



TOP HAT

December 2003 - Edition 21

In this final edition of the ezine this year, we have all of the usual great contributions and I've even put up the Christmas decorations, as promised.

First of all, Admin tells us about the Christmas logo competition which had some amazing feedback. The winning entry is now featured at MagicBunny.co.uk and at the top of this ezine. (Well done Huw!) And to all of the other entrants, good work, there were some fantastic ideas. All of the entries are featured in the MagicBunny News section of the ezine.

Next, Michael Saint Louis presents his monthly column. This month he continues with the long-awaited Pocket Pegboard construction. Michael Jay also continues his mini-series on Impromptu Match Magic, a great read for anyone who has ever needed to perform on the spur-of-the-moment. (All of us then!)

Peter Marucci offers a challenge this month for a reader to come up with a suitable presentation to his simple but effective Okito coin box routine. To conclude, Nigel Shelton shows us what can be done with just a sheet of paper and some imagination. Continuing with his paper-giveaway ideas, this month he shows how to make some nifty little card doves which are perfect for promotional giveaways.

I hope you all have a Happy Christmas. See you in the New Year!

Best Wishes,

~Jon Snoops~
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Every issue of the TOP HAT contains original effects and articles written by readers and members of MagicBunny.co.uk. If you have a submission, please email TOPHAT@magicbunny.co.uk

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The Latest From MagicBunny

The Latest From MagicBunny

Website News

By Admin

Welcome to the December edition of TopHat - the magic ezine that is fast becoming the most popular on the Internet. It's hard to believe that we are seeing the demise of yet another year - as one gets older, time seems to fly faster and faster. Even still Christmas will soon be upon us and, if you take a peep at the boards, you cannot fail to notice the seasonal theme that has been adopted.

This month has seen two major competitions on the boards, the first being a four of a kind revelation in the "Secrets forum" and the second being a seasonal contest to find a suitable Christmas logo for the boards during the run up to Christmas. The response to both of these has been excellent and we currently have 11 strong contenders for the Christmas logo accolade:

DREW:



DYING_TO_LIVE:



BILLBLUM:



The Latest From MagicBunny (cont.)

SEAN:



THENACKY:



THUMBSLINGER 1:



THUMBSLINGER 2:



HUW COLLINGBOURNE:



The Latest From MagicBunny (cont.)

THUMBSLINGER 3:



THUMBSLINGER 4:



... and finally one from Jon Snoops (to be found at this link: <http://jonsnoops.port5.com/xmas.htm>)

These boards certainly have a strong festive feel and you are as welcome to visit now as you are at any other time of the year.

Here's a special Christmas wish for you this year; that you may fulfil your ambitions and achieve whatever goals you have set for yourself. We shall look forward to your support now and in the forthcoming year, when we plan to implement new projects and see the return of many of our regular contributors.

Merry Christmas to you all.

Nigel Shelton.

Thoughts From Mid-West America

Let's Build Magic!

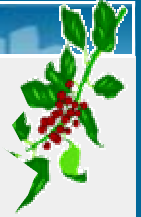
The Pocket Pegboard Part II (Finally!)

Michael Saint-Louis

Whew! How long has it been since I started this whole Pocket Pegboard thing? Well, at least three months because I wrote the first part before my little girl Pizi was born. Since then there has been a whole mess of crap going on... angry babies, PC/Mac interface problems, a few other surprises and the occasional flash of jealousy from a two year old who isn't quite ready to stop being the baby yet.... Crazy life. Since the first article I have even sold my soul and bought a mini-van! Believe me: I'm as surprised as anyone by that! A mini-van. It's my first new car and nice enough I guess but somehow my loud and angry punk rock CDs just never sound right... even though it has the optional six speaker surround.

When I look back over my life (or at least what I remember... the late 80's and early 90's are really

Thoughts From Mid-West America (cont.)



fuzzy) I can't ever remember expecting it to turn out quite like this. I sure as hell never reckoned I'd live through 30; I know, everyone thinks that at 18 but when you live the kind of life that leaves you without years and years of memories it is a pretty reasonable assumption! So all this family man stuff is kind of a shock. It's not bad-- in fact it's great. I love my wife and my girls and my house and even the mini-van isn't so bad. I just didn't plan for any of it! I make do, though, and we get along fine. So Phaedra Jane's lullabies are all Social Distortion songs and I watch more cartoons than she does... so what?

Usually, though, I am a real Boy Scout "Be Prepared" kind of guy. It's probably the only reason I have lived past 30!. I have emergency food and back up heating supplies in the basement for this long midwestern winter. I have extra clothes and blankets in both the cars (okay... the car and the mini-van). I'm trying to convince my wife we should install our own generator so we don't have to rely on the Man for power... like I said, a real be prepared kind of guy. I mean it's not like I live in the middle of nowhere; I live in one of the oldest cities in the United States and am (literally) surrounded by a couple of million people... many of them in mini-vans, too. But back to the Pegboard. It is a Boy Scout approach to magic and minimizes those nasty little surprises by simplifying that bane of close-up magicians: pocket organization.

If you haven't suffered through a few prototype Pegboards then go back, read the first article (I believe it was originally in the March, 1978 issue of Top Hat). It is for your own good. You really shouldn't start here cause you have to work the organizational bugs out before you build this thing. Go on, go back and do it! If I can drive around in a soccer-mom special you can put in the time required to build a decent Pocket Pegboard.

But if you have had your fill of cardboard and staples and know how you need to lay out your props then the first thing you will need to do is get a nice base material. It really boils down to two choices: sheet metal or plastic. Sheet metal is a bit harder to work with but it is inherently more macho. It is a better choice if you need your Pegboard to hold a curve so it fits naturally in your pocket or have alot of magnetic props. Plastic is probably what most of y'all will opt for, though, so it's what we'll concentrate on.

At this point I should apologize because I really intended to have some pictures for this. Long story short, all my digital picture stuff is on my wife's Apple but it isn't online and the PC doesn't like any of the pictures from our new cameras or any files from the Mac. So no pictures this time... but next time I feel like I need them it shouldn't be a problem... the Apple will be on the Internet by then (somehow I just haven't found the time to run a phone line back to her office yet). If anyone feels like they need pictures to get through building this then drop me a line at michaelsaintlouis@hotmail.com and I'll try to get a few out to you. Of course, that will mean I have to run that phone line I've been avoiding!

There are a million plastic choices out there. My first Pegboard was cut out of a plastic three ring binder. I'm not sure what kind of plastic it was but it was about 1mm thick and not too bad to work with in general. It was a bit hard to cut so I used sheet metal sheers to cut out the basic form and then drilled holes in it to attach the elastic. If you are using alot of heavy props you might want to consider a thicker sheet of plastic but most of you will be able to get along with something much thinner. I like to use the thinnest plastic I can get away with now... too strong to tear with my bare hands but easily cut with a sharp pair of scissors. Whatever you use, cut out the size you need. You'll probably thank yourself later if you round the corners of your Pegboard now. Sheet metal and thicker plastic will have to be cut with tin snips, a scroll saw or the Dremel and will require a drill for mounting the elastic. Thinner plastic can be cut out with scissors and will usually easily yield to a sharp hobby knife set.

The permanent Pegboard is constructed alot like the prototypes using elastic and cloth. Strip elastic is still the best suited for the job but when I make pockets on my Pegboards I like to use canvas or denim. The loops and T's are still measured out like before but will probably require a new way of fastening to the Pegboard base. Staples will only work on the thinnest of plastics. There are two ways to attach the elastic. The first is to cut two slots slightly wider than the elastic itself and about a quarter of an inch apart where you need to attach the elastic strip. This is where that hobby knife set we bought for our DIY kit comes in handy. After the slots are cut pass the elastic through one and out the other and then sew it into a loop to secure it.... that's where the sewing stuff I suggested you buy all those months ago comes into play! This method works well for thinner, easy to cut plastic but is not very practical for sheet metal or thicker plastics. In those cases you'll want to use a wider elastic (closer to 1/2 inch wide) and drill a hole where the elastic should attach. Place the elastic on the hole, put down a super thin small washer (something almost paper

Thoughts From Mid-West America (cont.)

thin) and rivet that elastic into place. What? No rivet gun?

As you figure out what kind of stuff you want to build and what materials you will work with you will figure out what kind of tools you will need. I can't tell you exactly what you will need but I can heartily suggest a manual (hand operated) cheap (think about the price of a DVD or Playstation 2 Greatest Hits title) rivet gun. Rivets are cool, they make your products look a bit more professional and they are easy to use. By that I mean that even the most uncoordinated of y'all won't be able to put a rivet through your hand! Rivets are one of my favorite ways to attach crap to other crap. If you don't know what a rivet is then go grab a pair of Levi's. You know those little metal circles that are in all the corners of the pockets? Those are rivets. A manual rivet gun will be able to insert several sizes of rivets made of aluminum or steel and I have used mine on everything from wood to cloth to my gutter downspout!

Pockets, like the elastic loops, will be measured the same way as they were for the prototypes. They can be sewn on but this will require punching or drilling a series of holes around the perimeter of the pocket to allow the needle and thread to pass through the base. It honestly isn't worth it unless you are designing a pocket that absolutely must be 'sealed' along the edges to prevent its contents from leaking out. If you need to hold a mass of pins or matches, coins or some kind of powder (which I really do not suggest!) then this may be necessary but if you are adding a larger pocket to hold something like a deck of cards you can just rivet the pocket on. You will want to measure some extra fabric and fold down the top edge (just like in the prototype). Form the pocket like you did for the prototype and tape it in place with a bit of duct tape or something similar. Next, drill a hole in each corner. Rivet the corners down. If you have long sides you may want to add rivets every couple of inches to keep them from being any large gaps in the pocket.

That's pretty much it. You can probably take it from there and customize your Pocket Pegboards to your needs. The only thing I think I missed is that if you make a larger Pegboard (like I usually do for my hooded sweatshirt pockets) you may want to drill holes in the corners of your base to allow the Pegboard to be safely pinned into place. I tried using adhesive Velcro on the back once and it worked pretty well but then you have to sew Velcro in every pocket you want to use the Pegboard with! I am way too lazy for that... after all, I still haven't even run that phone line for my wife's Apple!

The Pocket Pegboard has a bunch of uses. Not only will it allow you to neatly access your close-up props but it will allow you to neatly transfer it from one pocket to another. You could also make and stock several identical Pegboards and merely switch out Pegboards throughout a night of table-hopping instead of resetting all of your tricks over and over. Probably the best thing about the Pegboard is that once you have built one you have all the skills necessary to build all the custom droppers you need. A small piece of plastic and some elastic plus a little time and effort and you can have thimbles or silks or whatever you need neatly stowed away in a series of elastic loops. If you build anything cool please drop me a line! I'm always up for new ideas... and, as always, if you have any requests, suggestions or questions you can find me at michaelsaintlouis@hotmail.com. Just please no mini-van jokes; I feel bad enough about my bourgeois lifestyle!

By Michael Saint-Louis

Impromptu Match Magic

Impromptu Match Magic Another Look

By Michael Jay

In my last article, I gave you a good use for that old paddle move. It was based on having a book of matches with different colored sides to the matches. Not all books of matches have that, though, where the matches have a dark and light side. In this article, we will have a look at how to overcome this problem.

Personally, I love impromptu magic. Please understand, impromptu magic doesn't have to actually be "impromptu." You can have a set up, ready to go, and make it appear that you are doing magic on the spot, without a set up. This is also impromptu because the spectators believe that no prior set up was necessary.

So, for matches that are not colored differently on the two sides, you will set one match up as follows:

Impromptu Match Magic (cont.)

Bend the match all the way out of the book, pivoting that match right at the point where it meets the book (at the point where you would actually tear it out of the book but don't tear it out, just bend it down). Now, near the bottom of the match, as far away from the head as possible, use a pen to mark an "X" on the match. Bend that match back up into the book and it will look like any other match. I suggest that you do this with the match farthest to the left in the book (so you know which one it is). You are now set up and ready to go.

For lack of a better name, we'll call this:

THE JUMPING X

Effect: A match is ripped from the book, an "X" is marked on both sides with a pen and another match is ripped out, with no markings. At the magicians will, through the use of magic, the "X" is made to jump from one match to the other.

Explanation: Another match is secretly marked with an "X" while it is still in the book, prior to showing this effect (see above). Using a simple paddle move, the "X" can be made to jump back and forth.

Presentation: Show the book of matches. You've already put an "X" on one match, on the back, so you can freely show the matches in the book. Pull out a match (not the one with the "X" already on it) and place an "X" (using the same colored pen as the match you have previously marked) on the match, near the bottom, away from the head. You do this by holding the book in your left hand and placing the match across the book, to give you a backing with which to be able to make the mark. Show that "X" to your spectators.

Now, turn the match over and, just like you have done above, pretend to make an "X" on the other side. Don't mark the match, though. Now, using a paddle move, show the spectators that you have an "X" on both sides.

Remove another match, the one you have already, secretly marked. Using a paddle move, show it blanc on both sides. Hold the matches together, the one "X" up and the other "X" down and show both sides using the paddle move (hold them as I have described in the previous issue of Top Hat). This will further strengthen the fact that one match has an "X" on both sides and the other is blanc. Do this only once, though. You don't need to run when you're not being chased.

Now, give the matches a quick shake and simultaneously turn them, a la paddle move. The "X" will have jumped from one to the other. Prove that the "X" is on both sides of the other match and no longer on the original match. Make the "X" jump back and pocket the matches (for later use - waste not want not you can explain to the spectators).

Patter: Obviously, this patter will have to be different from the original "Dark Side" patter. However, I'm not going to give you any patter. I really believe that it is better for you to come up with your own. Make this trick uniquely you and it will be better than anything that I can give you.

Other Thoughts: This is an effective impromptu magic effect. However, the need to show the "X" over and over must be overcome. You only need prove the "X" on both sides of either given match once. Anything more is an overkill. So, once the "X" has jumped, show it on both sides. Make it jump back if you please, prove it to be on both sides, then move on to something else in your routine. Don't overdo this.

Next month, I'll have a bit more that you can do with matches, only this time, we'll take a look at wooden, box matches. Not everyone will have book matches and you should know a little bit of material with both book and box matches.

Until then, you all take care and I look forward to seeing you next month.

By Michael Jay

Money-Morphosis

Money-Morphosis

Magic With Okito

By Peter Marucci

The following is a solution in search of a problem - or, more correctly, a good routine. It uses one of my favorite magic props, the Okito Box.

EFFECT:

The magus shows four half dollars on the table, which he puts into a small brass box and covers with a lid; the box is untouched.

He then shows an English penny in his right hand.

The penny is tossed into the left hand, which closes, and he does whatever 'hocus pocus' suits the occasion.

He opens his hand and the penny is now a half dollar.

He removes the lid of the box and dumps the contents onto the table; there are now three half dollars and one penny.

He picks up the penny in his right hand and shows it to those on his right; he tosses it into his left hand and shows it to those on his left.

He then drops the penny onto the table with the silver coins and everything, including the box, can be examined.

WORKING:

Have three half dollars and a copper-silver (silver side up) on the table, a penny at the right fingertips and a half concealed in the right hand.

With the left hand, put the half dollars and C-S into the Okito Box. Show the penny and toss it into the left hand, Bobo switching it for the half.

Open the left hand, showing it is now silver.

Open the box and dump the contents on the table; by inverting the box, the contents spill out as three silver and one copper.

Pick up the copper (C-S) with the right hand, show the copper side around and toss it to the left hand, Bobo switching it for the real copper in the right hand.

Drop the real copper on the table and let the specs examine the coins.

Pick up the box and lid with the right hand and drop it in your pocket, ditching the C-S at the same time.

SECOND THOUGHTS:

Okay - that's the solution.

Now, anyone got a routine?

Peter Marucci
showtimecol@aol.com



Publicity Material for Dove Workers

Publicity material for Dove Workers.

An effective paper-made giveaway

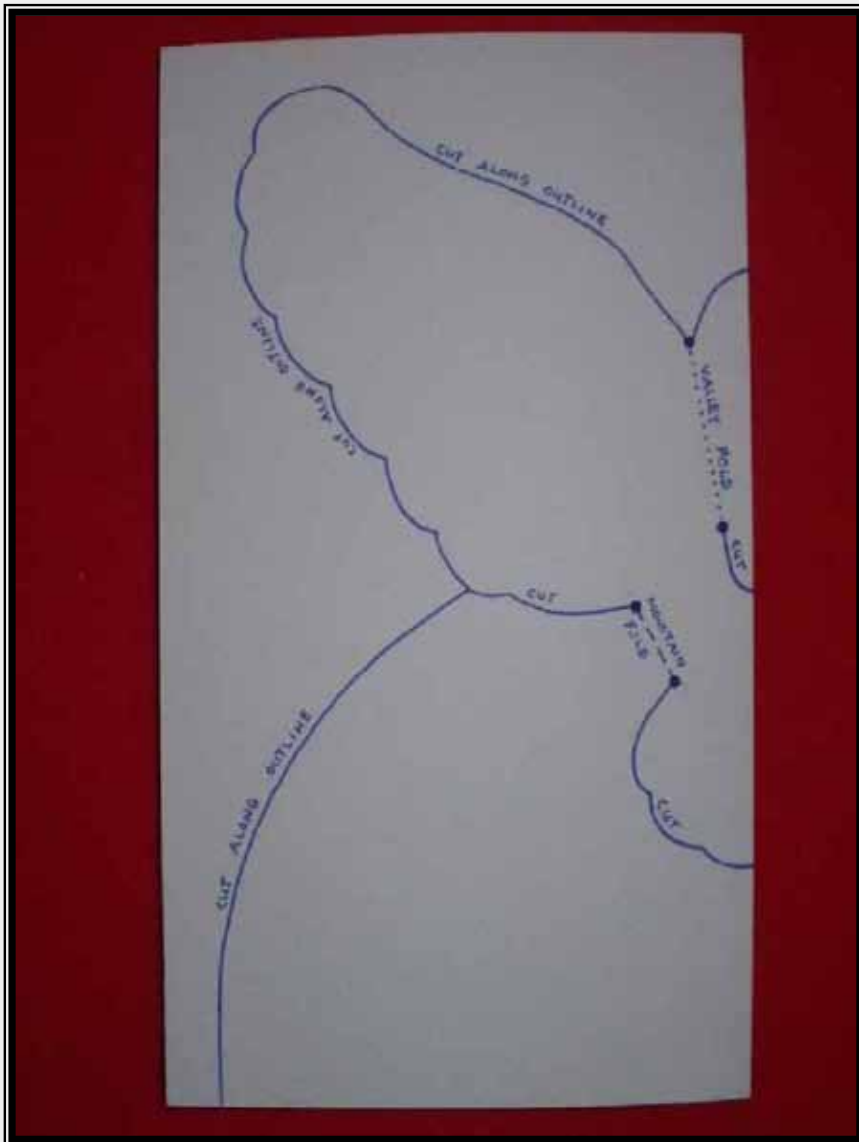
By Nigel Shelton

If you work with doves, you may like to consider this simple net as a way of generating aesthetically novel forms of promotion material for yourself and your work.

Publicity Material for Dove Workers (cont.)



Simply copy the net below, enlarge/reduce to an appropriate size and transfer onto a sheet of card.
To assist with cutting a symmetrical shape, the template should be drawn onto a sheet of folded card as



Publicity Material for Dove Workers (cont.)

shown below.



Add your own personal details or promotion material to the lower segment and then cut the shape out.



Next fold as shown on the template. (A valley fold is one where the card is folded upwards to produce a rut or valley. A mountain fold is one where the card is folded downwards to produce a ridge.)



Publicity Material for Dove Workers (cont.)

Finally, open the card and simply readjust any folds.



Each dove should take about two minutes to produce. These could be given away at venues as a novel form of promotion to generate further bookings for your work.

By Nigel Shelton



So that's the end of yet another year, I'll see you again same time next month. Have a great Christmas holiday and New Year.

Finally, don't forget the address... TOPHAT@magicbunny.co.uk

Jon Snoops