentally smoked heroin!!! He immediately got sick and puked in the bathroom. Then came out of the bathroom high and sweaty to start the argument with Matt. Understandably so.

Mathew hurled a few more curses and obscene words in Dutch at Matt. He the wiped the sweat and puke from his face. Sat down and then pulled out a deck of cards.

He looked at me and with a strained smile said; "Have you ever seen my handling of WILD CARD?"

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'A LITTLE BIT OF BUSINESS'

Ian Brennan A.I.M.C.

PART THREE



Hello again and welcome back to this third and final column in 'A Little Bit Of Business'. Today we will look at the do's and don'ts of social media and websites. Check out the advice below and step up your online presence.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Let's start by taking a look at social medias before we dive into websites in more detail. For the purpose of this article the phrase 'social media' covers platforms where other people can interact with the content you share. Some of the most popular social medias utilised by magicians are YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

YouTube is seen as the home for longer videos and has many features. The caution I would give is that YouTube is brilliant at linking videos together; most annoyingly linking magic videos with videos exposing the effects. An example of this is when you watch a Penn and Teller Fool Us clip and immediately afterwards YouTube is showing you how to do each trick. Keep this in mind if you are uploading content - do you want your audience watching tutorials for your tricks?

TikTok and Instagram are the homes of short videos. Bite sized video clips of fast, fun magic tricks. There are vast audiences out there and you don't need to upload a lot of content to start making a big impression. These platforms are brilliant for exposing new people to your brand.

Facebook is a great way to interact with your followers or your community. You will get less new followers from Facebook but once you have a Facebook follower you can



nurture the relationship and tailor their experience a little better here than the other platforms.

LinkedIn is a brilliant place to meet corporate bookers and to get your name known in corporate circuits.

With that in mind here are some of the do's and don'ts for maximising your Social Media.

DO'S AND DON'TS

Do try as many social medias as you can. Only if you dive in head first will you be able to work out which is your favourite platform or which works best for connecting you with your audience. When you have tried them all have a serious look at this next point.

Don't do more than you can manage. Social media can become a black hole that sucks up all your time. Only start investing your time in it if you can keep up the pace. It is

better to not jump in at all rather than have an account that can't keep up. There is nothing worse than looking at a performer's profile which announces their next show, coming soon, in 2016. Clients will think if you are that bad at organising a social media account then you must be bad at business. Simply remove posts that are not evergreen and remove sleeper accounts.

Do be careful what you post. Be mindful that your posts will go public so keep your posts in line with your brand image.

Do monitor your comments and remove inappropriate ones. Social media is full of trolls who like nothing more than to pick up on things, make bad comments and spoil your beautiful posts. Keep an eye out for these and remove them quickly.

Do check your backgrounds and set the scene. Make sure the background of your photos and videos is in line with your brand. I have seen a children's magician performing in their own bedroom with a pin up calendar on the wall behind them. This is not a good image and will not do much good for accruing future bookings. Check all your props and surfaces work together. Put as much thought in designing your set as the content itself.

Do keep your personal life personal. Anything you share is out in the wide world. Decide how much of your personal life you want to share and don't overstep your line. A good way to separate your personal life and business is to create two separate accounts.

Don't get stressed. Social media can be stressful. If it becomes a burden, then turn it all off for a little while and take a good step back and re-evaluate.

WEBSITES

Websites are a little more straightforward: Potential clients search for a service online and they land on your site. The end goal of your website is to get that customer further along the buying journey and hopefully they purchase your services or products.

DO'S AND DON'TS

Do have a clear brand. Make it clear what you do and why you are different to the other people offering a similar service. Is it your character; your style; or are you a specialist and no one else is as good as you?



DON'T GET STRESSED. SOCIAL MEDIA CAN BE STRESSFUL. IF IT BECOMES A BURDEN, THEN TURN IT ALL OFF FOR A LITTLE WHILE AND TAKE A GOOD STEP BACK AND RE-EVALUATE.

Do make it easy for them to book you. Make sure there is a nice clear button that the potential client can click to access your services. The easier this is to find then the easier it is for them to book you.

Do answer their 'First question'. When a potential customer lands on your site they will have a bunch of questions. Work out the common questions you get asked and answer these clearly before the customer gets in touch. This will help them understand your services and save you time in the long run.

Do keep it up to date. Like the social media point above- customers want to see a service provider who looks up to date and organised. If you not up to the challenge of updating your site regularly then try and make it 'evergreen'. Remove specific references to dates and times and keep it more general in feel.

Do specialise. Believe it or not customers like to book a specialist and it can harm you if you are seen as a jack of all trades and master of none. For example, look at the car brand Jaguar: If you go to their website everything is tailored to the potential Jaguar buyer. Nothing is mentioned about the fact that the same company manufactures Land Rovers. They appreciate that the two customer groups are different.

It is very rare a customer will be looking for a children's party entertainer and be impressed that you do corporate shows –they want the best children's entertainer. Neither will they be looking for a wedding entertainer and be impressed that you do kids' shows – they want the best wedding magician.

Showing all your skills in one place can be harmful so consider setting up different web addresses for each distinct arm of your services. This is especially important if you are a performer and a producer of magic. It is not best practice to tell your bookers that anyone could buy your magic and how easy some of it is to do.

Do keep text to a minimum.

Do test your site on multiple devices. A simple one here to finish with – check your website works well on mobile devices as well as computers.

That's it for now. I hope you have enjoyed these little bits of business and they have been some help in nudging you in the right direction.

If you missed any of my earlier columns in this series then do head back and check them out.

Until next time.

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HAVE YOUR SAY

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

TENYO MAGIC

I love Tenyo Magic and am always so excited to see what their new releases will include. The effects are always so clever, the quality excellent and the packaging engaging. But... and here's the question: Tenyo effects are great, but does anyone actually use them in professional performance? Or are they just a sort of novelty trick you show your relatives at Christmas?

Mike Redmond, via email

Thanks Mike. There are many thousands of Tenyo collectors all over the world, and many probably never even open their Tenyo tricks. We know of several collectors who always buy two - one to save unopened, and one to play with! However, we do know of several magicians who do use particular Tenyo effects in their close-up performances, but they have to be used within a routine so that spectators cannot handle them. Magician and publisher Richard Kaufman told The Magic Café back in 2014, "I'm not a professional magician, but I've done 15 minute "shows" consisting entirely of Tenyo tricks for people who've visited my home. No one says, "I'd rather see a card trick."

And just for the record, we asked our reviewers for their fav Tenyo effect and the winner was the incredible: Tower of Dice!



BAR BETS!

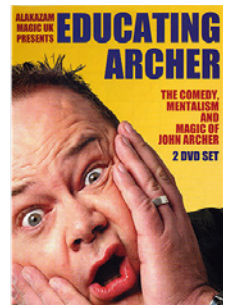
During lockdown I have really got in to magic. I am no sleight-of-hand master, preferring to do bar tricks and easy effects which are all about entertainment. Could you recommend any material on such effects? There's a mountain of material out there, but I'm guessing there will be a lot that doesn't come up to scratch. What are the best sources of bar bets you can recommend? Thank you, **J.T** via email

Try any of these beltors! Diamond Jim Tyler has three volumes of 'Bamboozlers'. The genius Simon Lovell has lots to check out, and let's not forget Paul Zenon's fabulous book: Dirty Tricks. You won't need any more than these gems!

TOSSED OUT DECK

This effect has me gripped, similar to magicians who are besotted with ACAAN. The principle and psychology of this effect is so brilliant, that I can't help seeking out all the different versions. I especially love the Wayne Dobson and Mel Mellers versions. Are there any particular ones which you think are worth buying?

Mark Elliot, Manchester



There are some outstanding versions. These instantly spring to mind: John Archer's version on his great DVD Educating Archer, Devin Knight's cool interpretation: Knockout Tossed Out Deck, and Sean Taylor's Anchors Ahoy is brilliant. Killer Prediction by Cody Fisher is a fantastic stand-up effect using paper balls which uses the Tossed Out Deck principle to create an unbelievable mentalism routine.

MENTALISM NEEDED!

Next month I have been booked to do a small corporate event - there will be around fifteen people (socially distanced, of course!) and I have been looking for an easy mentalism effect which I can split up my card routines with. I love tricks which involve envelopes. Any ideas? **Jamie Walker**, London

Hi Jamie, we have long been fans of effects by Astor, and his Jumbo X-Ray Envelope is a classic mentalism effect which is self-working and perfect for those stand-up performances. You can instantly tell which ESP card has been placed in an envelope using a devious and brilliant method. We love it. It's available from all the top dealers.

MATTHEW WRIGHT

Great to see Matt Wright on the last cover of Magicseen. I saw his show in Spain about a year ago and it was the highlight of my holiday. We met him afterwards and he was a lovely guy and was happy to chat and sign autographs.

Lesley Harrison, Birmingham (UK), via email.





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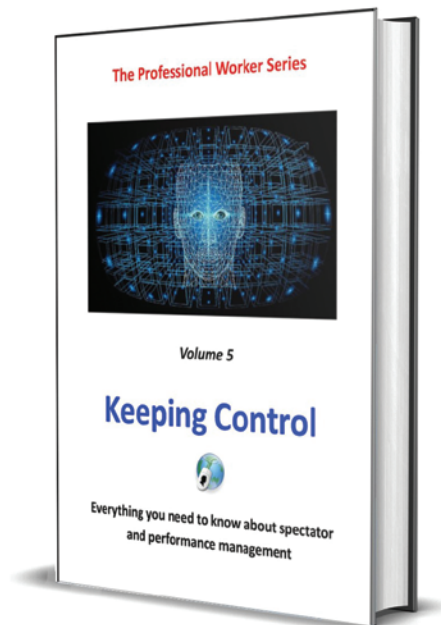
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Volume 5 sets out to discover whether there is one key element that contributes more than any other to making a performer a success. The conclusion is that **CONTROL** is a factor that if properly harnessed can exert a huge influence on the life of any performing magician.

With this in mind I examine the various ways in which control can be exerted to make a positive difference. Here's a breakdown of the contents.

Controlling Nerves – tension and nerves can destroy a show, so I offer a series of practical tips for how you can control those damaging performance jitters.

Controlling Sleights And Moves – you can't expect to perform well if you do not have command of the technical aspects of your tricks and I give advice on practice and rehearsal to help you get up to speed.

Controlling The Show Contents – putting together a running order for a stand up/kids show or deciding which tricks to take along to a close up gig can be optimised to get the right balance and I offer suggestions for ways to do it.

Controlling The Show Logistics – preparing to go out and perform and getting there on time and in the right frame of mind can go wrong, and I suggest strategies to enable you to arrive ready to give of your best.

Controlling Your Children's Show Surroundings – do you know exactly what to look for in terms of a room layout when performing for children and do you know how to change unsuitable arrangements? I explain how.

Controlling Your Adult Show Surroundings – the booker does not necessarily know what will work best in terms of a room set up, so I offer some guidelines for what a stand up act and close upper should be looking for.

Controlling Children At Your Show – if you can't control the youngsters you won't be able to effectively entertain them, so I present a whole range of tactics to keep you in control and thus able to present a top show.

Controlling Adults At Your Show – commercial close up workers have to contend with so many distractions that it pays to know how to get and keep the attention of your spectators, as I explain fully.

This 35 page E-Book is full of practical advice, hints and tips that will help you to take complete control of everything to do with the presentation of your show and this in turn will provide you with strategies and best practice ideas to enable you to be the best you can be every time you work.

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HARRY AND BESS - LOVE & BONDAGE, THE CARD TRICK

GREG
WEBB

Using just three cards, an Ace, a Queen and a Joker, the performer creates a close up version of the classic illusion, Metamorphosis.

COMMENTS:

The original version of this effect was first published in Gregg Webb's ebook, "Lizard Wizard's Diary." (Available at Lybrary.com). This is an updated and beautifully streamlined version of the card transpo.

REQUIRED:

AS (Houdini), QS (Bess), Joker.

SET-UP:

Just a three card packet from top down, AS, QS, Joker. Fig.1.

WORKING:

1. Say, "Every night, Bess used to tie Houdini up and lock him in a box." (Pause) "This wasn't at home, this was on stage. I can show you how Houdini and Bess did their signature trick called "Metamorphosis" using only two cards and this Joker to represent the box."
2. Thumb over two cards when you say "two cards" and then as you square them up, get a left little finger break under them.
3. Do a double turnover and as you do, get a little finger break again while you show the QS and say, "This is Bess." Fig.2. Turn the double down which is easy thanks to the break.
4. Now comes a great Ken Krenzle idea. Thumb over two cards to the right again and with the right hand take the top one and without showing it, openly slide it under the second card. People think you are moving the QS from the top to the second position.
5. As you square up the two cards again, get a left little finger break under them both as before, and then do a double turnover, getting a break once more as they land face up. Fig.3.
6. The AS will show and you say, "This is the Master Magician Houdini", and then turn the double face down again.
7. Deal the top card, which you miscall as Houdini, onto the table. Slide out the Joker with your left hand as you take the supposed QS with your right hand, keeping it face down.
8. Your left hand turns the Joker face up and you set it on the supposed "Houdini" card still on the table. After you miscall the card in your right hand as "Bess," hold it face down above the cards on the table. (Maybe an inch above.) Fig.4.
9. Say, "Then the metamorphosis occurs!" Reveal the card "in hand" to be Houdini, the Ace. (I like to snap the Houdini card face up.) You then remove the Joker and finally show that "Bess is now tied up in the box."





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THE REVIEWS

WE TAKE A LOOK AT **WHAT'S HOT** AND **WHAT'S NOT**



BOLTED

Jared Manley

Available from any Murphy's retailer or dealers contact www.murphysmagic.com
Price: £49.00

One of the most popular plots amongst magicians is the 'object-to-impossible-location' one. Evergreen effects such as signed card to wallet or bank note to Bill Tube immediately come to mind. Bolted is an effect that sits perfectly in this genre as it is a signed card that ends up between two perspex sheets that are fixed together by two substantial bolts that go right through the apparatus.

The idea is the brainchild of Jared Manley who originally released the effect back in 2013. This is

now a re-release of that original, although whether there are any substantial alterations or additions wasn't altogether clear to me.

The prop itself is well made and cleverly constructed. It comes with a plastic holder that is used in some of the handlings to simplify the palm and load of the signed card needed while the plastic plates are hidden away in your jacket pocket. The skill required to perform the load is about the same level that you would expect in order to present the card to wallet, so palming is required, although there are no-palm versions explained as well. The instructions come on an exhaustive 1hr and 47min online video in which every possible aspect and handling variation imaginable is gone through. I liked the attention to detail and finesse offered here, little wrinkles and tips that showed that the prop had been used regularly and was not an idea that had only been conceived 10 minutes previously.

The cleanest handlings, in my opinion, are offered by the palming method, but there were

a number of routines which attempted, with varying success I felt, to make it sleight free. There is nearly always a trade off for doing this, and here it is the somewhat unnatural handling of the deck required and the slightly frightening angle issues which are thrown up. The performing conditions you expect to work in will no doubt make up your mind in which direction to go.

Whichever routine you select, this is not an easy trick to perform well. Although the handlings have been well thought through, I did feel that nearly all of them had moments that looked decidedly suspicious. These moments could be covered by suitable misdirection, but performers lacking experience might struggle to get away with it.

One thing to note is that the signed card that ends up trapped cannot be released and handed back to the spectator. The bolted sheets can be handed over to the spectator to look at as the gimmicking is well disguised and unlikely to be discovered, but that is as far as it goes.

Apparently this situation has led

to a certain amount of discussion as to whether this weakens the overall effect, and in the video introduction Jared himself explains why he doesn't think that this matters if the presentation used is right. You would need to decide whether this inability to return the signed card is a problem for you or not.

I think if you put in the required practice and can become slick with your handling, Bolted might become a favourite. Bear in mind, however, that there is a re-set which you cannot really do in front of spectators, and that if you can't or don't want to palm a card, the no-palm alternatives are going to land you with potentially unacceptable angle issues for commercial performance. **ML**

WHAT'S HOT: well made prop,

thorough video explanation, strong effect if handled well

WHAT'S NOT: the re-set and angle issues make this less useful than the traditional card to wallet and some of the suggested handlings are at times rather unnatural

RATING: 65%



SWINDLE

Steve Cook

Available from www.alakazam.co.uk
Price: £14.99

If you are familiar with Steve Cook's previous releases then you will already know that Swindle is going to be a great effect.

A simple 50/50 choice of either the contents of a black tin or a white tin results in you, the performer, coming out on top every single time - no matter which tin the spectator chooses.

Everything needed is supplied and they are exactly as they appear - normal tins. The tins are not gimmicked in any way, although there is a quick one-time set up needed then you are good to go. At just £14.99 this is a real

bargain. The tins are really nice looking and will take up little pocket space.

The routine, taught by Alakazam's Peter and Harry Nardi, sees the spectator ending up with a simple note which states "You will choose this box!" and the performer ending up with a £20 note.

This is just one presentation. Once you know the devious method this could be changed to suit your own needs/style.

The method itself is super simple and you will be performing this

in no time at all. It's Steve Cook's thinking at its best.

There is more than just a 50/50 chance going on here but no matter which box is chosen the end result is equally as impressive.

Swindle is the perfect opening effect. It's quick, extremely fair and the end result packs a punch! **PS**

WHAT'S HOT: Simple but brilliantly deceptive

WHAT'S NOT: some may see this as a simple 50/50 chance.

RATING: 85%



CHANGING CARDS

Richard Young

Available from:

www.changingcards.com

Price: £25.00 each

It all started some 25 years ago when Bob Swadling, master magic craftsman, put his range of changing cards on the market. The concept was easily described: you show a card, throw it in the air, and when it spins back into your waiting fingers, it has changed – either its face or its back design. For a while in the 90's you couldn't move at conventions for magicians spinning and catching these rubber-hinged cards.

Now comes Richard Young who has revised these fine products. That the basic technology is scarcely changed from the original a quarter of a century ago pays homage to the Swadling methodology. They work beautifully; after the mid-air change they snap back in perfect alignment with no tell-tale movement or give, and they look like a single card.

Having consulted with Bob Swadling, now in his eighties and living in the USA, Young learned how to craft them, and he has proved a good student. They are meticulously, crafted by hand, sitting at his kitchen table surrounded by decks of cards and, likely, a box of prophylactics from which he fashions the hinges.

There is a wide range of versions available; cards that change faces, cards that change backs, multi-change cards (four changes from one card). There is a double blank card version - in case you think he's taking the p**s with these, they allow you to write a series of messages, predictions, or what

have you. So the card might read 'Prediction', whereupon it changes in mid-air to read whatever you previously forced, and then again if you so wish it could change to 'Off by one' or a second prediction, or somesuch.

There are also some excellent effects built around the changing card principle. Harry De Cruz contributes a fine two card monte effect. But perhaps the star of this growing collection is 'Lucky Lady', originally included in the Swadling collection and snapped up by Paul Daniels for use on his TV show. This is a rapid visual sequence with one card in each hand, the 9S and 10S, whereupon in turn they change to the royal flush in Spades. It's a great TV trick, which makes it a shoo-in for social media or Zoom.

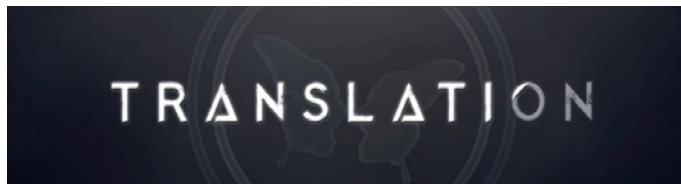
Young will make you a custom set, so as all the nice dealers say, you are limited only by your imagination. The online tutorial is nicely shot and takes the 30 seconds necessary to teach you the handling, but then explores a wide range of ideas using the cards. It will doubtless spark creative applications in your mind.

The single and multiple changing cards come in at £25 each. The Lucky Lady set (which comprises of two gimmicks) is £40, as is the customised set. He also has a start-up offer of any three cards for £60. **BG**

WHAT'S HOT: beautifully hand-made; they work as they should. Wide range of versions available.

WHAT'S NOT: nothing in the prop. Some may feel the price smarts for an effect that's so quick – but they are laboriously hand made.

RATING: 92%



TRANSLATION

SansMinds

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

Price: £33.00

With so much instruction online now, the one trick DVD is feeling like a dated format even to this ageing reviewer. SansMinds have specialised in this type of product and obviously intend to produce as many as the market will stand while DVD players exist and magicians fall for it. Try to resist the temptation!

They also seem intent on producing as many versions of the 'torn corner' transformation as possible into the bargain. The problem is they tend to be rather forgettable either because of their impracticality or the nature of eye candy magic, blink and you miss it! Possibly both. Consequently, there's always room for another one.

I had to stifle the choking as I read the back of the DVD case, "Translation is a work of art for working magicians". SansMinds' disingenuous copy is to be expected, their overpriced mediocre magic has to be talked up, but 'work of art'? Please, just make it work!

A card is chosen, returned to the deck, and wrongly produced on top of the pack. The magician tears the corner off and places it on the back of the card where it visibly changes into the correct corner along with the rest of the card which can both be left with the spectator.

For your thirty odd quid you receive a DVD of 20 minutes instruction, loads of product trailers and a piece of plastic to attach your torn corner gimmicks to when working. I searched hard but couldn't spot the promised work of art. With just

a torn corner and tape, you will have to prepare the gimmicks as you need a new one for each performance so there is a reset. I'm prepared to reset a trick if it's really special but this one isn't worth the trouble.

This could be the simplest gimmick yet with no elasticated thread or rubber bands needed. Its simplicity is both its essence and its drawback because it depends on the elasticity of Scotch tape or some other brand for the transformation to work.

Any adhesive tape I've ever used has a very limited 'springiness' about it and little that can be relied upon like rubber dam, which is where the trick starts to fall apart at the seams. Having made the gimmick and tried the method, both are unreliable and unconvincing.

Jason Lu makes it work for the demo but unless you can find a tape that will spring back with the speed of rubber dam it's never going to be reliable enough. Throw in a reset and it's a non-starter for both professional and enthusiast.

I suspect this was dreamed up in 3 minutes and with no gimmick to supply, rolled out in a matter of days. You will bin it even faster after a few tries. At best it could have been an idea in a book or lecture notes but even then, it doesn't work reliably, if at all. Like Covid 19, avoid this like the plague and stop the virus of one trick DVDs. **PP**

WHAT'S HOT nothing
WHAT'S NOT: you need to make a supply of gimmicks, one for each performance. The method and gimmick are unreliable. A reset is required to repeat. There are angle issues.

RATING: 15%



CHACE

Vinny Sagoo, Neomagic

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

Price: £19.50

Based on Alex Elmsley's Four Card Trick, Vinny Sagoo has developed a packet trick using the classic Chase the Ace plot. The performer shows four blue backed cards, three with blank faces and a regular Ace. The Ace

is inserted face up in the fanned cards and the cards are counted showing first that the Ace has turned face down, then face up before the back is shown to have transformed from a blue to red. Finally all four cards are fanned to reveal that the blanks are now Aces.

This effect is not difficult to perform. The only sleight involved is an Elmsley Count, only four cards are used and there are no flaps, glue, roughing or other fluid to worry about. During the performance there are no real angle problems, it resets easily, takes up very little pocket space and can be performed using a table or in the hands.

In the packet you get the four cards and what I think is an A6 sized instruction booklet complete with colour photographs. You also get a link to the online videos where both the on the table and the in the hands versions are demonstrated

and fully explained.

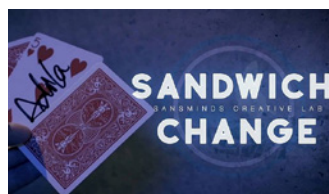
If you like packet tricks then I think that you would enjoy using this. It is a well thought out effect that you could use for small groups in a wide variety of situations including walkabout. The apparently blank faced cards can't be examined so you may need an audience management strategy ready to cope with that.

Just before each revelation the suggested presentation involves asking the audience a question about the state of the cards, none of which of course they get right. It is not an approach that I think endears itself to modern audiences and you might want to reframe the patter. **SB**

WHAT'S HOT: Uses only four cards, is easy to do and has a series of revelations.

WHAT'S NOT: the cards can't be examined and you may need to change the presentation

RATING: 65%



SANDWICH CHANGE

SansMinds

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

Price: £27.30

At first sight I thought that this looked good. An indifferent card, face up between two face down cards and held at the corner by a spectator, visually changes into their chosen card. The change is instant and looks amazing. Unfortunately what you need to do to get to that moment and the gimmick used make this almost unusable.

With the DVD, which contains about twenty five minutes of explanation, you get a pre-made gimmick ready to go. In

performance two cards are shown and laid to one side. A spectator's signed chosen card is lost in the deck and the top card, which is shown not to be the chosen card, is slid between them.

What is not shown in the promotional trailer is the step between this point and the spectator holding a corner. What the performer has to do, holding the three cards fanned at eye level, is to fold a flap over part of the centre card, line up the edges exactly in two places and hide a tell tale index.

These moves are essential but not easy to do unnoticed as they occur immediately before the change and there is no natural point in the sequence to provide misdirection.

SansMinds suggest leaving a Sharpie uncapped on the table and at this point ask a spectator to put the cap back on. Even if you only had one person watching that would be a transparent move to distract attention. Yet in both

the promotional video and in the studio performance, this key step is not shown as the camera cuts away. It is not a good sign if the originators of a product can't show a convincing performance. More fundamentally I found that the gimmick was not reliable. The operation of the flap relies on the elasticity of invisible tape and on several occasions it just did not work. The method was revealed as the flap failed to close and was left hanging in the air. I tried renewing the tape but it made no difference. In later sections SansMinds provide some quite good advice on performance and angles, but this is of no use if the product does not work. **SB**

WHAT'S HOT when it works the change in the spectator's hands looks impressive.

WHAT'S NOT: the gimmick proved unreliable and getting the cards precisely into position for the change unnoticed is difficult.

RATING: 15%



ULTIMATE DECK HOLDER

Eran Blizovsky

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

Price: £35.00

This is a nicely made holder for a deck of cards, with a spring clip to attach to a belt or trouser band. A cased poker deck sits snugly in a vertical position, with 2 cm protruding from the top.

The deck can be removed quickly with one hand, a manoeuvre greatly helped by a generous U shaped cutout which allows a finger to push the deck upwards from below.

The quality of construction appears excellent with the holder and clip covered in black stitched leather, rendering the empty holder unobtrusive.

The leather exerts just the right amount of grip on the pack to hold it steady, even for a full poker deck without its case.

The holder could be useful simply to free up pocket space. It is suggested that it could be used as part of a deck switch, though no instructions are given for this. **CP**

WHAT'S HOT: neat and well constructed utility prop for holding a deck of cards. Frees up pocket space

WHAT'S NOT: nothing really

RATING: 70%



COLORS

Guillaume Botta

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

Price: £24.50

This is minimalist, and then some. Not for this single-minded Frenchman the smart packaging that has come to be the container of choice for modern effects to nestle within. This comes in a cheap plastic baggie with a tiny sticker giving you the link to the film. It doesn't even trumpet the name of the effect, let alone its marketeers.

You get the cards, and they are not produced in any standard make of cards that I've ever seen. These are sassy, presumably designed especially for this routine. The back designs are really cool, and the faces look

like something Card-Shark would produce.

You may have realised that magic has fallen to the looping ways that beset fashion, music and art. In this case, the seventies return with a recent outpouring of The Packet Trick. Once ubiquitous, they then became rather frowned upon by the Dan and Dave generation, with their fancy juggle moves and card acrobatics and – damn them – their youth and optimism, only to languish in the magic wilderness. But the past year or three have seen the return of the packet effect, with its trademark of lots of changes taking place to just four cards.

This lies firmly in that fine tradition. It's a highly visual routine with seven (count 'em!) magic effects along the way, culminating with a kicker of a

finish. You start with four double-blank cards and one by one they print back designs. Then cards are erased back to blank, turn over, then back, before the four Aces appear. To finish, you are left with a single blank card, on the face of which is a madcap collection of Aces and suit indexes. In effect the four Aces have all collected upon the one card.

Refreshingly there is no sticky stuff, R&S or strange faked cards. It's just a packet of specially-printed cards and a succession of moves. This means there's a lot of procedure in this to learn.

In keeping with so many of this genre, this packet trick (dread phrase!) is a fast-moving procession of false counts, turnovers and acquitments that are pretty clean, insofar as any succession of Elmsley-type counts can be said to be clean. Although English is not his first language he explains it all slowly and clearly, teaching the whole thing well.

The sleights required are by no means knuckle-busting, the main challenge facing you is to remember the sequence of moves as if you get one out of place, the whole construction

topples like a juggler tripping over. The finish is gutsy, to say the least, but I certainly didn't catch it first time round on the presentation segment of the film.

If you like packet tricks, this is a good one. There's not much more to say about it than that. **BG**

WHAT'S HOT The sequence of effects is pleasing to the eye, and brings a succession of surprises. The cards are lovely. That finish is so satisfying.

WHAT'S NOT: It's another packet trick, for goodness sake. How many more manifestations of four cards changing in various ways can there be? One or two of the moves are a mite cozy - you have to give in to Magicians' Logic in some cases to make sense of the moves - but that's inherent in The Great Packet Trick. Erm, but isn't it slightly costly for what it is?

RATING: 60%



BEND

Menny Lindenfeld

Available from www.store.theory11.com

Price: Approx £19.00 (\$24.95)

If you've been looking to add a metal bending routine to your repertoire then look no further. 'Bend' by Menny Lindenfeld offers you an introductory course into the art of metal bending. This is the perfect crash course to get you started.

The online tutorial runs to over an hour of in-depth instruction. In no time at all you will be apparently bending spoons and forks at will.

Menny is a great teacher and explains everything precisely and in great detail. Everything is very easy to follow and understand. Multiple subtleties and handlings are offered. These small details are what make this routine look as if you are really bending the spoon with your mind.

The main routine taught is broken down into sections so you can do as much or as little of the routine as you see fit or have time for. Each phase is strong enough on its own or coupled with any of the other phases.

The way the routine is structured allows you to apply the relevant bends directly in front of the spectator who can also examine the spoon after each phase.

Just be aware that if you choose to perform this routine impromptu, with borrowed spoons, that some are tougher than others to bend. Plus if you use your own spoons you can leave the final bent spoon as a souvenir.

With just a couple of spoons (no gimmicks) in your back pocket

you will have a powerful routine that will leave a lasting impression on your spectators.

I've only dabbled with metal bending before seeing this download but having seen how easy this routine is and the reactions it generates I will be putting in the time to learn this.

If you are interested in metal bending then this is a great place to start your journey. **PS**

WHAT'S HOT: Easy to follow instructions. Great routine

WHAT'S NOT: nothing really

RATING: 85%

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

'Your art is wonderful, you're incredibly talented and your portrait of me is stunning.' - **David Berglas.**

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



'The Unbreakable Bond'

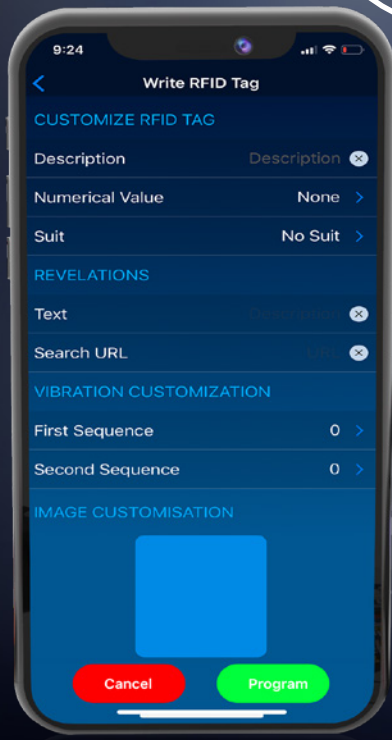
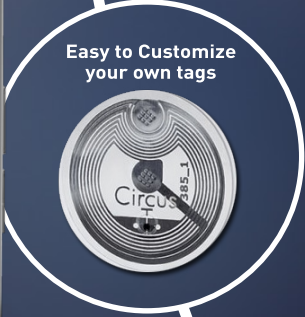
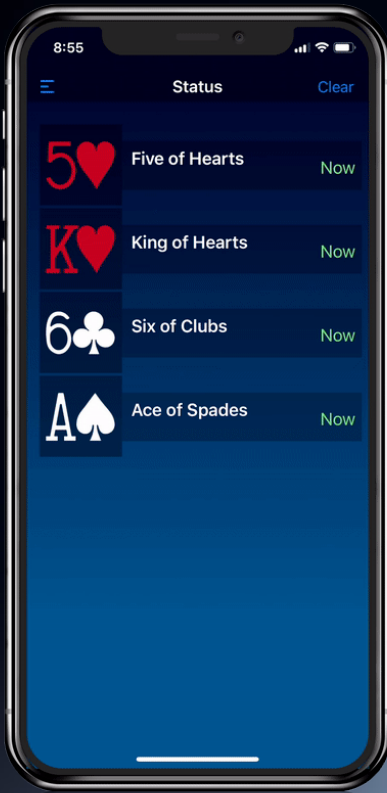
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THE SHOUTOUTS

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



CARD-SHARK...

Good News For Those Who Missed Out on our "Amore Special" because we Sold Out!!

We had such a Great Response from our Newsletter; We just received another shipment of "Cupid-Jokers" from US Playing Card Company to fulfil additional orders. So if you

were unable to order your set due to limited quantities, now is the time to get yours! Love is in the Air!!! We are in the middle of the Wedding Season after several months of delays due to Covid-19.

We are not sure how the situation is with you, as some countries are more lax than others, based on the actual risk level. Let's hope that the worldwide efforts of scientists will soon result in faster Covid tests and better treatments.

Otherwise, we fear further impacts on the entertainment industry.

We are focusing on a single effect "Cupit" by Pit Hartling. We realised that another effect of ours could turn into a romantic effect by using two of the Cupid-Jokers: The One Card Collector - Cupid Edition.

Well, to round it up: you will receive 15 Souvenir Cupid Jokers on top.

Just go to www.card-shark.de/ads/LOVE and watch our newsletter video.

This offer ends at midnight German time on Monday, the 14th of September 2020. Or earlier, if we sell-out of the Cupid-Jokers again. Let's see what happens first. www.card-shark.de

COBRAMAGIC

Welcome to a new era and I don't mean Covid-19, the era of the brand-new Super Chip Full Set by Cobra Magic! We at Cobra Magic have over a decade long of experience in creating electronic products for magicians, our bestselling Mentalism Chair has been praised by the biggest and greatest in the world such as Lior Suchard, Brett Barry, Lior Manor and performed by BGT star Marc Spelmann.

Why are we telling you this? Oh right, because of The Super Chip Full Set, our brand-new product that may even surpass the success of the PK chair.

It comes as a set of three different coloured poker chips, they look and feel real, and give you a ton of information. You could know who took which chip, which hand it is in and whether it is heads or tails, and all from 30 feet away!

30 feet is quite a safe distance to keep from your volunteer especially during these pandemic times which is the best solution for social distancing in your live shows. You never need to come close

to your participants and you instantly know everything you need to know.

The Super Chip Full Set comes with 12 full original routines. So in a time of uncertainty where people are scared to come closer, make them feel comfortable and keep your distance while fooling their pants off.

The readers of this fine magazine receive an exclusive 20% discount on The Super Chip Full Set! Use this coupon code magicseen2020

Buy yours today from www.cobramagic.com

to your own style. If you work with children, Rick's eBooks are a must-have. Go to www.missionmagic.co.uk and search for 'Lenski'.

CARLDEROME

Covid-19 is still the talking point all over the world, but its nice to see that things are now starting to get better, and some of us are back getting those much needed gigs again. Now we are starting to get back to performing, this is to let you all know that during the lockdown I have been making up a brand new batch of my special liquid HEAT. It's an effect that is

suitable for all kinds of magic situations, such as bar magic, walkabout and even on stage.

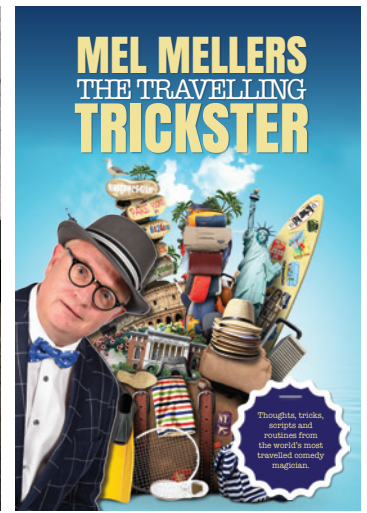
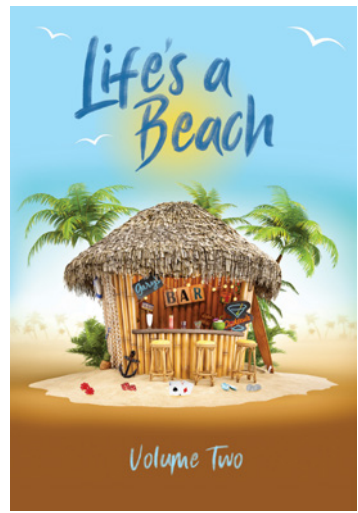
Heat is used by top magicians all over the world and is back in stock again ready to be sent out by first class post worldwide. The cost is still at the same price, only £28.00 including worldwide delivery.

One bottle will last hundreds of performances, and is a REPUTATION MAKER. To see HEAT performed live by myself, two times by DYNAMO, and by Lou Dobon, David Berglas and Marc Spelmann as X on BGT, please visit www.cdrmagic.com/heat.

MISSION MAGIC

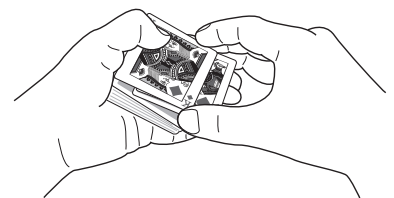
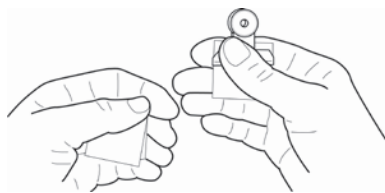
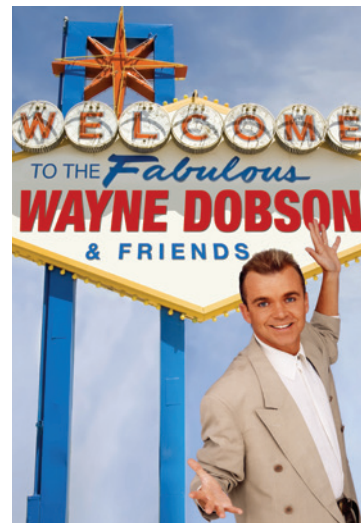
Rick is giving it all away! Mission Magic's very good friend Rick Lenski is making ALL of his scripted magic routines available for FREE. That's a lifetime of work. You can now freely download eight of Rick's eBooks. That's an astonishing 73 tried and tested gospel magic routines, using rope, coins, dealers' props, pocket tricks and everyday objects. Even if gospel magic isn't your thing, you'll still find original material and inspiring routines you can adapt

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SEBASTIAN MIDTVAAAGE TERRIFIC IN TEXAS!

Now and again we get tipped off about a terrific magician who has somehow evaded our radar. Sebastian Midtvaage is one such performer. A brilliant sleight of hand performer with a style you can't ignore, we managed to throw a few quick questions in his general direction!

Tell us a bit about yourself, where you're from, family...

I was born in Oslo, Norway. My family moved to the States when I was 3 years old. I have an older brother and a little sister I adore. My mom was always my biggest supporter growing up - in life and in magic. I now live in Texas with my amazing wife and our two cats.

I SPECIALISE IN SLEIGHT OF HAND MAGIC. I ENJOY MATERIAL THAT CAN BE DONE WITH A BORROWED DECK, MONEY, RUBBER BANDS, AND MENTAL MAGIC.

How did you get into magic?

In 2nd grade, I was completely fooled by the key card principle. I learned how to perform it and later showed it to my extended family at a family poker night. Their reactions were explosive - "How did you do that?!" I was hooked. As I started learning more, I used it to help connect with the people in my life (and there were a lot; our family moved quite a bit).

What sort of stuff do you perform?

I specialise in sleight of hand magic. I enjoy material that can be done with a borrowed deck, money, rubber bands, and mental magic. My favourite material uses a mnemonic stack. While I sometimes use gimmicks, I prefer effects that can be done impromptu (or at least seemingly impromptu).

Which magicians have influenced you the most?

Kostya Kimlat, Asi Wind, Juan Tamariz and Michael Ammar.

How would you describe your style?

"A combination of casual Fridays and a slap in the face." - Erik Casey (I'll take his word for it.)

What makes you different?

What sets me apart is my origin story. I began performing professionally as a part of See Magic Live when I was 14. This early push into the professional scene gave me unique experience that is the biggest benefit to my magic today.

What sort of shows do you perform?

The majority of performances I do are close up strolling appearances at restaurants and private events. More recently I have performed parlour style magic at the Orlando Improv and in dinner shows at Christner's Prime Steak & Lobster in Central Florida.

What have you been up to during Covid19?

My wife and I moved from Central Florida to a small town in Texas at the beginning of April, and since then, I've been developing ways to generate income working from home. As someone who is both immunocompromised and not interested in performing virtual shows, this performance break has given me the opportunity to explore new paths in life and magic.

Tell us about a favourite release of yours...

My favourite release is my book *Shaken Not Stirred*, which is something I've put almost a decade of work into. It covers my thoughts and ideas on using the shake change, as well as routines from my strolling and parlour repertoire.





What annoys you most about the magic world?

Fedoras.

If you could be any other magician, who would you be and why?

Erik Casey. He's ridiculous in all the right ways.

Who are your current fav magicians?

Derek Delgaudio, Juan Tamariz, and Asi Wind.

Last effect you bought?

The last effect that I bought was the Venom Cube by Henry Harrius.

What are you working on at the moment?

I'm working on a magical bartending show. It's a combination of mankind's second oldest profession with mankind's second oldest hobby; a show that blends the history of magic and the history of cocktails for a unique experience that intoxicates and amazes.

What do you get up to when not doing magic?

As you could probably from the answer above, I have a passion for mixology. I like crafting unique cocktails and exploring different approaches to bringing certain flavours out.

What has been the highlight of your career so far?

The highlight of my career so far came in late 2018, when I

...I HAVE A PASSION FOR MIXOLOGY. I LIKE CRAFTING UNIQUE COCKTAILS AND EXPLORING DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO BRINGING CERTAIN FLAVOURS OUT.

stood onstage at the Wizardz Magic Theatre in Kissimmee, Florida for my first performance after completing treatment for brain cancer. That in itself makes this particular performance incredibly significant to me. But what truly makes it the highlight of my career is the fact that I performed my very first show on that same stage back in 2010. That Wizardz audience became my Wizardz family. It was surreal in all the best ways to make my comeback there that night in 2018.

<https://amy-kimlat.squarespace.com/magicians/orlando-magician-sebastian-midtvaaage>

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