THE MAGAZINE FOR MAGICIANS AND MENTALISTS

MAGIC SEEN Lite

ISSUE 21



MARVIN BERGLAS

TIME TO CELEBRATE

MAGICSEEN: ALMOST AS POPULAR AS VLADIMIR PUTIN...

Own a piece of magic history



'Dai Vernon: The Professor' by Jay Fortune
Official Limited Edition Fine Art Print 20 x 20"

Source image and subject used with permission of
the Estate of Ross Bertram and the Estate of Dai Vernon

Limited to 100 with 10 Artist Proofs. Hand-signed & Numbered by the Artist
(Frame for illustrative purposes only)

Painting the Professor's Portrait

by Jay Fortune

I am excited and honoured to announce to readers of MagicSeen a brand-new Official Limited Edition Print which will be shipped to collectors this September.

- Official Limited Edition Print - Own a piece of magic history -

Working with the Estates of Ross Bertram and Dai Vernon, this portrait has taken 3 months to create across many, many sessions. The finished work is 24x24" and is currently being professionally captured before an expert Fine Art publisher will produce 10 Artist Proofs. From these, I will carefully select the perfect finished print which will then be produced as a Limited Edition run of 100.



Each print will be on the finest archival quality Fine Art grade paper at a finished size of 20x20". I'll then hand-sign and number each work. With a Certificate of Authenticity accompanying every print, the finished works will be shipped worldwide early September.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to own a piece of magic history! Please register your interest by email to mail@jfortune.co.uk. Once the Proofs have been produced and the Limited Editions are ready, I will notify you with costs and availability on a first come, first served basis.

Until now, I have released mini-prints of some of my magician paintings and it would be hard to imagine a greater magician than Dai Vernon as the subject for my first Official full-size print.

- Destined to become a collector's item -

Above, is a work-in-progress photograph as the painting began to take shape. The first washes are on and the background begins to be defined. Left, is a later work-in-progress photograph, with tone and detail beginning to give form and movement to the piece. The foreshortening on Vernon's arm, creases of the hand and shading of facial features all begin to give the painting energy and definition. The finished work (opposite page) has my 'signature' vertical slashes and is a faithful artistic expression of the source image, famous among magicians.



- working with the Estates of Ross Bertram and Dai Vernon magicians and collectors of magic will enjoy owning one of these stunning prints -

I am most grateful to the kindness and support from the Estates of Ross Bertram and Dai Vernon and hope that magicians and collectors of magic will enjoy owning one of these stunning prints when they are available this coming September.

A percentage from all sales will be donated to the Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal. As an artist with works in prestigious galleries and worldwide collectors, I cannot wait to see these finished works in magicians homes and offices across the globe. For more info, please email mail@jfortune.co.uk. Thank you.

Destined to become a collector's item,
only 100 will ever be produced with 10 Artist Proofs.

To register your interest in acquiring, please email mail@jfortune.co.uk
Official Release - September 2022.

WELCOME TO ISSUE #21...

Our latest taster edition of Magicseen, which is based on the contents published in the full September 2022 issue, features the complete interview with cover star Marvin Berglas, the man whose legendary business, Marvin's Magic, has been the starting point for many magicians' interest in our art. Learn more about the business and the man behind it here.

One occasional article that we enjoy running is called A Quick Dip Into... in which we extract a selection of meaningful and interesting quotes from an important book. This time we delve into Lawrence Hass's tribute to Eugene Burger called Final Secrets and present 16 thought provoking comments from the late, great master.

Want to learn a neat card effect? Good. You can try Adam Hudson's routine On The Cards extracted from the Masterclass section.

What else does Lite issue 21 offer you? Well, Ian Adair provides a host of personal observations about everyone's favourite Tommy Cooper; if advice is your thing Pro Tips #2 discusses practical considerations when selecting cases for your act; and finally, we have a number of product reviews to let you know what's hot, and possibly what's not!

We hope you find this free download interesting, and if you would like to get the full monte, don't forget that you can receive the complete version of each bi-monthly edition by taking out a 6 month, 1 year or 2 year sub in either printed or download format by going to www.magicseen.com.

Mark Leveridge

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I deal with many companies on a daily basis but I have to say Mission Magic has to be the most charming and efficient. The little things like a free trick, the sweets and the personal handwritten message on the invoice.

I love your products, I love your message and I admire what you stand for. In a cynical world it's refreshing to see a company like Mission Magic flourish. May I take this opportunity to wish you every success in the future, you certainly have a lifetime customer in me.

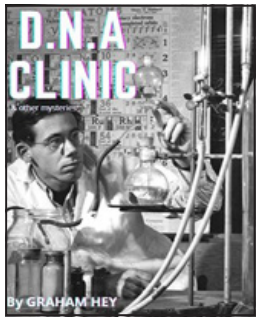
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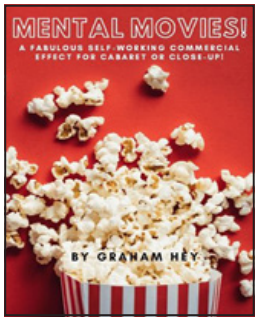
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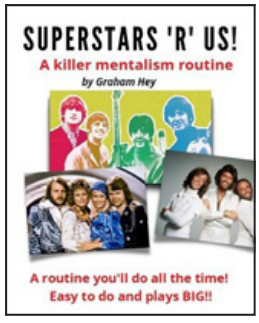
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MARVIN'S MAGIC

THE WORLD'S MOST ICONIC MAGIC BRAND

We've all heard of Marvin's Magic – the company who produces the world's most popular magic sets – but what do we really know about the man behind it? Magicseen chats to the founder and brilliant performer, Marvin Berglas.

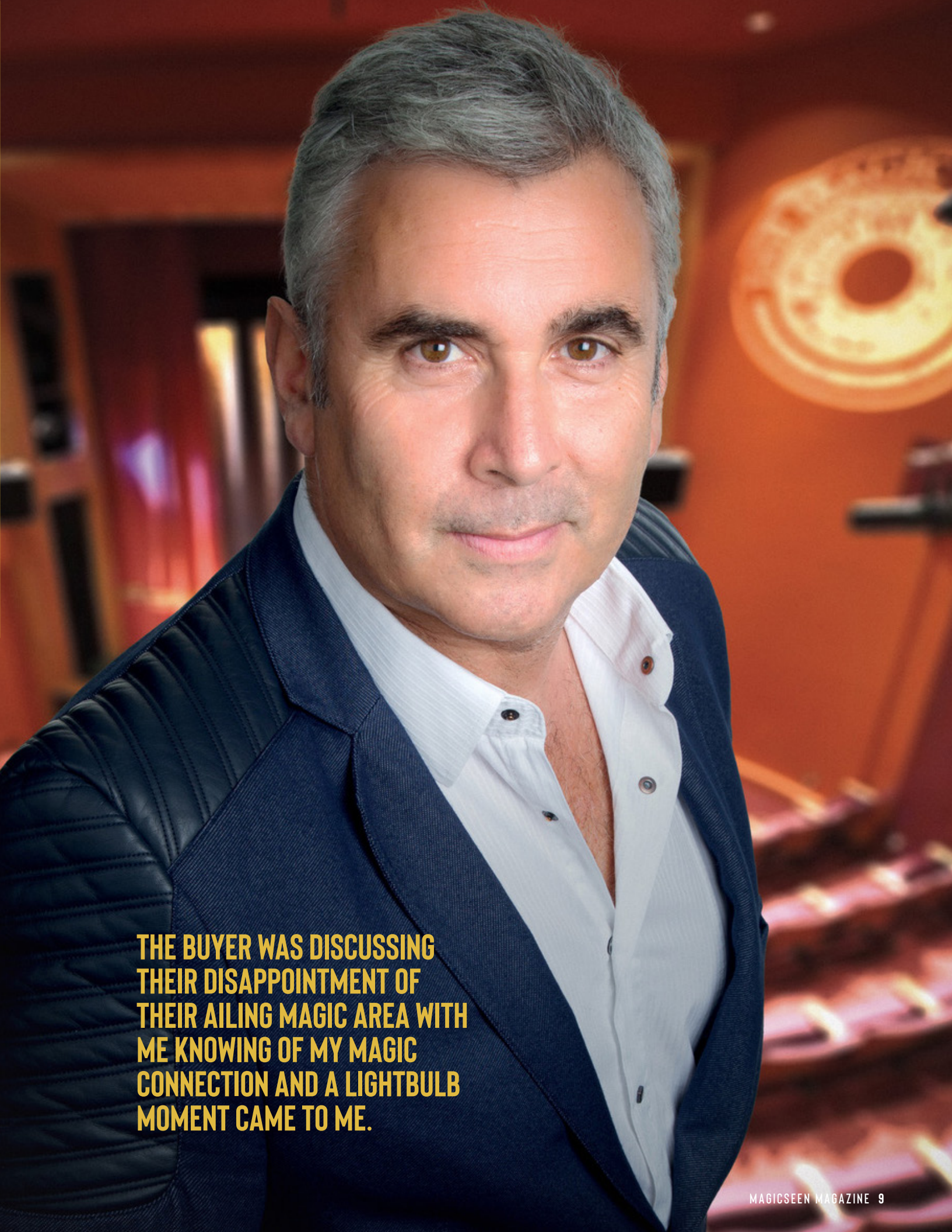
In 1993 Marvin combined his two passions of magic and football and was approached by London's Arsenal FC. "I became the first resident magician in the Premier League. When hospitality at football started, I provided pre-match magical entertainment for the VIPs and sponsors on match days at Highbury. As it grew I headed a team at The Emirates and then as my reputation grew, I was also doing around 150 gigs a year plus running Marvin's Magic. These included corporate, celebrity and VIP events around the world.

So how did Marvin's actually get off the ground? "Well, Marvin's Magic started with a casual conversation with the then head buyer of Hamleys," says Marvin. "From 1979 I was already established as a top demonstrator and supplier of the popular Magic Drawing Board. Hamleys historically had been famous for magic but in the early eighties they had lost their way and were selling some cheap magic products.

"The buyer was discussing their disappointment of their ailing magic area with me knowing of my magic connection and a lightbulb moment came to me. I pledged to come up with something exciting and had earned the opportunity to have a few months to present something better. In October 1987 Marvin's Magic was launched with well-presented and packaged tricks that could be demonstrated and sold by real magicians. It took off from day one and the rest is history!"

A pivotal moment was when Boots approached Marvins to sell their magic cards in their men's gift area for Christmas. Marvin tells me that it was a real eye-opener to sell in one order as many as they had sold all year through demonstration. "It showed with our brand we could sell in many outlets not just demonstration stores," continues Marvin. "Originally we would source components from throughout the world and collate them in the UK. As the company grew, we were able to design and manufacture to our exact specifications, and get complete products direct from the Far East.

"There is constant change and development in the marketplace. Of course, digital is important and we have included lots of extra technology with our Marvin's Magic App including video instructions, bonus tricks as well as augmented reality.



THE BUYER WAS DISCUSSING THEIR DISAPPOINTMENT OF THEIR AILING MAGIC AREA WITH ME KNOWING OF MY MAGIC CONNECTION AND A LIGHTBULB MOMENT CAME TO ME.



THE BIGGEST LESSONS ARE ONLY TO SURROUND YOURSELF WITH A TALENTED PASSIONATE TEAM. LOYALTY IS CREATED WHEN YOUR TEAM ARE VALUED, EMPOWERED, REWARDED AND LOVE WHAT THEY ARE DOING.



"Forty years ago magic was sparkly props and dragon motifs - twenty years ago street magic was the new thing. Today access to information is so much easier for consumers - so tricks, sets and effects must be more relevant than ever."

We get on to the subject of marketing, and I ask about which campaigns have been the most successful for Marvin's Magic? He says instantly spring to mind: "Firstly breaking all records for TV shopping with QVC in the US and going on to create an award-winning direct response TV commercial campaign. Secondly, Argos choosing Marvin's Magic for their TV Xmas advert. And thirdly winning the global Costco business."

I ask Marvin what is the most important lesson he's learned in making his business so successful? Says Marvin, "The biggest lessons are only to surround yourself with a talented passionate team. Loyalty is created when your team are valued, empowered, rewarded and love what they are doing."

Chatting to Marvin at this year's Blackpool Magic Convention, we always find him to be an inspiring figure. Always professional, obviously always immaculately dressed and always happy to stop and chat with magic fans with the utmost courtesy. He's been incredibly successful throughout his career, yet he's not one to big himself up. I ask him if he's got any more business ambitions left? "Of course …. Always!" he laughs. "It's only right that one day a magic company should float!"

In past decades, many professional performers have been switched on to magic by the TV stars of the day such as Wayne Dobson, David Blaine, Paul Daniels and more recently, Dynamo. But the influence of Marvin's Magic these days is said by many to be the most responsible for encouraging so many magicians over the years as their sets are readily available in so many stores and online. "Of course, the fictional wizard Harry Potter no doubt has also been a factor," adds Marvin.

Marvin tells me that he is especially drawn to "top close-up sleight of hand magic - even better if combined with mind blowing mentalism and a dash of comedy!" And when it comes to classic magic books, he instantly goes to 'The Mind and Magic of David Berglas'. Says Marvin, "Not only does it inspire you to come up with original presentations and prepare every detail - if you read between the lines you gain even further insights. But also, my dad finishes with a story about me which I will forever treasure!" He reveals that his dad's unique creativity and motto "nothing is impossible" has helped shape his thinking throughout his career, "…so I will always be grateful."

As we find ourselves more than half-way through 2022, Marvin's Magic is currently available in over 60 countries around the world including USA, India, Australia, Europe and the Middle East – with the US being their biggest market. I ask him where he sees Marvin's Magic in ten year's time? "More of the same hopefully. Our team thrive on continual development and innovation. Our brand is established, trusted and well-known and so we always look forward.

"I'm most proud of our legacy of introducing literally millions of hobbyists into magic. It's also great that so many over the years went on to become part of our talented in store demo teams in London and New York and some are now amongst the elite professionals in magic and acknowledge and cite their time with us as instrumental to their success."

It's been a real pleasure spending a bit of time with Marvin, learning more about his own performing, as well as his business. Marvin's Magic is set to be around for many years to come and their success is richly deserved.

TO CELEBRATE 35 YEARS OF MARVIN'S MAGIC,

HERE ARE **35 THINGS** YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT MARVIN AND HIS COMPANY!



1 A handful of high profile Marvin's Magic celebrity customers over the years include: Michael Jackson, Margaret Thatcher, Kanye West, Daniel Craig and Mick Jagger.

2 Did You know? Marvin's TV debut was on his then favourite children's TV show aged 5 assisting his dad David.

3 Did You Know? Marvin and Marvin's Magic appeared on a giant billboard in New York's Times Square twice an hour, 24 hours per day for 7 years!

4 In-store Marvin's Magic run the magic shops within Hamleys of Regent Street, Harrods, FAO Schwarz New York and FAO Schwarz Milan.

5 Famous faces Marvin has personally performed for include Michael Jackson, Simon Cowell, Hugh Grant, Tom Cruise and Margaret Thatcher.

6 A few music artistes Marvin has performed for i) The Spice Girls ii) Busted iii) Heatwave iv) Cheryl Cole v) Shalamar

7 Unusual places Marvin has appeared include the Royal Box at Wembley and Twickenham, private jets in Brazil and Russia, private yachts around Europe, the Directors' Box and Diamond Club at Arsenal FC, inside Tower Bridge, House of Lords and St James Palace.

8 Did You Know? Advertisements featuring Marvin's Magic include Argos Xmas TV advert, Royal Mail billboards, Yazoo flavoured milk in cinemas and at bus stops!

9 Front page, back page centre spreads! Marvin's Magic and Marvin have featured on the back page Sunday Sport, front page of the Evening Standard, centre spread of the Sunday Times magazine, front page of the Daily Mail and the front cover of The Beano.



10 TV shopping: Marvin's Magic have featured on their own programmes within TV QVC channels in the UK, US, Canada, Germany and Belgium.

11 Marvin's Magic is available in over 64 international territories including USA, Australia, India and The Middle East.

12 Marvin's Magic have collaborated with the following magicians: Michael Ammar, Dave Williamson, Kevin James, Yigal Misaka and Charlie Frye.

13 A selection of the Awards bestowed on Marvin and Marvin's Magic include: Outstanding Service Award from the British Toy & Hobby Association, The Magic Circle's Maskelene Award for Services to British Magic, The British Magical Society's Award for Outstanding Service, Gold Medal for Electronic Toy of the Year and Gold Medal for Children's Gift of the Year.

14 Marvin's favourite ever sets: Marvin's iMagic, Marvin's Executive Magic Collection, Marvin's Secret Box of Tricks, Freaky Body Illusions and Marvin's Deluxe Box of Tricks.

15 Famous Family connections: Marvin's father is David Berglas - legendary magician. Marvin's mother is Ruth - actress trained at RADA. Marvin's cousin is 'Zapiro'- the foremost political cartoonist in South Africa. Marvin's 2nd cousin is Jill Firminovsky iconic rock photographer. Marvin's niece is Lauren - upcoming music producer - Lollypop beats.

16 Sports personalities Marvin has performed for at their weddings or special private events include: Golfer Ian Poulter, rugby player Ugo Monye, footballer and manager Frank Lampard, and Arsenal Managers Mikkel Arteta & Arsene Wenger and The Barbarians rugby squads.



17 Just a few of the past Marvin's Magic demonstrators who have made a name in our industry and showbiz: Marc Paul, Andy Nyman, Pete Wardell, ventriloquist Paul Zerdin, actor Tom Hollander, Megan Swann - President of The Magic Circle and TV presenter Stephen Mulhern .

18 Did You Know? Marvin's Magic have appeared on board planes, branded taxis and even rickshaws.

19 Did You Know? Marvin regularly performs magic during radio interviews.

20 Did You Know? Marvin has performed to political leaders and heads of states including: Tony Blair, Gordon Brown, Margaret Thatcher, Hosni Mubarak - former President of Egypt and HRH Princess Anne.

21 Marvin has lectured at FISM, EMC, The Magic Circle, Institute of Directors and the University of London.

22 Did You Know? Marvin's Magic has designed co-branded sets with Disney, M&S, Rubik, Ryan's World and British Airways.

23 Did You Know? Marvin's Magic has featured on high profile on-pack promotions with 12 cereal packs in the US, Asda Eggs, Arby's US restaurant chain, National Geographic and KFC.

24 Marvin's favourite magicians: David Berglas (obviously), David Williamson, Jeff Hobson, David Stone and Kevin James.

25 Magic magazine cover stories include: Magicseen Magazine, The Magic Circular, Secrets, Vanish and Genii.

26 Advice from legendary dad David Berglas to Marvin: "Learn a few tricks really well rather than lots badly!"

27 Did You Know? Marvin's Magic featured in movies Eyes Wide Shut, Don't Say a Word and Staggered.

28 Did You Know? Marvin was the first resident magician in the Premier League at Arsenal FC.

29 Marvin also loves playing and watching football and has performed to numerous famous football heroes including George Best, Dennis Bergkamp, Geoff Hurst, Ruud Gullit and Thierry Henry.

30 Marvin turned out regularly over 20 years for The Showbiz XI and The Arsenal ex-professional and celebrity XI football teams.

31 Marvin has played football alongside or against legends such as George Best, Jimmy Greaves, Glenn Hoddle, Frank McLintock and Liam Brady.

32 Marvin has been to several World Cups and has performed to England Football Managers: Bobby Robson, Terry Venables, Glenn Hoddle, Fabio Capello and Roy Hodgson.

33 Marvin is a proud member of The Inner Magic Circle with Gold Star and Past Vice-President.

34 Most popular Marvin's Magic products ever by sales units: Marvin's Ultimate 365 set, Marvin's Amazing Magic Made Easy set, Marvin's Magic Drawing Board, Dynamic Coins and Lights From Anywhere.

35 Marvin's career advice is: "Work hard, play hard and be passionate about everything you do. Your reliability and reputation are paramount."



Joshua Jay's Talk About Tricks was THE spot to publish magic in its day where I was honored to be included and published next to some of our industry's giants.

DANIEL GARCIA

Talk About Tricks is a goldmine of priceless information to be treasured for generations to come.

HARAPAN ONG

For almost a decade Josh gathered hundreds and hundreds of wonderful creations. Every month had something incredible to learn and practice–I looked forward to it every month, and now I'm excited that all this great material will be in one place.

PAUL VIGIL

An astounding collection of magic. This was where I first published 'Time is Money,' and it's where a lot of people first heard from me. You'll be studying this set for years.

ASI WIND

Joshua Jay made Talk About Tricks a place for new talent and cutting-edge ideas. It was one of the first places I published my magic. Josh has dedicated his life to help advance magic and this set is filled with some great ideas.

CALEN MORELLI

Over the years, I've lost count of the number of well-known magicians who have told me that for them it all started by being in the pages of "Talk About Tricks!" That's quite a legacy.

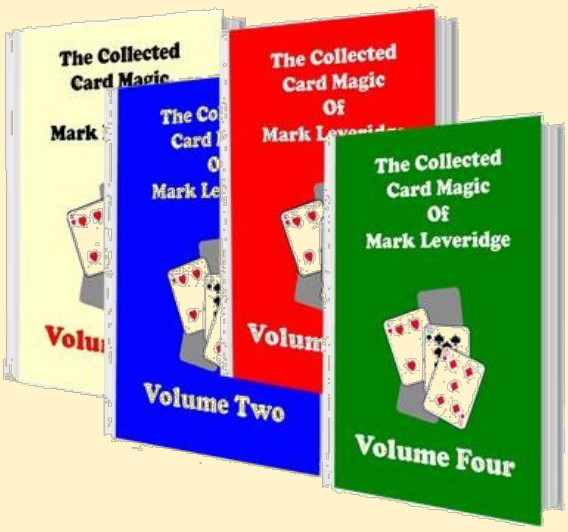
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ON THE CARDS

ADAM HUDSON

EFFECT

A packet of cards is introduced and a spectator is asked to cut a chunk of cards from the top. The cut away cards are turned face-up and placed back onto the rest of the deck.

The performer mentions that this action has created a place in the packet, where those cards that are facing up, meet with those that are facing down. The performer spreads the cards from hand to hand until the first face-down card is reached, setting that card onto the table. The remaining cards are reassembled so that all are facing in the same direction.

The tabled card is looked at by the spectator, placed back onto the pack and then cut into the centre.

The spectator is asked to focus on the pack, imagining one card reversing itself. The packet is ribbon spread across the table, with one card being seen to be face-up in the spread. The spectator announces that the one indifferent card is not the card they have been focusing on. The performer corrects their presumption, mentioning that 'It is in fact an indicator card'.

The value of the face-up card is noted, with a number of cards matching its value being counted along the spread to arrive at another. The newly arrived on card is pushed forward, turned over and indeed proves to be the spectator's selection. The performer then states the following...

"It was always on the cards that you would chose that very one. Well, when I say on the cards, I mean one particular card. I mean on the one card that is face-up."

The face-up indicator card is pulled completely from the spread, and the name of the selection is found written on its face.

COMMENTS

The card is forced with a lesser known force that I first encountered in Mark Wilson's Complete Course in Magic. Until sitting down and thinking it through, I did presume as the book states, that a double backed card would be required for its operation, but it's not the case.

SET-UP

Remove the 3H from the pack and with a Sharpie draw the card symbol as shown in Fig.1.

Now remove the AH from the deck along with two indifferent cards and set up the top of the deck as follows.

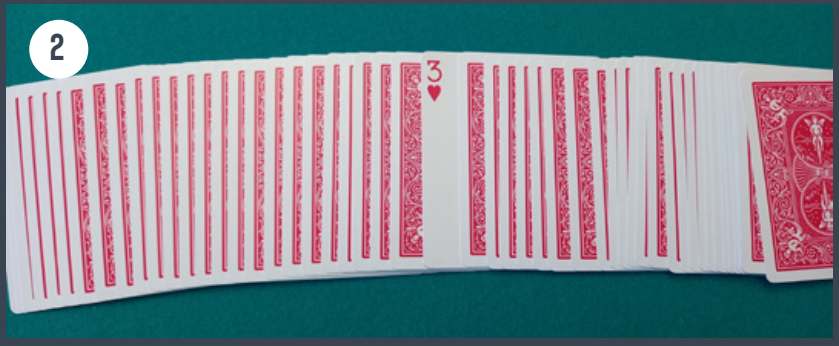
Place the AH face-up on the face-down deck. Next, place the two indifferent cards face up onto the AH and finally place the prepared 3H face down on top.

WORKING

You introduce the pack of cards and invite a spectator to lift a block of cards from the top, turn it face-up and then place it back on the deck once more. The spectator completes this task and you state.

"What this creates is a point in the pack, where face-up cards meet with face-down cards. We will spread through the deck until the first face-down card is reached,





indicating the exact point that you cut to. I would like you to secretly look at the first face-down card."

Spread through the cards one at a time until the first face-down card is reached, offering it for the spectator to take. The face-up section of the pack is turned back over and placed onto the table, with the face-down section of the pack being placed on top.

The spectator takes the card, looks at it (it will be the AH) and then places it back on top of the pack. The spectator is invited to cut the deck and then complete the cut by putting the bottom half on top.

Attention is concentrated on the pack and the spectator is asked to imagine one card turning face-up. After a short time, ribbon spread the cards and one card will be seen face-up. Fig.2.

The spectator will inform you that the one face-up card is not their selection. However, you continue to explain that this face-up card is an indicator card, with its value of three pointing to the spectator's selection. Three cards are counted to the right of the spread, with the card at this new position being pushed forward. Fig.3.



The card arrived at is turned over by the spectator, and is seen to be their selected AH. You then say…

"It was always on the cards that you would chose that very one. Well, when I say on the cards, I mean one particular card. I mean on the one card that is face-up."

The face-up indicator card is pulled completely from the spread, with the name of the selection being found written on its face, as prepared previously.

AFTERTHOUGHTS

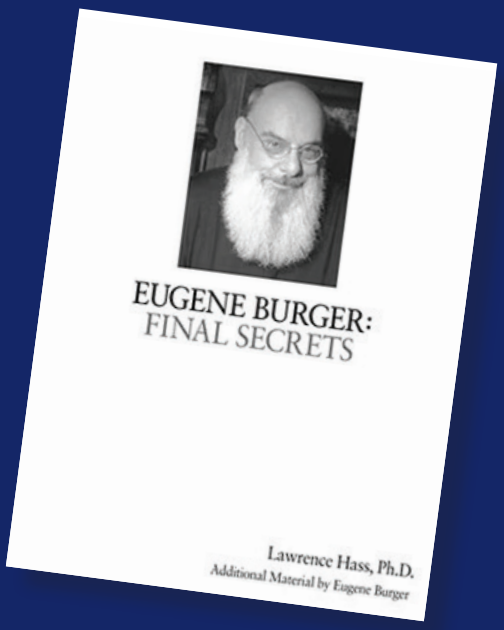
When spreading the cards from hand-to-hand, arriving at the position where face-up cards meet with those face-down, it is important that a little care be taken to only move one card at a time. This action will eliminate any possibility of prematurely exposing the face-up indicator card, which may occur if the cards are spread in chunks.



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A QUICK DIP INTO...
EUGENE BURGER: FINAL SECRETS
BY LAWRENCE HASS



Meaningful Eugene Burger quotes
compiled by Mark Leveridge

1 I begin with the premise that the magic I'm doing has great value, that my magic is worth your time. That's my basic premise; everything radiates out from that. I think this is the very thing many magicians forget when they perform. They act as though what they're doing has no value, not even to them.

2 Unless we have closed ourselves off from real criticism, growth is possible for all of us. Through work and rehearsal, we can become more relaxed during a performance, we can become more confident and powerful - for these things are the result of knowing what we are doing, which is to say, they are the result of thoughtful repetition, of practice and rehearsal.

3 Magic takes us out of the realm of attainable skills, out of the realm of the possible, and into the strange world of the impossible: a world where the impossible is made magically possible. There is a great difference between this and balancing an egg on your nose.

4 It seems that the vast majority of magic books have lost sight of what the important questions are. They are concerned instead with a very tiny part of what magic is about, namely, how different magic tricks work. Yet if our dream is to perform magic to great response from our audiences...how the magic tricks work is only the beginning of the magical journey.

MAGIC TAKES US OUT OF THE REALM OF ATTAINABLE SKILLS, OUT OF THE REALM OF THE POSSIBLE, AND INTO THE STRANGE WORLD OF THE IMPOSSIBLE...

5 I think the path of growth toward becoming a better performer is a difficult way for most of us because it requires so much thought and work and more thought and more work. It demands that we try and fail and then try again and then probably fail again. And then keep on working and trying with absolutely no guarantee of final success.

6 Too many magicians seem to believe that a strong ending is enough to save a boring beginning and middle. It rarely is, and the reason is simple to understand. The show the spectators are seeing is the entire process, from the magician's initial appearance to his final departure. From the audience's point of view, everything that happens within that time, absolutely everything, is the show. And so, every moment counts; there are no unimportant moments.

7 I have always maintained that the best defence against the interrupter (heckler) is a smooth, well-polished performance. A polished performance typically doesn't have any openings for the interrupter to interrupt. The strategy, in other words, is not simply to deal with the interruptions after they occur by reacting to them, but rather to focus our attention on ways we might prevent them from occuring in the first place.

8 Most serious magicians want to be more creative with their magic; they don't want to be simply imitators. Most serious magicians would like to do something magically that is special, even unique. But they feel blocked in these creative endeavours and the harder one tries to become creative through an act of will power or conscious effort, the more blocked we seem to become.

9 You have to fool people! Magic performance in the real world requires that what you are doing is completely deceptive. If it is not entirely deceptive then it's a failure!

10 The first criterion that must be met before I add a piece of magic to my repertoire is the magic effect must call to me. It must be a piece

of magic that connects with me on some level so I want to perform it. When I am performing material that gives me joy to perform, the audience "catches" my enthusiasm.

11 I maintain that regular practice and rehearsal is better for me than sporadic practice and rehearsal. To work consciously toward a goal every day seems better than working on it only when I happen to remember and think about it.

12 I believe there are a lot of sleights that once we give them a name and make them "official", people thereby presume that they are deceptive. I would even include the Double Lift in this category. I don't think I've ever been fooled by a Double Lift, even when I was young.

13 The "best" card tricks for me are the ones that fit (1) my personality and performing style and (2) my range of technical expertise with cards. Attempting to perform a card trick beyond my technical competence is very much like walking into quicksand. There is no magic -only disaster.

14 The logic goes as follows: "If I make a big deal out of this trick and it flops, I will look like a jerk. Better to present my magic in a way that, if it does fail, I won't look too bad." Enter idiotic comedy. Go for one emotion, laughter, and forget the fact that there are many human emotions a magical performance might successfully engage.

15 Because close up magic is an exceedingly intimate kind of situation, expecting people to be quiet all the time may be quite unrealistic. Close up magic is not platform work. Consequently, people may not respect the rule that holds when they go to the theatre, the rule that tells audience members to be silent during the show.

16 I like the image of walking into the party, and the host or hostess, or the person who hired me comes up and says, "What do you need?" And the first thing I say is, "Nothing, I don't need anything. It's all here."... It would just come out of my pockets.... There is no need for all these contraptions; there's just a person who is a magician.

one-liners

FROM THE EDINBURGH FRINGE 2022



Acting isn't a real job. If it was a real job, they wouldn't let kids do it.

The world isn't full of 8-year-old plumbers because "they showed potential".

Lily Philips

I used to think I hated Facebook. I realised I don't, I hate people. When it comes to Marmite, nobody hates the jar. **Garrett Millerick**

I'm gutted. Just found out my wife's been playing tennis with her sex instructor. **Rajiv Karia**

Before I started comedy, I used to think I was my own worst critic; I've since found out I am not, it's actually a guy called Chris. **Hannah Fairweather**

I was watching a programme about sharks the other night and the guy hosting it said: "Sharks are more scared of us than we are of them." Really? I doubt sharks stay up all night watching documentaries about me. **Red Richardson**

I spent the whole morning building a time machine, so that's four hours of my life that I'm definitely getting back.

Olaf Falafel



Trickery for Tarot Readers



Trickery for Tarot Readers, includes the following:

- Six presentations that are perfect to use during a Tarot reading
- Three simple card forces you can use that look deceptive and natural
- How to 'control' a Tarot card in a stack in a completely natural manner
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"Trickery for Tarot Readers is not about performing 'tricks' with Tarot cards. It is about using techniques that are available to the 'magician' who performs card tricks but adapting them so that you as a Tarot Reader, can demonstrate the 'magick' and power that is latent in the Tarot.

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Follow the lessons herein and you will be seen as a mystic, a seer, a person with arcane knowledge. Just do your card tricks with Tarot cards and you will be a mere conjuror, doing tricks that anyone can learn. The mystic on the other hand has a skill with something otherworldly, with powers that are yet to be understood.

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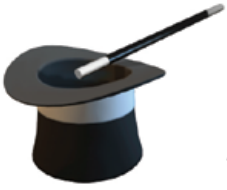
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TOMMY COOPER'S

POTTY PECULIARITIES

BY IAN ADAIR

It's easy to name a number of top magicians during the 1950s and 60s who were so well-known, that they became household names. The general public had been introduced to television, and only the BBC channel existed. I remember seeing David Berglas on TV as my first magician, not only featuring in variety type shows, but having his own television series. During the 50s and 60s David Nixon was the magic man of the day and was still presenting his TV shows right up until he sadly, and unexpectedly, passed away on 1st December 1978. He was definitely a household name.

The magician I want to feature here, although never regarded as a sophisticated manipulator of magic, is Tommy Cooper. He was a 'funny' man in more ways than one. For decades he toured many of the top theatres in the UK, starring in his own shows, including The London Palladium, as well as in several Royal Command shows.

He launched his television career in the 1940s and instantly became a very popular personality. Tommy mixed well with magicians at magic conventions of

his choice, such as Blackpool, British Ring and Magic Circle events.

His profile and life stories have already been well documented by television producer and author, John Fisher. After Tommy's successful career, John became the producer of 'The Best of Tommy Cooper," a series of television programmes containing segments from various TV shows - all featuring the zany, yet loveable Tommy Cooper. John Fisher's 470 page biography 'Tommy Cooper – Always Leave Them Laughing' was published in 2006.

At the age of ten I wrote to the BBC requesting a signed photo of Tommy Cooper. I did receive one, but it wasn't a photo – it was a character/cartoon type illustration of him, but he signed it.

When I left my home town of Kilmarnock to join Edwin Hooper in Bideford North Devon, at his newly formed Supreme Magic Company, I never realised then, that one day I would become a very close friend of my idol – Tommy Cooper. Tommy was an early customer of the firm, having already purchased numerous comedy effects and props, which he used and featured in his act, as well as on television programmes. In fact during his lifetime Tommy purchased tricks on a WEEKLY basis from 'Supreme' – not all comedy items, mainly close-up effects. Although he didn't use these in any of his presentations, he loved practising and showing them to friends and family.

He was starring in a summer season at the Princess Theatre, Torquay in 1962, and from there he phoned us (Edwin and myself) asking if we could bring him one of our latest vent figures – a dog, which we called Fido. When we arrived at the front of the theatre, there he was, waiting arrival of a prop he intended to introduce into his shows. Unwrapping it, he kept it on the move, uttering barking sounds (the only vent he could do!) in front of now what became a huge crowd of people gathering around –outside the theatre. Two 'up-and-coming' artistes (bottom of the bill then), also appeared in this summer season show – Morecambe & Wise!!

The vent dog which Tommy featured in his shows is now on display in the Magic Circle's Museum.



I NEVER REALISED THEN, THAT ONE DAY I WOULD BECOME A VERY CLOSE FRIEND OF MY IDOL — TOMMY COOPER.

The following year, at the same theatre in Torquay Tommy was, as usual, the main star of the summer season show. Edwin Hooper and I invited German magic dealer W. G. Werry to look over our premises, and so, made a point of booking tickets for the show. Werry's girlfriend Helmi accompanied him. Tommy, knowing that we were coming to see him, invited us to join him in his dressing room, after the show.

In the show Tommy performed one of our effects - 'Torn Tissues to Flowers' without messing it up. It was to our surprise when Tommy opened the door of a large upright cabinet which exposed at least two hundred fully expanded bouquets of spring flowers!!! Many scattered to the floor. Seemingly he never refolded any of the bouquets after each presentation, and simply chucked them into the cupboard. Helmi to the rescue – she sat at a table, refolded each bouquet, securing them with rubber bands, whilst Werry demonstrated his fabulous reversing matchstick routine to the both of us.

After my divorce, and now on my own, I always made a point of holidaying once a year, selecting UK holiday resorts where Tommy would be performing. I always contacted him prior to making arrangements, and I was always welcomed to his dressing rooms (over 150 or more!!). I'd watch the shows, visit his dressing rooms, chat about magic, and sometimes demonstrate the very latest tricks. During one of his shows he stated he would make a large pot of flowers vanish, this resting on a tripod table. Picking up a gigantic magic wand, as wide as a tree-trunk, he slammed it down onto the vase of flowers. The vase and flowers, as well as the table crashed to the floor, into pieces. Doesn't sound funny, does it, but audiences burst into laughter. He admitted he hit the table so fiercely this time, that it not only collapsed, but was badly damaged. He just couldn't work out how two of the broken struts could be quickly fixed, ready for the next show. I happened to be staying in the same hotel as Tommy (in Blackpool) and having a meal with him on a Saturday



TOMMY AND GWEN

TOMMY SUDDENLY APPEARED WEARING A DRESSING GOWN. HE WAS ANXIOUS TO SHOW US ONE OF HIS LATEST PURCHASES FROM AN AMERICAN DEALER — A MATRIX TYPE ROUTINE USING COINS.

morning. He seemed rather peeved and upset, simply because he didn't receive the usual attention he was used to. All staff members were preparing food and arranging things for a large wedding reception and seem to be ignoring him on this occasion.

Sometimes he would hire a flat for a season, rather than pay hotel fees. I noticed on a few occasions towards the end of the show, a stage-hand would nip out and buy fish and chips and a half bottle of red wine. This he handed to Tommy, who later, upon returning to the flat, would get someone to warm them up.

Tommy co-starred with first teenage idol and rock star Tommy Steele in another summer season show. Tommy introduced us to Tommy Steele who, although not the big star he once was, was popular as an all-round entertainer. When we left the stage door, only one young lady was there to greet him, autograph book in hand. Seemingly, Tommy Steele was a bit of a prankster, loving to play jokes on people, and wanted to obtain a large quantity of Itching Powder. Tommy C asked if we could help find a supply for him, and this we did. One week later, one of the daily national newspapers reported that he had scattered the powder throughout seated passengers whilst the plane was in flight which caused havoc.

Tommy and Gwen (his wife) invited us to stay at their lovely home in Chiswick. Edwin Hooper and I made the journey from North Devon to Chiswick and were greeted by an au pair girl who answered the front door. She ushered us into a rather attractive looking room. Tommy suddenly appeared wearing a dressing gown. He was anxious to show us one of his latest purchases from an American dealer – a matrix type routine using coins.

Gwen cooked a lovely roast dinner and here we were dining with the entire Cooper family – Tommy, Gwen, Vickie and Tommy Jnr. After the meal we sat in their garden. An elderly man, his neighbour, popped his head over the fence between both houses and pointed to Tommy's overhanging apples. "I'm entering some of my fruit and veg in the Chiswick Flower Show later this afternoon. Can I pick some of your apples and enter them, under your name?" he asked. Tommy agreed, and when the old gent finally departed, Tommy said to us "Silly old bugger – I couldn't care less whether or not my apples win a prize!"

Later we followed Tommy in our car, right to the car parking area of the famous London Palladium where he was performing at that time – co-starring with Cilla Black and Frankie Vaughan whom we had the pleasure of meeting. First, he had to visit the chemist which was situated a few yards away from the theatre. "Walk with me swiftly, please – I never like walking through crowds on my own," he said. We waited outside the chemist shop – he came out with the biggest bag of mixed medication one could imagine. As usual, his Palladium appearance was very well received.

For some reason, I kept 'bumping into' Tommy in unusual places. I was sitting at a table at the then popular Talk of

the Town Cabaret Floor Show Night Club, London when Tommy and his family were ushered to one next to me. Seemingly he and his family often got invited to such events, at no cost.

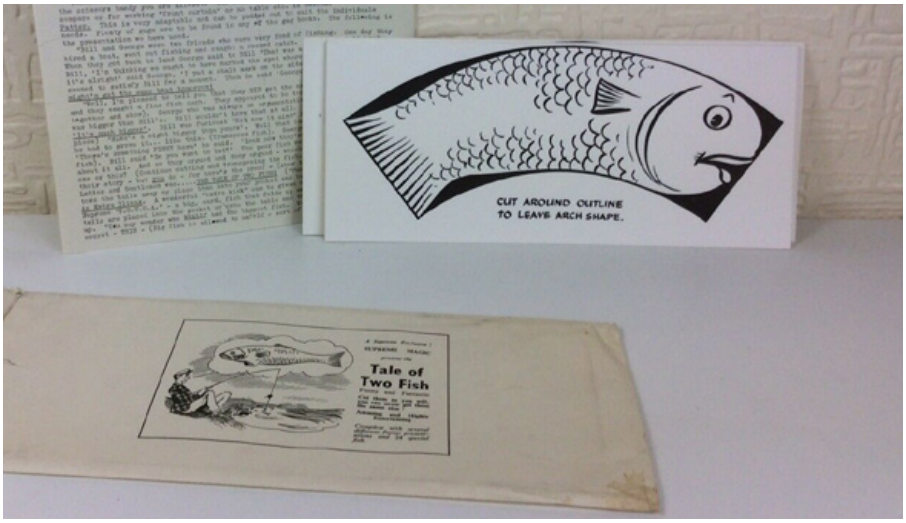
When Tommy noticed me, he invited me to join the family at their table, which I kindly accepted. I didn't dream that the cabaret star of the evening, Bruce Forsyth, who knew the Cooper family was there, announced his attendance. Spotlights immediately shone on us, as Tommy rose and acknowledged Bruce's mention.

Whenever possible, Tommy would make a point of either attending conventions, or at least, parts of these. He was sitting on a bar-stool in the headquarters hotel, of the famous Blackpool convention being plied with drinks from well-wishers, when he lashed out on me.

"I want to talk to you Ian", he said. "I've just ordered your string of giant comedy sausages, and they don't look realistic." I told him that no one could compare a GIANT sausage against a normal one, and that their size would receive extra laughs. Tommy wasn't having any of this and demanded his money back. In fact, he pinned me against the wall in the bar whilst a few magicians tried to rescue me. I guess, well, I know, he probably had had 'one to many' looking at the huge glass of gin on the counter which was constantly being topped up!

One of the most unpleasant occurrences happened at a British Ring convention held in Brighton. Our Supreme dealer stand was situated in the dealers' hall, the registration desk nearby. Tommy approached the desk expecting to be freely welcomed. However, not having any money with him, the officials wouldn't let him in. Hearing the commotion, Edwin Hooper made his way to the registration desk and paid his registration fee. Tommy never attended any further British Ring conventions.

Tommy was rather 'naughty' on occasions. He deliberately copied the artwork for Supreme's effect 'Tale of Two Fish', an optical illusion type trick with giant cut-out fish. He had these made much smaller in cardboard, as well as having them coloured, and included these in his 'give-away' bags.



Tommy always assured magicians and the Magic Circle (he was a member) he would never expose a trick in his act, or on television. He purchased the Comedy Clock Box, a best-selling prop manufactured by Supreme, and performed it on television. He performed it well, in-as-much as he received generous applause, but Edwin Hooper noticed he deliberately removed his thumb and fingers which held down the 'shell' clock. He allowed this to fall onto his table. Bringing this to Tommy's notice, he assured Edwin that this was an unavoidable error. Later, he did admit he thought he had the right to expose it, simply because he had bought it (at the same price as all other magicians did.)

He wrote a chapter in my book 'Television Puppet Magic', performed my effect 'No-Fake Gravity Glasses' on one of the Parkinson's TV chat shows, and presented me with two of his used props –one of his Card Ducks (he had three) and a fez (he had over 100!)

My last meeting with Tommy was on the 12th April 1984, three days before he sadly died on stage during his live performance on the television show 'Live at Her Majesty's.'

He previously owned a 'Leg's Table' which a London dealer sold him, but during one of his recorded television shows, it let him down – the cut-out shapely legs jammed and wouldn't hinge down. Supreme's master cabinet-maker, Johnny Hocking had just manufactured our first, and improved model, and Tommy wanted one for his performance at Her Majesty's Theatre. This large prop couldn't be sent on time, so I transported it to his home in Chiswick, where it was set up, ready for Tommy to get accustomed to it.

I didn't have time to chat much with Tommy that evening, but showed him a gag item which I thought he might be able to use. He picks up a book and says: "I'm a great lover of books, you know, I collect them, I read them, I've got hundreds of them- you could say I'm a bit of a book worm" As he says this, a giant, long, pink worm (like a spring snake) jumps out of the pages of the book, as he opens it. Tommy would twist it so it appeared to be wriggling. When the worm finally drops to the stage floor, he brings out a gun (blank firing pistol) and shoots at it several times.. finally it stays motionless on the floor. Doesn't sound very funny in print, but Tommy loved it, and told me he would use it in future shows. Sadly, this gag item was one which he never had the opportunity to use.

He did use it in that fatal show, but sadly collapsed and died on stage whilst performing his closing effect wearing an elaborate cloak (normally a comedy production of numerous oversized items produced from it.)

I kept in touch with Tommy's wife, Gwen (now deceased) and still have her letters. In one she writes "I miss him so terribly."

I have many more memories of Tommy, mostly happy and joyous ones. I miss him dearly, as do thousands of his devoted fans.

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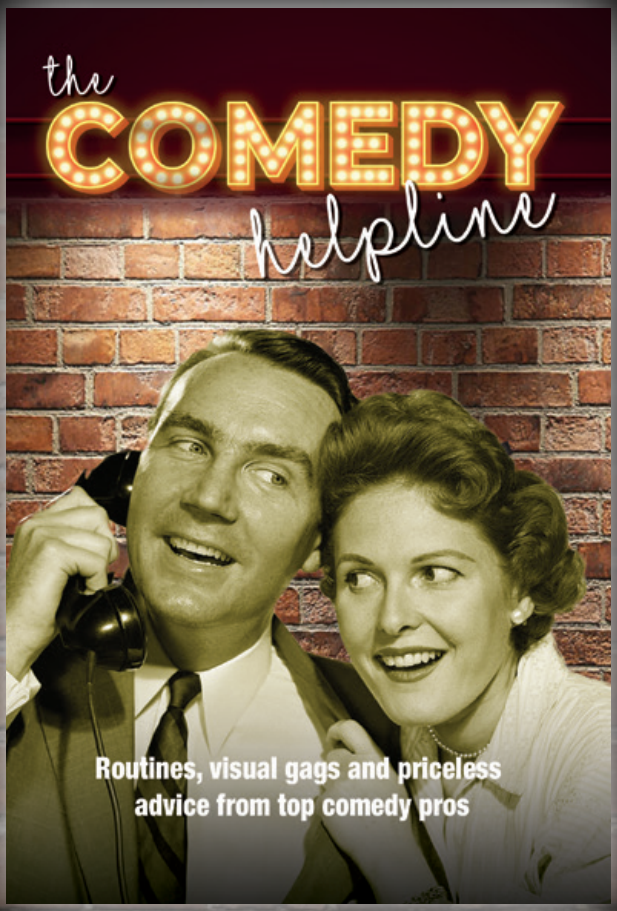
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PRO TIPS

BY MARK LEVERIDGE

A SIX PART MINI SERIES OF COMMERCIAL PERFORMANCE ADVICE

EXTRACTED FROM THE LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE E-BOOK.

PART #2 COMPACT SHOW CASES

When I was a young magician I remember watching experienced local performer Tony Griffith working a stand up show out of an LP record case. The ease with which he could walk into a venue, place the case on a chair, open it and immediately start his show, appealed to me immensely and from that time on changed forever my approach to the material I would use in both my own stand up adult show and also my kids' show.

It's possibly a moot point as to how much influence the size or number of prop containers you need to put on a show should exert on your selection of magic, but for me it has always been a starting point for my trick selection. So if a children's effect uses a prop which won't fit into my compact roll on table, it doesn't get even considered for the act.

Of course, I can get away with this attitude because in all the places that I work I can present magic that does not require huge props or large backdrops/settings. Entertaining at children's parties in village halls or in bookers' homes simply does not require outsized props, my stand up act is only used in parlour size audience settings, and of course as a strolling close up magician I am carrying everything I need in my pockets!

FOR A STAND UP GIG OR A CHILDREN'S PARTY, I ALSO TAKE A PORTABLE AMPLIFIER AND MICROPHONE, AS BEING HEARD IS SO IMPORTANT. BUT EVEN HERE I LOOK TO STREAMLINE WHAT'S REQUIRED TO MINIMISE THE AMOUNT OF APPARATUS REQUIRED.

The practical side effect of this mindset is that I can pretty much always get into a venue in one trip, and escape in one go too. Not only has this proved a real bonus in terms of time management, it has also helped me to preserve valuable energy which I can expend on the show itself rather than on lugging several heavy containers in and out of the venue. It also enables me to be ready to perform almost immediately, which can be a life saver if I am pushed for time thanks to delays en route to the gig.

As a strolling magician I load my performance suit with everything I need for the show at home and so all I need to do on arrival at the venue is make sure I have the jacket on! For a stand up gig or a children's party, I also take a portable amplifier and microphone, as being heard is so important. But even here I look to streamline what's required to minimise the amount of apparatus required.

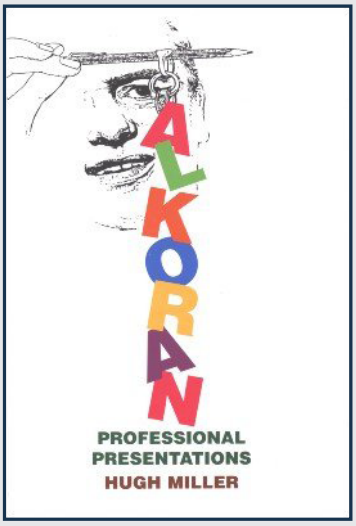
The amplifier is carried in a purpose made bag that has a strap so that it can be slung over my shoulder. The microphone is wireless so I only need the mike itself, a neck microphone holder and I also carry a couple of spare 9V batteries in case the one in the mike dies. These I carry in the side pockets of the amp bag.

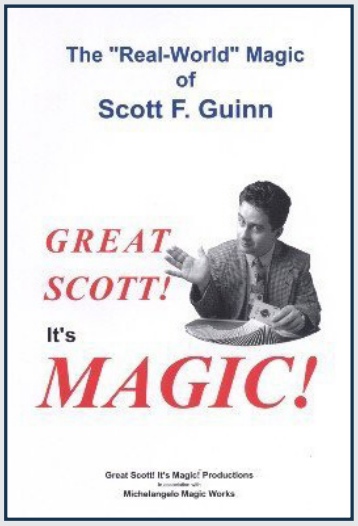
The stand up act is carried in a Boxall Table. This is a square box which has a top lid that when opened up becomes a small table top while giving access to the props held inside. This takes away the necessity for a separate prop table. The box has a symbol stand tripod base that screws into it and creates a smart, practical container that breaks down into just two manageable parts.

For my kids' show I use a roll on table. Because I do whole parties, this box contains the materials to do all the games I intend to use, all the prizes I will be giving away, plus all the props needed for the magic show. Although this does create a relatively heavy container, it still only takes one trip for me to carry it and the amp in the shoulder bag from the car into the venue. If I anticipate that there may be a long walk from the carpark to the performance room, I take a flat bed trolley and put the two items on that to save my back. I'm still getting into the venue in one trip therefore.

This set up I have been using for decades and it has proved invaluable. Now, I fully understand that for some performers, this is all too restrictive. I have seen some entertainers who love nothing more than to dress a large area with pop up banners, back drops and large colourful props or illusions, and that's great - it wouldn't do for us all to be exactly the same. But as I have got older, I have increasingly appreciated the pragmatic nature of my set up and it has meant I have been able to continue with the way I work over the years without the need for drastic amendments.

And if I needed any further proof that a small set up can be effective, I only need to think back to the mid 1960's when I was taken to London to see one of the Magic Circle Christmas shows that they used to put on at the Scala Theatre in the West End. One of the performers, Bunny Neill, walked out onto the huge theatre stage clutching in one hand a small black bag. He walked up to the microphone and using a simple bulldog clip attached the bag to the microphone stand. He then proceeded to present his entire act with objects removed neatly from the bag. It was the ultimate example of 'packs small, plays big' and I've never forgotten it.





IT'S COMPETITION TIME!

Two DIFFERENT prizes this time in the Magicseen Competition!

Normally we draw two winning entries in our competition and each receives the same prize. This time, we are delighted to say that Lybrary.com have provided two different prizes. The first is a DVD entitled Great Scott It's Magic, which presents an excellent selection of real world effects from pro US magician Scott F. Guinn. The second is Al Koran's Professional Presentations by Hugh Miller. This 80 page printed book is the 2009 Martin Breese improved version of the original 1967 publication and it features many of the classic Koran effects, including the Koran Medallion.

To win one of these two prizes, simply email to **markleveridge@magicseen.co.uk** the correct answer to the question below and your name will then be in the 'hat' for the draw at the end of September.

Here's the question: **"Who published the 1967 version of Professional Presentations? Was it a) Supreme Magic b) Harry Stanley's Unique Magic Studio or c) Goodliffe Publications"?**

Send your entry in no later than 30th September 2022 to ensure you are included in the draw. Magicseen will allocate which prize goes to the two winners. For more information about both these prizes go to www.lybrary.com.

Congratulations to Jim Aitken and John Wootton, our two winners from the issue 105 competition, each of whom received a signed copy of Tony Nicholson's The New Messiah book.

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Andy Gladwin is one of the co-founders of Vanishing Inc, author of Vanishing Inc's top selling book The Boy Who Cried Magic and the performer who fooled Penn & Teller with a trick he designed specifically for them. He has obviously read more magic books than anyone because the depth of his knowledge of card magic is encyclopaedic.

The download is separated into two 2 hour lectures originally broadcast a week apart plus the original 90 minute Zoom Q & A session which gave the subscribers an opportunity to ask questions with Andi live. There are also two pdfs with his detailed masterclass credits and the script of one of the masterclass tricks.

The first session covers his newer material that has not been seen in print, as well as some interesting advice on practising and group practising sessions. The first trick is a very commercial version of spectators cutting the Aces. This begins with a lot of top, bottom and middle cards being burned to disprove any possible methods, but takes time and can be confusing for the helpers. It does feel like a lot of running to start with before you are even being chased!

Needless to say it's a clever routine where the spectators' chosen cards (all Aces) match another Ace placed in the card case at the start. As with all of the routines described we see a performance with real spectators first before the explanations are given.
The first session also includes Andi's rare coin trick, with an equally rare sighting of an Okito coin box. It's a sequence of coins vanishing and appearing in the box and a double climax of them all vanishing from the box and appearing in the hand followed by the coins appearing on the top of a shot glass and the box underneath. It requires a table, shot glass and the spectators' undivided concentration, so it's really a small scale formal parlour piece.

Completing the first session are his versions of Hofzinzer's Everywhere and Nowhere and Bannon's Play it Straight Triumph, both worthwhile interpretations of these classic pieces.

The second lecture session is dedicated to the magic from Andi's recent volume, The Boy Who Cried Magic. Ghost is an incredibly direct one phase 'sandwich' routine. A chosen card is returned to the deck. Two cards are selected to find it and suddenly vanish, to appear in the deck with the chosen card between them!

Monty Python is an unpublished quick 'sandwich' effect followed by a visual three card monte routine. Cut, Stop, Shuffle is a one trick deck routine, good fun and very fooling for walk around situations. The Magic Script has the spectator read a script to perform Aronson's Shuffle Bored for a fun parlour show piece. The Silent Movie is a fun stand-up feature version of Do As I Do that we see Andi perform on USA television. Aura is again another highly effective but simple trick to perform and practical for all kinds of situations. On top of the material there are numerous finesses described that help to make the well-used Tilt move and Cross Cut Force a lot more convincing, plus unpublished false shuffles, riffle stacking and the reverse cull.

The 90 minute Q & A zoom session completes the package along with a pdf listing the credits for each trick, something which Andi does in the utmost detail along with a pdf of the script for the Silent Movie trick. I enjoyed the material which most experienced card magicians should find accessible. It's all described with great clarity and I can see that some of the routines would also be a lot of fun to perform as well. **PP**

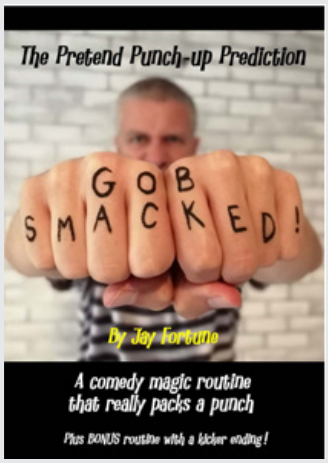
WHAT'S HOT: includes a variety of material in both skill level and performing conditions plus many finesses on sleights and shuffles. He makes everything a presentational showpiece
WHAT'S NOT: The 'Masterclass' title is a slight misnomer as these are really straight lectures to camera
RATING: 80%

THE TRUTH — A PAPER CHOP CUP

Daniel Prado
Available from www.vanishingincmagic.com
Price: £15.60 (download only) or £20.10 (with expansion pack)

In this video download broken into 5 segments, Daniel Prado gives full details on the history, motivation and construction, performance and explanation of his paper Chop Cup.

This can be made up using any basic paper coffee cup and the video is well shot with quality graphics that take you step-by-step through the construction. If you



GOBSMACKED

Jay Fortune
PDF Download
Available from www.lybrary.com
Price: £9.00

Here is one of Jay Fortune's commercial routines that was designed for a late night Friday and Saturday night drinking audience in the West End of London. That should tell you all you need to know about the style and presentation of the piece, but if you don't normally encounter that type of crowd then two other alternative presentations are included for a more sober audience.

It's a prediction routine based on a personal story of how you were mugged and intend to find the perpetrator using a new criminal detection system. A spectator is invited to test out the system by eliminating photographs of the magician's mouth where you were hit by the mugger. The is no doubt a lot of fun to be had as the magician and spectator pretend to act out the mugging.

Finally, one photograph remains which when revealed shows your mouth with one tooth missing! When you open your mouth it matches the exact same tooth blacked out in your mouth. This is somehow meant to prove that the spectator could be the same person who mugged you two nights previously. The logic of that deduction is lost on me, but there is a further laughter punchline as the magician shows an item that the spectator apparently left behind. I would need to see this in real life to be convinced of the laughs this apparently gets.

If your performing style is suited to creating this type of situation comedy with spectators then it can be a fun routine to perform. It's not necessarily strong magically but is more about the entertainment value of the routine and it doesn't involve much in the way of props.

It's more about your own life experience which as Jay says is always more interesting to an audience than a magician's props. You will need to be prepared to black out a tooth with the appropriate material available on the market, take some pictures of yourself and find the extra something (a common article) for the final punchline.

A second routine, Gobsmacked 2, is a more straightforward prediction piece where a set of joke shop chattering teeth walk across the photographs and stop on the one with the blacked out tooth which in turn matches the missing tooth in your mouth. For this you will need to source a set of wind-up walking/chattering teeth.

Jay also gives a further presentation based on the story of a dreaded visit to the dentist. The photographs represent the various treatments needed and again the walking teeth land on one which shows a missing tooth indicating an extraction needed. Opening your mouth you show the tooth already gone and the same tooth missing in the walking teeth as well.

Here are three alternative presentations that you can take on and run with, making them what you want. They are storytelling performance pieces and require your personality to bring them to life rather than magic that works straight out of the box.

This is for the experienced magician looking for an original comedy routine rather than well-known magician's prop routines and in the right hands there is comedy potential to be had. **PP**

WHAT'S HOT: original situation comedy routine with three presentations to suit different audiences
WHAT'S NOT: originally designed for the creator's own style and personality. Suits an experienced comedy performer. Various props will need to be provided
RATING: 55%

like Blue Peter style craft-projects, you'll love this!

Daniel shares his philosophy on what magic is at the very outset of this download. He then moves on to discuss his thinking behind using everyday objects for a Chop Cup routine as opposed to traditional, ornamental looking cups. We're then into segments covering the construction of making your own and how to make the 'ball' – in this case a rolled-up paper napkin.

The final segment teaches a very simple routine (without a final load sequence) which looks clean and has a handling for passing out the paper napkin post-performance.

There are also thoughts behind using a borrowed paper cup, seemingly impromptu, which will require pre-planning on your part.

On the plus side, Daniel comes across as a really nice guy, thinking deeply about his magic, the theory behind the moves and routining and giving you a basic historical context to the prop itself. All top stuff!

On the negative side, from my point-of-view, I don't really see the point of this. Once you understand the gimmick's construction and how to prepare the napkin so the Chop Cup principle works, I don't see this as being very practical in commercial situations and, for impromptu performances, you can easily do a standard one-cup routine without using any gimmickry and with a paper cup.

Back in 2006, I was filming a TV pilot with Paul Zenon at a youth centre in London. Paul did an impromptu performance using a plastic drinking cup and snooker balls from the pool table. He rolled a tenner up (back in the days we had paper money!) as the ball and did a 'is it under the cup or in my pocket?' routine. When he finally produced not one but two snooker balls from the empty cup, the kids went wild! All without any chop-cup gimmick but with maximum impact.

In summary then, if you like DIY magic projects, this could be good fun to make up and experiment with. Daniel's thoughts and ideas are well thought through. Ultimately though, I can't help feeling this is perhaps a solution to a problem that didn't exist and is no better, perhaps weaker, than a standard sleight-of-hand and pocket load one-cup routine with a borrowed paper cup. **JF**

WHAT'S HOT: well shot, well explained and delivered by a thoughtful performer
WHAT'S NOT: unless you're a DIY fan or Chop Cup method collector, perhaps not as convenient or powerful as a totally impromptu version using no gimmicks
RATING: 55%



MIKE PISCIOTTA MASTERCLASS

Running time 4 hrs
Available from
www.vanishingincmagic.com
Price: £60 for individual download (£50 as part of monthly subscription)

Mike Pisciotta is resident bar magician at the Magic Castle, twice awarded Close-Up Magician of the Year by the Academy of Magical Arts and, in 2019, Parlour Magician of the Year.

The Masterclass consists of three downloads, each broadcast to subscribers a week apart in late 2021. The first two 90 minute sessions were prerecorded, with Mike Pisciotta sitting at a card table talking direct to camera. The third was a 60 minute live Zoom session, giving a chance for questions and discussion.

The two prerecorded sessions are very simply produced, mostly from a straight on camera and, although unscripted, Mike works from a simple prompt list to make sure all points are covered. There are no helpers or live performance so tricks are largely "talked through".

Mike opens by emphasising the importance of drawing inspiration from outside magic, whether from films, literature, theatre or simply from passionate hobbies. This ensures presentations are personal and authentic, a theme he returns to throughout, together with strong encouragement to make regular jottings in a journal. These insights, together with practical advice on structuring a show, storytelling, being clear about the effect and power you demonstrate, and managing audience energy levels, give really useful pointers for improving performance.

Every deck that Mike uses has a breather crimp and is placed in Tamariz stack order, giving a lethal and subtle combination of principles. The breather crimp is covered in detail, together with applications beyond a traditional key card, including a clean force and a trick "Everyone's Maverick" where the spectator cuts to the chosen card.

All of the tricks explained are direct, strong and often cleaned up versions of classics with an intriguing presentation. So the classic "Biddle Trick" gets the breather crimp treatment, a couple of convincers and a highly evolved "rub a dub vanish". "Into The Dead Zone" has the performer apparently fail to find 3 cards that match the selection, with a kicker transformation to 4 of a kind. "Merlin Aces", a 4 Ace assembly, was first described in Expert Card Magic and required an impractical level of skill (including dealing cards from top and bottom as aligned doubles). This is simplified hugely using simple sleights, combined with a masterful equivoque to force the Ace pile.

A simple, strong, silver/copper routine is the only non card item. So much coin magic is "shut up and watch", this is intriguing and highly memorable.

"Fortune Telling Birthday Book" uses the memorised deck principle for a strong reveal of chosen cards matching the diary entries against two spectators' birthdays.

The breather crimp is again deployed in "Zen Master", where a chosen card is found in three different ways.

The Zoom session, chaired by Damian Jennings, revisits many of the themes, including what to do when things go wrong, strong openers, dealing with drunks and making the most of your performing environment.

I remain unconvinced by the Vanishing Inc Masterclass format, as they are relatively expensive and apart from the Zoom session are often delivered as straightforward lectures with little interaction with the viewers.

This Masterclass gave viewers exposure to the thinking and philosophy of a superb performer and artist, together with tips on sleights such as the Classic Force and approximately eight excellent, direct tricks. It is a little discursive and for some tastes may be spread thinly over too many bases. **CP**

WHAT'S HOT: excellent insight into the thinking of a highly regarded performer. Valuable performance and "real world" advice. Direct versions of several classics, requiring only intermediate skill
WHAT'S NOT: relatively expensive. Comparatively light on "tricks", a little discursive with no supporting published structure or notes
RATING: 65%



TALK ABOUT TRICKS VOLS 1 AND 2

Joshua Jay
Available from
www.vanishingincmagic.com
Price: £199.00

On my personal magic bookshelf my favourites titles are those that are hard backed compilations of magazines. So Harry Lorayne's Apocalypse, Richard Kaufman's The Collected Almanac, Jim Sisti's The Magic Menu, Karl Fulves' Palbearers Review amongst others, are books that I come back to time and again.

Now I can add to that illustrious list Joshua Jay's Talk About Tricks. Between 2001 and 2013 Joshua edited, contributed and compiled the trick section of Stan Allen's market leading Magic magazine.



PROBABLY THE GREATEST OPENER & CLOSER I'VE EVER INVENTED!

(Ticklish! & Pizza Time)
Jay Fortune
PDF Download
Available from www.lybrary.com
Price: £9.00

Despite being only 18 when he took up the task, Joshua was already well connected in the magic world and was therefore in a great position to elicit contributions from top magicians of the day.

Over a 12 year period Joshua put together 145 monthly columns featuring 767 tricks from 346 different contributors, and all of it is faithfully reproduced in the 1294 large size pages of this outstanding two volume set. Printed on shiny quality art paper and featuring hundreds of photographs (initially all in black and white but after a couple of years all in colour), these books provide a major source of the magic from many of the world's best creators in the first decade or so of the 21st century.

Although you will not be surprised to learn that card magic features heavily, this is by no means an all card feast as there are plenty of routines using all manner of other props too. These are the sorts of books that you probably won't read from start to finish, but are more likely to regularly pick up and dip into. Everywhere that you break open the pages you are faced with interesting and absorbing magic to enjoy and hopefully try, and so there are countless hours of pleasure to be had as you browse the contents. As well as the tricks themselves I personally enjoy the fact that at the start of each column Joshua talks about various current (at the time) topics. It might be giving some insights into his personal magic life, or his opinion on the hot topics of the day, or some salient advice, which as the years progressed and his own experience increased, so did the value of his comments. Certainly in the first few years of his tenure, these sections were highly entertaining and useful to read.

Another feature of each column was the inclusion of the Expertalk section. Here Joshua got top people to give there tips, advice and ideas on well known or classic moves, principles and ideas in order to help readers to finesse their own handlings. This is an important and very useful way to progress magic techniques and something we can all benefit from reading.

At an asking price of £199 you might wonder if it is worth the money in order to secure a collection of magazine trick sections that are over 10 years old. The answer, in my opinion, is a categorical YES. Everything about this smacks of quality. The two meaty volumes (they have a combined weight of around 6kg - I nearly pulled my back carrying them into the house!) are produced to a very high standard, including coming in a strong thick card slipcase, and contain enough magic to keep just about everybody happy for simply ages, and with a quality of content that is arguably the best ever produced.

In many ways these books contain the final hurrah for magic in magazines. By the time that Talk About Tricks finished in 2013, the internet had become the preferred way for creators to share their ideas, and increasingly top material was being sold directly over the web rather than being published in magazines. The sheer volume and quality of the magic contributed here will probably not be repeated in the same way ever again, so take this opportunity to enjoy the fact that Talk About Tricks exists for posterity by purchasing your own copy. You won't regret it. **ML**

WHAT'S HOT: fantastic collection of quality magic contributed by a who's who of the magic world in the early part of the 21st century. Exemplary production standards make these books a joy to own and read
WHAT'S NOT: because of their physical weight and size, not a particularly comfortable read with the books on your lap
RATING: 95%

Good openers can be hard to find that suit your personality. It needs to be just long enough to get you on and establish who you are and what you do. If it can be magically strong as well then you are on to a winner. Jay Fortune's Ticklish will certainly get you on but whether it suits your personality, as well as the sort of magic that you do, is a different matter.

The routine itself can't be described in detail without giving the whole idea away, suffice to say it's a cod prediction gag which fails and produces an unexpected piece of magic which because of its surprise, is quite funny, but is another wrong prediction. The pay off is the strong magical part which is both surprising and magically strong. I can't see this suiting everyone's style because it is rather Cooperesque, any more than it will suit all types of audiences.

It's very 'throwaway' and so will ideally fit a comedy magician who is going to continue with a comedy prop type of act. It's certainly commercial and you will need to have a comic personality to do it justice and get the full benefit of its comic potential. For the full effect it will require some pre-show work which is easily done but it can still be done without it. You will also need to adapt your trousers to a small degree.

Pizza Time is more of an encore piece than a closer but then if you don't get called back very often well, close with it! Again it's a cod mind reading effect which is just for laughs and you will need to know how to do that to achieve its comedy potential. It's a prediction routine as you give a spectator three attempts to realise what he has to do. When he does, the prediction has changed! It doesn't have the magical potential of the opener but is potentially funnier if you like that sort of humour.

It will suit the gagster type performer better than others. Jay created them for his cruise ship act and both were therefore tried and tested for a commercial audience. They both pack flat, take up very little space but play massively for stand-up and stage work. At the price they are both worth a punt for the commercial performer looking for comedy ideas. **PP**

WHAT'S HOT: tried and tested commercial routines that will get you on as well as off.
WHAT'S NOT: originally designed for the creator's own style and personality. They will be best suited to certain types of comedy performers who are experienced at working an audience and playing for laughs.
RATING: 65%

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