



MagicBunny.co.uk

TopHat

July 2004 - Edition 28

Welcome to the July's TopHat, the latest edition from the minds at MagicBunny.co.uk. No, your calendar is not wrong, but we've managed to bring this ezine out on the first day of the month. This makes a lot more sense for a monthly publication and I'd like to thank all contributors for helping to achieve this deadline. Future editions will, with every effort, be released on the 1st of the month and the deadline for submissions will be the 25th.

This month, the ezine features top articles on magic theory, effects from magicians around the world, news items and reviews. We begin with the introduction of a new competition for Summer from Nigel Shelton and James Green of Wand Magic. With gift voucher-prize incentives and free gifts for 25 entrants, this isn't one to miss. Following this, Daniel de Urquiza continues to bring his expertise from Argentina with his new variations on the old Leaper-routine.

Craig Browning's bizarre magic articles continue with "Creating Magick" which contains theory all magicians will find useful. Next, Peter Marucci returns to the "Bell Book and Candle" mentalism routine he visited last month and offers a different handling. With a news item, Chuck Hickok informs us of his upcoming UK lecture tour on mentalism, appropriately named "Entertaining people within the Corporate Marketplace with Interesting, Easy-to-do and Strong Mentalism." We also have a selection of reviews from various magicians who have witnessed Chuck's lectures. Finally, Michael Jay continues on from last month with further thoughts on routining your magic.

All the best,
~Jon Snoops~
Editor of MagicBunny.co.uk's TopHat Monthly E-zine
jonsnoops@magicbunny.co.uk

Contents

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

MAGIC NEWS: *"The Latest From MagicBunny"* by Nigel Shelton

MAGIC EFFECT: *"Argentinean Leaper"* by Daniel de Urquiza

MAGIC ARTICLE: *"Creating Magick"* by P. Craig Browning

MAGIC EFFECT: *"Bell, Book and Candle II"* by Peter Marucci

MAGIC NEWS: *"UK Lecture Tour"* by Chuck Hickok

MAGIC REVIEWS: *"Lecture Reviews: Chuck Hickok"* by Various Reviewers

MAGIC ARTICLE: *"From the Desk of Michael Jay: Thoughts On Your Routine"* by Michael Jay

The Latest From MagicBunny

The Latest From MagicBunny

Website News

By Nigel Shelton



I was very pleased to recently receive correspondence from James Green, the owner of www.wandmagic.co.uk, offering to donate numerous surprise magic tricks and a £30 Shopping Spree at Wand Magic as potential prizes for a special Magic Bunny summer holiday competition.

Wand Magic has been trading for some time now and has gained a reputation for being one of the most economical UK retail outlets on the Internet for magic books, DVDs and accessories. They have also gained a name for an excellent level of customer service and also a high level of consumer goodwill.

If you have already not had the chance to browse their pages, take an opportunity now to see what merchandise you could select with a free £30 gift voucher and I am sure that you will be pleasantly surprised at the range you will find.

I am most grateful to James for his very kind offer of this gift. Wand Magic will also be offering twenty-five additional prizes for the first twenty-five entrants to this competition. This is a very kind gesture.

A SUMMER "HOLIDAY" COMPETITION

The London Underground map must be one of the most recognisable topological networks in the world. Nearly every UK produced diary contains a London Underground map printed on the back page and the vast majority of people are familiar with the style and format of this kind of network mapping. The complexity of this system yields a vast repository of possibilities for creating a spectator with a multitude of combinations and permutations. Imagine the astonishment that could be achieved if this resulted in a prediction that could be backed up with additional secondary evidence to support the forecast of a magician.

This month's "Admin" ezine contribution is based on this principle.

You are invited to submit contributions for the following effect:

THE EFFECT

The magician pulls a seemingly ungimmicked metro map of some major European city from a wallet. He/She explains that he has recently returned from a business/holiday trip to that particular destination and invites a member of the audience to participate in an imaginary journey, using the map as a reference. The spectator selects **any** station as a starting point and then follows a series of vague, open-ended instructions regarding their imaginary journey through this city. They are then asked to state the name of the station that they find themselves at. Remarkably, after this declaration has been made, the magician withdraws an entrance ticket from his/her wallet to some major tourist destination. The ticket clearly states the same station as proof of match of location.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The map, of course, is completely fabricated. It is up to the imagination of the entrant to produce a network as simple or as complex as required. The chances of a spectator being totally conversant with the metro system of some large (but rarely visited) European city are minute. It is also up to the competition entrant to produce a set of instructions that limit the final destination station to as small number of combinations as possible. It is quite acceptable that there could be two, three (or possibly more) final destination stations; as a small number of faked entrance tickets could be reasonably held within a normal wallet. Obviously, the transportation network must seem to be realistic but should be reasonably complex enough to create the impression that the spectator had a seemingly random choice throughout their journey.

The Latest From MagicBunny (cont.)

COMPETITION RULES

This competition shall be open for the month of July and shall close at midnight on the last day of that month. Any further contributions will not be counted towards this competition.

All entrants to this competition should (preferably) post their entries in the relevant thread in the "Secrets" forum. If they do not have access, they may email their contributions to admin@magicbunny.co.uk and these contributions will be posted at roughly 7.30pm (GMT) the following evening by myself. The first twenty-five entrants (that is the first twenty-five named individuals who contribute to this competition thread) shall also receive a free special surprise magic gift.

All contributions remain the intellectual property of the contributor. They will not be used or modified without the full consent of the member who submitted that idea.

This competition is open to all members of Magic Bunny, regardless of their country of residence.

I (Nigel Shelton) will construct a post in the secret forum on the first of August for members to nominate their favourite entry and this person shall receive a £30 gift voucher for use at www.wandmagic.co.uk Unfortunately, members who have no access will be unable to vote. Regretfully this must be the case as it is the only way that I can assure that false registrations (and therefore subsequently false nominations) are not submitted to bias the result.

In the event of a tie, I shall decide on an ultimate winner.

Members are welcome to email any necessary graphics to myself if they do not have access to web space for uploading accompanying pictures. Please remember that any made-up metro network pictures should be saved in *.gif or *.jpg format.

Members are free to post as many entries as they wish but can only be eligible for one surprise free gift.

Any further questions should be posted in the "Competition Announcement" in the "Secret" forum and I shall endeavour to provide appropriate feedback.

May I wish all contributors good luck with their entries and thank James from Wand Magic for his generosity in providing the numerous prizes and £30 gift voucher.

Nigel Shelton.

Argentinean Leaper

Argentinean Leaper

Featuring 'The Open Ending Theory'

By Daniel de Urquiza

'The Leaper' plot, credited to Charles T. Jordan, it's one of those effects that card magicians like to 'improve.' Just like 'Triumph', 'Oil and Water', 'Ambitious Card;' every card magician worth his/her salt has to have his/her own version of it (of course, 'improving' it).

The general script is as follows: a spectator selects a card, which is placed at a packet hold by spectator. Magician has another packet of cards. Selection travels from spectator packet to magician's packet.

You, the sagacious card handler, knower of every card trick ever invented, may be asking now: What's the difference with 'Cards Across' plot?

Well, primarily the plural; in cards across, there are several cards that do the travelling, thus the use of 'cards.' In 'The Leaper,' only one card travels.

Argentinean Leaper (cont.)

Second, the travel in cards across is not as instantaneous as in the leaper.

Third, card across usually has three phases, and the leaper has only one.

As the name tells you, its card leaping from one packet to the other.

And there are many other differences, in handling, method, aesthetics, etc.

There are other magical plots related to 'The Leaper,' like 'The Visitor' from Larry Jennings. Also 'Devilish Miracle,' by Marlo, and so on, and on, and on. And on. But probably you already know it, sagacious card handler.

Ok; a selection travels from spectator packet to magician's packet. Big deal. No one is going to build a theocracy around you because you perform 'The Leaper.' It's a minor card trick, nobody does it anymore; it's passé, démodé, it's completely out fashion, not cool.

Well, I must say I disagree with that point of view.

I hereby give to the magical community, which includes you, sagacious card handler...

THE ARGENTINEAN LEAPER

An open ended routine

EFFECT

Spectator shuffles the deck. Spectator cuts the deck. Spectator selects one of the resulting packets. Magician shows spectator 5 cards from the selected packet. Spectator must remember the position and identity of one card, saying nothing.

Spectator holds the packet, magician takes the other packet. They count together, in unison, without looking at the cards, until spectator reaches the position he remembered. Then... you'll see.

METHOD

1) Setting the conditions.

The great thing about this plot is the complete freedom you have. So, you should remark this to your spectator. And I say 'your spectator' because I think this effect is perfect for 'one-on one' situations.

Spectator is seated in front of you, and you are the happy possessor of a deck of cards.

Give the deck to spectator, asking him to shuffle it. Then ask him to cut. Tell him to select any packet. Ask him now to shuffle the packet he selected.

Tell him: "So, YOU shuffled the deck, YOU cut, YOU selected a portion of the deck, and YOU shuffled this portion. Are we ok with this? Because, you know, it's important to me that you agree with me that I haven't yet even touched the deck, and that I have no idea of its order, the identity of the cards you hold, etc. Do you agree with me on these conditions?" If he says no, use the cards as weapons, as taught by Ricky Jay, and kill him.

Grab his packet, and say: "I'm going to ask you this: I want you to select a number AND a card. What does this mean? I'm going to show you some cards... let's say 5. Ok. I want you to select a number between 5 and 10. Look and remember the identity of the card that is located at the number you selected. Do you understand this? Ok.

I'm not showing you the first cards, because I don't want you to say "Mmm, he could see that card" or anything like that. So you don't think of one, you don't think of two, you don't think of three, you don't think of four, you don't think of five."

This last line belongs to Marlo, and it's his patter to this version of the effect that I love, and I find almost poetic. But, trust me, that's the only thing in common with his version and mine. The key to the effect, which is the transposition of the selected card, is achieved by totally different sleights, but most importantly, totally different misdirection techniques.

While saying this line by Marlo, you do a double push off of the two first cards, counting them as one. This idea is from Jordan. Don't show their faces. When you reach five, go on counting, saying: "You can think of six, of seven, of eight, or nine, or you can think of ten." Turn your head, not looking at spectator when doing this, and make sure that spectator gets a good view of each and every card.

Ask: "Have you made your selection? ("Yes") Do you remember the card, and its position?" ("Yes") If the answer is no, repeat. If after repetition the answer is still no, then you made a bad choice of: a) spectator b) your career.

Give the packet to spectator. Grab your packet. Tell spectator. "Ok, so YOU, and ONLY YOU, know the position of the card you merely thought of, and its identity.

Argentinean Leaper (cont.)

We are going to do this now: we are going to count cards, face down, on the table, at the same time. When we reach your number, you tell me, and we stop counting. Ok? Well, we all now you didn't think of one (place a card at the table, and gesture and make faces to spectator, indicating him to place a card at the table also. When he does it, nod, and continue), nor two, nor three, of course you didn't think of four, and there is absolutely no chance that you could have thought of five... but, you could have thought six, or seven (and so on, until spectator stops. Suppose it's eight). Ok. You thought of eight.

2) *Doing the dirty business.*

Here comes the key, the episteme, the center case, the focal sleight of the whole thing. The palming. Lo and behold, sagacious card worker.

Let's remember a little bit our geographical situation.

You have two packets, at the table, formed by eight cards each (in our example).

Also, you have a packet of cards in your hands, and spectator has the remainder of the deck in his hands.

What you want to communicate is this: "I'm going to show the final here. I need to clear everything, to make spectator can understand it. So, let's take this portions of the deck out of the way. How do I do it? Ok, you give your half, I square it with mine, and I put it away. While I do this, you square your packet of eight cards. Ok, I have left the deck apart, now I square my packet of eight cards. We are ready for the ending. Look!!!"

Of course, you don't say a word of any of the above written.

It's called "The internal script." You should THINK of it, and match your actions to your thoughts. You will be surprised how good this works. It gives you a purpose, a meaning, credibility, justification, a religion, a house and a wife, and wealth. Well, not the last 4 things. But the others, yes.

Read again your 'internal script.' Now, what you ACTUALLY do is: take the spectator's portion of the deck.

You will have the selection on top. Remember that you counted two as one at the begging. This is what you were aiming to.

Square it with your half. WHILE doing this, say to spectator: "Please, square your cards." So, you are squaring the deck, talking to spectator, and of course, PALMING the top card. If this is not misdirection, then I don't know what is.

Leave the deck apart, and say "I square my cards." Ideally, you should be squaring your cards when spectator is still squaring his. Of course, you are adding the palmed card.

This is where my version is different from others in print (from the method and technical point of view.)

Of course, you, the sagacious card worker, are going to say to me: "No, there is a version of Dr Jacob Daley, at his note number 2340 which is identical." Well, I don't care. I've come up with this idea independently, so it's an honour to me if I can say that my mind works like the mind of Jacob Daley, or any other card magician of relevance. It means I'm at the right way.

3) *The open climax theory.*

Now, another idea.

Were you are now (you have in your packet the selection) it's a crossroad.

You can go several directions from here.

It's what I call the open climax theory. You can almost always end an effect in more than one way. Why stick to one ending, the same old boring ending again and again?

A good answer would be: because it's a great one. Maybe, the best ending possible.

Well, how sure are you about that?

Wouldn't you like to experiment?

The premise of this theory is: the performer should explore all of the possible endings which any given set of conditions allows. Every magic routine has 2 parts: the setting of the conditions, and the resolution of them.

It's like a detective story. Author sets the conditions of the crime. The ending is the resolution (in a surprising and amusing way) of the conditions. E.g. the aces are there, now they are here (Ace Assembly).

The card is in the middle, now is on the top (ACR), etc.

What I say is this: try new ways to solve the crime. I recommend the reading of the Father Brown stories, by Chesterton. In one of them, about a noble man who was born without a head (really), every character gives an opinion about what happened.

All I'm saying is: try this with your magic.

A few solutions to the conditions of 'The Leaper'

Argentinean Leaper (cont.)

- a) The standard ending: turnover your card. Was that your card? No. Which was your card? You turnover your card, it's the selection. Climax.
- b) Let's rewind a little. You don't tell spectator that both of you are going to count. Only spectator does it. He stops at his number. You reassemble the deck, palm the card, and put the deck apart. Lap the selection. Ask spectator to turnover his card. It's not there. Ask him the name of his card. You say it cannot be. That's your lucky card, and you always keep it in your pocket.
- c) You proceed as standard effect. But when squaring your packet, you catch a glimpse of the selection. Look at spectator eyes. Say. "I'm going to take the card out of you." Keep looking at him. Say: "Your card was..." First climax. Then, ask him to turnover his card. It's not there. "I've told you I was going to take the card out of you..." You turn over your card. Final climax.
- d) Or you can openly look at the first card of your packet, and say: "Let's see what fate has placed as my first card... hmmm. Ok, now, I'm going to count to three. I want you to say out loud, at the count of three, the name of your card. I will say mine. OK? One, two, three." Both name your cards. Of course, you both say the name of the same card. You go like "C'mon, you are kidding me." Spec turns over his card, it's not there; you have it. Climax.
- e) As only 10 cards are used for the selection, you could throw in a change of the colour of the backs of the deck. You may need to magician's force a portion of the cut deck to spectator...no big deal.
- f) What if you have a prearranged deck? You could add a prediction, and the change of colour, plus the travel to the pocket....

Once I've told you about those endings, you can see that there's nothing special or crazy or wow! He's a genius!!! in there. Everything's common stuff. Or maybe not. Who knows what can you invent? Now, you could have 2 feelings about the open ending theory. Feeling number one, you could say: "I don't like it. Effects should have one ending only. Magician should select one, and stick to it." Or feeling number two: you could try to apply to your entire repertoire this theory. Change the ending. Make your own climax. You might end up with a completely different effect. Something new, original, something yours. If, after have pursued through all your routines, you don't change a bit of them, well, at least you are sure about your foundations, your whys and whats for. And that's a worthy exercise, and a good place to be. Think about it.

KR

Daniel de Urquiza
AltaCartomagia
Argentina

Creating Magick

Creating Magick

Bizarre Magic

By P. Craig Browning

When composing his great works occultist Alester Crowley intentionally invented a new spelling for the word "Magic" so as to distinguish what he spoke of from the world of trickery. He simply added a "k" to the end of the term, inferring that this was the magic of mind, science, soul, and heart. A living, breathing form of magic that was real and made possible via one's study of things surreal, metaphysical, and even sublime. A world that we, as bizarrist elude to but rarely host sufficient understanding of, when it comes to our ability to deliver a truly magickle experience to our patrons. Especially those of us young in years, who perceive Bizarre Magick as being something cool and of current vogue vs. the tool it is intended to be – a theatrical format from which **WE** as "entertainers" take on the role of the ancient Bard. Using our skills as a means for invoking the deeper recesses of the human mind. Awakening, for many, that part of the human imagination that brings about a unique sense of resolve and understanding.

Creating Magic (cont.)

Long ago I was deeply involved in the Goth and Punk communities of the U.S. Not to blow my own horn, but I was ahead of the curve and "into the scene" long before it became a trend, escaping the commercialism of today, such as one finds in the retail realm of companies like HOT TOPICS or Spencer's Gifts. In short, being "Goth" had little to do with your look, but rather your attitude. A rule that's exceptionally applicable to the realm of Bizarre Magick e.g. just because you have some stage blood oozing over a playing card does not make what you do "Bizarre"... it's just messy. Bizarre Magick stems from a particular mind-set and personal attitude. The more successful personalities associated with Bizarre Magick are those who have an exceptional appetite for the surreal; men and women that host a strong aptitude for learning as much as they can about human nature, folklore, and things macabre. In other words, the passion for life shared by these individuals is merely extended into the style of performance they deliver. It is who and what they are, not so much the "gross factor" of the material they present.

In his Book of Haunted Magick Rick Maue introduces us to a concept known as "Cerebral Magick" e.g. the ability to leave a lingering impression in the mind of our audience that makes them ponder if or not what they've experienced was "real". This is an old "trick" known to the old school mentalist who learned to tread that fine line between things theatrical and the way of the charlatan. Like mentalism, the Bizarrist solicits from his audience an investment of belief. The tales we weave, our explanation behind this or that phenomena, lure our guests into a state of consciousness where anything can happen. But, in understanding this, we must also recognize that there is a division within our realm e.g. the difference between those practicing genuine bizarre magick vs. those that employ a bizarre or macabre theme within a magic show. Confused?

There is a related field within Bizarre Magick that I refer to as being Macabre Magick. Unlike true Bizarre Magick, the macabre side offers a very strong tongue-n-cheek element akin to the many wonderful tid bits shared with us by the late Eugene Poinc. Let's face it, routines like **LIZZIE'S BUNNIES** or **CAL THE CADAVER CARPENTER** are priceless, very funny pieces of business. Though "bizarre" they are also "corny" bits of material designed to entertain folks in a manner that is more akin to traditional magic vs. hardcore bizarre magick. Truth be known, the majority of those calling themselves "Bizarrists" fall into this category, not the more formal modus operandi. The latter personality not only being rare in our world, but the more difficult persona to cultivate. A role that requires a great deal of time as well as experience to become. Most of us that have taken on the mantel of being a Bizarre performer actually take on the role of being a clown in some kind of cheesy costume and trying to act "deep" when we are not. In short, we become a parody of what we think we are portraying. Know however, that you are not alone in this image, there are some very renown performers who are perceived as being "silly" by their audiences for similar reasons. Individuals so full of themselves that they are blinded to the fact that they're not delivering the kind of character they've envisioned themselves to be. Just as our characters in a Fantasy Role-Play Game rarely turn out as we've envisioned, so too our stage character will rarely come across as some kind of unique entity the public is willing to accept. That is, until we follow Chris Carey's philosophy and "*do the stuff that's you...*" In other words, we can hold onto that idea image, but we must blend within it aspects of our true character.

The truest of Bizarre Magick are rare and unique individuals. Unlike most that are involved in magic, these personalities seem bigger than life. Not that they have enormous egos, but that their presence alone reveals a sense of novelty that the public picks up on even without their presenting an effect. Being "Magickle" is a part of who and what they are, it is conveyed through their manner of speech, their ability to hold to intellectual thought, as well as their ability to sew insights or perspectives into a conversation that goes a few steps beyond the norm. These are individuals that invest much of their time into deep thought vs. projected fantasy. Too, the majority of these individuals have lived a very tortured life and yet, remain strong. In short, they are the Blue's Musician equivalent for the magic world. The magic they present is generally an extension of their own spiritual or intellectual center. It is presented in a very methodic manner and leaves the participant spellbound – uncertain if or not they just experienced a simple trick or a legitimate miracle. It is a level of being most of us can but aspire towards but few will ever know. In our act of striving towards that goal however, we set within this estranged craft of ours, a new way of thinking as well as operating. Our actions, no matter how trivial they may seem, add to and embellish this art form we all love. That is, when our focus is proper and harnessed by genuine discipline.

Creating Magic (cont.)

Any one reading these words has the ability to fool and entertain others. When it comes to planting the seeds of mesmerism into the mind of a participant however, few of us will ever know such glory. Ironically, few of us perceive the difference it makes. Our goal being but to show off and do tricks vs. taking the time that's required for learning how to deliver miracles. It matters not if you're doing simple card work, grand illusion or intentionally striving towards the realm of things bizarre, we each fall into the same trap. In our mind it is the goal of generating applause and acknowledgment right now, that's at issue. As such, we ignore our sloppiness of technique as well as delivery. We set aside the creative critique of our peers and like someone strung out on drugs or booze, allow self-will to run riot, slowly destroying the very dream we seek to bring about.

The question is... or should be *"How can I make a difference?"*

I've been most fortunate to have two very headstrong individuals in my life that stressed the value of education; my father and my mentor, the late Charles W. "Kirk" Kirkham. Both of whom encouraged me to take time to study; to go beyond the surface explanation on any given subject and find out all I could about the things I was interested in. As a magician this demand allowed me to discover dozens of methods by which the same or similar effect could be accomplished. Through Kirkham this course of study allowed me to actually touch and use the equipment that defined those differences. That is why when a young lad asks me about a famed effect such as the Asrah Levitation, I can give to him a very in-depth perspective of the many variations on both, the device itself and the various elements around it. Subtle insights that can add to or take away from its deception or, practicability based on the performance setting you may find yourself in. Knowing the technical facts is but the first step behind knowing your magic. The second step centers on learning by observation e.g. watching others perform the effect and discover their strengths and weaknesses so that you can better refine your handling. Too, and along similar lines, it's learning their mode of presentation and the effect it has on the audience.

Granted, when working with less commercial effects or material that's more "original" we are left to our own for the most part. That does not excuse us from taking time to study how others work similar bits of material nor does it dismiss the value we will find when asking our peers to be critical and help us create a mode of presentation that "sells the bit" as it were. These are the elementary steps we must take if we are to fulfil the title of **MAGICIAN**, regardless the field we chose to work within.

When it comes to the world of Bizarre performance however, the demand placed upon us grows with intensity as well as obligation. Sure, we're there to entertain folks, this is a foremost fact. We are also there to convey intrigues that go beyond the common levels of magical presentation. Our obligation becomes one that appeals to the mind and the massive labyrinth therein. Our magic and the tall tales we weave around it must spark the human imagination and solicit from our guests a unique suspension of disbelief. Slowly, we lure them into believing, even in part, that what we do goes beyond mere slight-of-hand.

Bob Cassidy hits on a very important and highly applicable point in his axioms about mentalism when he speaks about plausibility. Simply put, if what we present has no plausible foundation, it makes no sense and is not readily accepted by the public. For this reason those of us that specialize in things bizarre and macabre must weigh the effects presented and how they will be presented. If our premise is amiss logic, then what we deliver is little other than another trick or puzzle. On the other hand, if we adhere to consistency of theme and allow the effect to serve as nothing more than an accent – the manifestation of a given phenomena. We gain that investment of belief from our patrons and host the upper hand when it comes to manifesting something that's magickle vs. a trick.

I'm certain that many reading this particular article will think I've but repeated my thoughts from the past. Too, there are those that see my perspectives as being a waste of time and New Age dribble. The irony being that I have heard this issue discussed time and again, most all involved hosting common agreements, one way or the other. The catch being that magic has yet to change... to grow. We are creatures of habit and we seem hell-bent to hold onto those old habits no matter the consequence. Yet, like any great field filled with weeds, there exist those one or two flowers that raise up to be counted and admired. It is to those few that I share these words, for it is in you that our art will evolve and our public will come to know that magick really is alive and the fantasy around it, justified.

Catch ya next issue!

By P. Craig Browning

Bell, Book and Candle II

Bell, Book and Candle II

Mentalism with a new method

By Peter Marucci

Last month I referred to a routine by Max Maven in the Linking Ring magazine and offered a different handling. Here it yet another handling, using the same charismatic props.

The original was based on props that included a bell, a book, and a candle. (The title -- Toll, Tome and Tallow -- was stretching alliteration a bit, even for the Maven!)

I found the concept fascinating - especially the props. But the handling didn't suit my style. I came up with another way of handling them, based on the magician's choice, which is included in my lecture notes, Bizarre Magic.

And the following is yet another way of doing it. (I told you I found it fascinating!)

BELL, BOOK, AND CANDLE II

EFFECT:

The magus shows a miniature bell, book, and candle. The spectator freely selects any one and the magus reveals that he has predicted which one before the presentation began.

Preparation: The hardest part of this routine will be assembling the miniature props. You'll need an antique-looking bell, an old book (preferably of a religious nature), and a candle and antique-looking candlestick.

As well, you'll need a small box with a lid, just big enough to hold the props.

On the inside of the lid, is written the message: You will choose the bell.

On the bottom of the box is written the message: You will choose the candle.

And on the back of the book is written the message: You will choose the book.

Have the props inside the box and the box on the table, hinge side to the audience.

PRESENTATION:

Five hundred years ago, the phrase "bell, book, and candle" could strike terror in the hearts of the general populace. These things (open the box, not revealing the message on the lid, and place the three props on the table, again, not revealing the message on the back of the book) were used in the church's ceremony of exorcism.

The ceremony still exists, although today it is extremely rare.

Many people, when they hear the phrase "bell, book, and candle", assume it refers to the bell and candle on a pagan altar and the book of spells, or grymoire, used in ancient rituals.

Actually, they come from the Christian church. When a heretic was being excommunicated, the priest would read from the book:

"We exclude him from the bosom of our Holy Mother the Church, and we judge him condemned to eternal fire with Satan and his angels and all the reprobate, so long as he will not burst the fetters of the demon, do penance, and satisfy the church."

The priest would then close the book, ring the bell - symbolizing the accused's death - and extinguish the candle, throwing them down, representing removing the accused from God's sight.

Pretty heavy stuff, 500 years ago.

Pretty heavy stuff today!

These three objects were powerful symbols of spiritual authority and to have any one of them removed was bad enough; to have all three used in the ritual was awesome.

I am going to ask you (point to a spectator) to choose any one of these three things. Take your time - your very immortality may rest on your choice. And I want you to make sure that you have an entirely free choice, based on your God-given free will.

(The spectator finally selects one item.)

Of the three, you selected that one, after long deliberation.

But, perhaps, I already knew that, even before you did.

Bell, Book and Candle II (cont.)

Let us see.

If the bell was selected, open the box and turn it around so the inside of the lid can be seen, with the message, "You will select the bell." If the candle is selected, keep the box closed but turn it over, revealing the message, "You will select the candle." And, if the book is chosen, turn it over, showing the message, "You will select the book."

SECOND THOUGHTS:

A choice of one out of three is not really that amazing; so this is where the presentation is critical to make the routine work well.

Pad out the script (without getting into a lecture) and you have a feature routine based on the simplest of methods.

But remember: It is essential that it be done as realistically as possible to make believers out of the audience.

In short, you have to "sell" the trick.

Peter Marucci

e-mail: showtimecol@aol.com

UK Lecture Tour

Entertaining people within the Corporate Marketplace with Interesting, Easy-to-do and Strong Mentalism

September 6th	Edinburgh
September 8th	Newcastle
September 13th	Birmingham
September 14th	Surrey
September 15th	Kaymar Magic (London)
September 16th	Hull
September 20th	London Magic Circle

Chuck Hickok is a Corporate Entertainer, Mentalist, and the author of the widely acclaimed book, **Mentalism Incorporated** - 2003's best selling book on Mentalism.

- ◆ At this lecture, Chuck will teach you several easy-to-learn, entertaining audience-tested routines from his current corporate act.
- ◆ Chuck will share his secrets for presenting Mentalism to corporate clients.
- ◆ Plus, Chuck will review and expand upon his practical and proven ideas for effectively performing mentalism that are found in his book.

This is for MAGICIANS and MENTALISTS alike! If you are interested in adding one or two strong and easy-to-perform mentalism routines to your current act, this lecture will give you a chance to learn from one of the best.

You will leave this with lecture with:

- ◆ Strong, audience-tested Mentalism routines you can add to your act tomorrow!
- ◆ Practical strategies on how to build a convincing and entertaining Mentalism act for corporate audiences. **Most strategies apply to *any* corporate entertainment presentation.**
- ◆ Proven suggestions from a working professional that will help you become a better performer, anywhere.

UK Lecture Tour (cont.)

Consider what **Larry Becker** said about Chuck, "*Chuck Hickok has achieved outstanding prominence in the field of corporate entertainment. Chuck's book reveals the intimate details of his process for structuring a strong corporate act. Chuck shares the 'real work' about mentalism that is missing from other books.*"

Michael Close of Magic Magazine said of Chuck's book, "*A competent performer with good marketing skills could take Chuck's suggestions and make a living with the ideas in this book. What's that worth to you? It's worth a hell of lot more than the \$60 price. I highly recommend it*".

Barrie Richardson, author of the mentalism classic, Theater of the Mind, recently said "*Chuck's ideas are for anyone who wants to learn how to present a corporate mentalism act that will inspire, entertain, and generate happy customers. Chuck's ideas on showmanship could stand alone as relevant and extremely helpful advice for anyone.*"

From Chuck Hickok

Lecture Reviews: Chuck Hickok

Lecture Reviews: Chuck Hickok

Marc DeSouza

Past IBM and SAM National Champion: Close-up and Stage

Chuck Hickok did indeed lecture at our home last Thursday. It is with mixed feelings that I report on the lecture. I am afraid that it may be turning many more magicians to mentalism and has the potential to cause the ranks of PEA to swell. **It was one of the best lectures I have had at our home.** Several of the attendees said it was the best lecture they have ever seen. I don't think praise can get much higher than that.

For magicians who have had no previous experience with performing mentalism, it was way beyond a primer/crash course...it was a gift of an entire working repertoire, plus a way of thinking about construction and presentation that should serve them for the rest of their performing career. For those of us who are a bit more experienced, it reminded us of many important basics and along with some great tips that we didn't know, but more importantly, that some of the simple things we forget or pass by are so incredibly effective for "real audiences".

If you get the chance to see Chuck lecture, don't miss the opportunity. More importantly, warn magicians to stay away...we don't need them taking our business ;)

(Note: Marc DeSouza invites the top magicians and mentalists to lecture in his "home theater" which seats thirty. Marc's home is the top place to lecture in the Philadelphia area.)

Denny Haney Owner, Denny and Lee Magic
One of America's Most Successful Magic Dealers

Chuck's Lecture was the most organized lecture I have ever seen. He knows his subject...and fooled people with his simple but strong mentalism. What is unique is that everything in his lecture is material he uses in his current show. This is rare. His explanations were amazingly clear and easy to understand.. Everyone thought his lecture was one of the best in months.

Lecture Reviews: Chuck Hickok (cont.)

Rick Maue

Deceptions Unlimited & Author of The Book Of Haunted Magick

It is not everyday that you have the opportunity to see a real working professional lecture on the material that he actually uses to make a living--but that is exactly what you get with Chuck Hickok.

Chuck offers a rare behind-the-scenes look at the act that has brought him great success in the corporate market. And there is truly something in the lecture for every magician or mentalist that has the desire to learn not only some outstanding routines, but also the wonderful thought behind them.

The material is very strong, and all of the methods are well within the reach of any performer. But that is still not the best part of Chuck's lecture. The best part is learning about such great routines from a performer with extensive knowledge of how to be in front of an audience.

Simply put, I would strongly encourage every magician and mentalist I know to see Chuck Hickok lecture. I personally cannot wait to see him again.

Neil Rozum

Blackstone Ring 23 (Cleveland)- Program Chairman

Chuck Hickok's mentalism is simple, direct, and most importantly – entertaining! His lecture was enthusiastically enjoyed by our club members.

The Chuck Hickok Lecture: Performing Mentalism for Corporate Audiences
(Lecture at the Meeting of the Minds – The PEA's International Convention)

By Bob Killian

*This review was published in the August 2003 issue of Vibrations -
Newsletter of the Psychic Entertainers Association (PEA).*

Up until this past year, Chuck Hickok was primarily professionally known and admired by his PEA colleagues and officials at several hundred corporations where he has established himself as a premiere corporate entertainer. With the publication of his enthusiastically received best seller, *Mentalism Incorporated*, Chuck has earned significant attention in the magic world where his professionalism, attention to detail, warm humor, and extraordinary teaching abilities has been noted in a succession of flattering reviews.

Hickok noted this was his first ever lecture. The only proof of that was his non traditional provision of free lecture notes to all attendees. (In fact, Chuck says he will email his notes to any PEA member who requests them.) The notes were well written and well organized, as was his lecture. The 1.5 hour MOTM workshop on performing mentalism for corporate audiences was an overview of his book which is, itself, a compilation of his recent life's work in entertainment.

Chuck discussed his eight beliefs about performing mentalism for corporate audiences: A Likeable Persona; Believability; A Unifying Theme; Increasing Impossibility; Exclusivity; Multiple Moments of Amazement; Innocent or Natural Props; and Maximum Impact. Three fully explained routines, (Magic Square, Book Test Trilogy; Triple Prediction) also in his book, illustrated his precepts. Chuck described himself as "not an innovator but an enhancer." While many of his performance pieces are traditional his enhancements are uniquely his and add a professional patina, expedite handling, and evidence an understanding of showmanship and the demands of performing.

Throughout his lecture, in typically modest fashion, Mr. Hickok was careful to credit ideas, sing the praises of PEA friends and colleagues, and cite them and others as inspiration for his success. His lecture, which he hopes he'll have the opportunity to give in other venues, is a thorough examination of his philosophy of performing with enough attention to teaching performance pieces to satisfy the most ardent "routine

Lecture Reviews: Chuck Hickok (cont.)

collector." A litany of experiential lessons (he calls them "Things I learned the Hard Way,") prove his professionalism is the result of encountering many performance challenges and learning how to overcome them. His final routine, offered in alternative formats for those who seek the easier way out, is a culmination of his thinking and beliefs, tying together his performance, seemingly impossible, with multiple moments of amazement with maximized impact.

From the Desk of Michael Jay

Thoughts on Your Routine

From the Desk of Michael Jay

By Michael Jay

Last month, I talked about the late Milt Kort's ideas on routining your routine. If you've taken the time to read that article, then please, continue on. If you've not given that article a look, I would suggest that you go back and read that, simply because this article is an extension of that one.

On a side note, if you are a new member of Magic Bunny and you haven't taken the time to look at Top Hat from the beginning, I strongly suggest that you do. In fact, it is interesting just to note how this e-zine, under the good auspices of Jon Snoops, has evolved. The amount of knowledge that can be found in the series is phenomenal, to say the least. On this side note I'd also like to ask the members for articles to publish in this e-zine. Don't be intimidated by the material or the authors, just submit your article and be heard. It doesn't have to be a magic effect, it can be your thoughts on the world of magic with your complaint or your praise. Your voice means something, you know?

Okay, let's move on...

Why is a routine important? Have you ever taken the time to consider that thought? Over and over, we push the newer members of the magic community to build a routine. However, when do we really stop and consider what makes the routine so much stronger than just a single trick?

In a way, a routine is a mini play. It has a beginning, a middle and an end. Therefore, a routine is much more interesting than a single trick. The routine takes you from a trickster to a magician. Still, there is much more than just that simple fact.

Consider the sleights that you go through when doing a single trick. It may just be one sleight, as in the quick vanish of a coin. If you stop there, where did that coin go? You've built up tension in your audience with a simple vanish of a coin and now your spectators want to know, where did that coin go? If you don't release that tension, they will have no choice but to work on how you managed to make that coin vanish. Oddly, they might not want to know how you did it, but you've left them with no choice but to consider exactly how you managed to make that coin vanish. That is a form of mind control and you are responsible for it.

When you build up such tension, it is your job to release that tension, unless you want your spectators asking you how you did that. Not only will they ask, but they will try to come up with a logical explanation. Something that you need to fully understand is that whatever method they come up with ("It went up his sleeve..."), it is the correct method. Consider that for a moment...If a spectator decides that the coin went up your sleeve, whether it did or not is irrelevant. In the mind of the spectator, that was the method you used and therefore, the spectator is 100% correct. Never forget, perceptions are realities.

Of course, there is an easy way around allowing the spectators to perceive such things. The routine. After vanishing that coin, if you make it reappear, you've just taken away the need for your spectators to figure out how you made it vanish. Now, they want to know how you made it reappear! Even as such, the human mind works in a strange sort of way. They've forgotten to wonder how you made it disappear because

From the Desk of Michael Jay (cont.)

you've given them closure. What this means is that the coin's vanish is impossible, but, because it has returned, it is no longer impossible. The spectator has had the tension of an impossibility removed from their brain and now it seems completely reasonable. Yes, the human mind is a strange thing, indeed!

Okay, here's the situation, you've vanished a coin then brought it back to existence. You now have the beginning of a routine. You've gone a bit farther than a single trick and have done two tricks. Where can you go from here? Before we answer that question, let's go off on a tangent, shall we?

I love reading our forums. One of the reasons that I find them so important in my day to day life is that they offer me pause to think about my own material. In a recent discussion on the most valuable "pen through bill" effect, I started working out how I could routine that particular effect so that it wasn't just a "simple one-off" to throw out during a close up show. One contributor to that discussion suggested that his use of the pen was the perfect lead in to his presentation of Gregory Wilson's "Recapped." Well, there's an excellent introduction into a strong routine. And, it could further be used to routine the routine.

Explain that your pen is just like a magic wand. You'd look pretty strange carrying a wand around, so you use your pen instead. To illustrate, you take out your pen and you ask to borrow a bill. You take the bill and using whatever technique you like, push the pen through that bill. After you remove the pen from the bill, showing that it is actually unharmed, allow the spectators to check the pen, if they please and put it away. For the following purpose, you must keep the pen in your shirt's breast pocket or your jacket's breast pocket. Oh, also, you must be wearing a suit jacket.

Now, reach into your pant's pocket and pull out a coin (or produce it from the air by having a clip with a coin next to the pocket that you put the pen into). Do a false transfer and, using the dirty hand, reach into your pocket and pull the pen back out. While you are grabbing the pen, drop the coin down your suit's sleeve. With pen in hand, use it as a wand and wave it over the hand that the spectators believe holds the coin. You've made the coin vanish using the pen that you've proved to be magical. You now have the beginning of a short routine and where you go from here is up to you.

Obviously, after showing the coin has vanished, all you need to do is drop your arm to your side and retrieve the coin by letting gravity do its job. If you're unsure as to how this should work, refer to Bobo's "Modern Coin Magic," specifically the section on sleeving. Wave the pen again, and the coin has reappeared. Simple, straight forward and eye popping magic – now isn't that exactly what you are looking for?

Now, put the pen away again and steal a second coin from your clip. You can now show one coin by pretending to pass it from one hand to the other. Jay Sankey teaches a strong way of doing this in his video "The Revolutionary Coin Magic of..." If you have that video, I would suggest a slick splits at this point. You are now free to do a two coin routine, or steal a third coin and go into a three fly or possibly the Ron Bauer presentation of "Gadabout Coins." Your ending for this will be a bit different than suggested, though, since you want to reintroduce the pen back into the routine and continue on, with a routined routine.

As you steal away all three coins, go into your pocket to grab the pen and ditch the coins in your breast pocket. Bring the pen back out and, with a wave and a flourish, the three coins (or two coins, if you did a two coin routine) are gone. You may now proceed into your presentation of Greg Wilson's "Recapped." You are now free to finish with that routine and put the pen away, or, if you are good at this and you have a receptive audience, move on to yet another routine that involves the pen in some way (this need not be overt – you can simply use the pen to have the spectator sign something or write something down).

However, if you consider the routine above, you have not only a routined routine, but an overall strong presentation that is properly set up. You have a strong opener that grabs attention – putting a pen through a borrowed bill. You have a bit slower of a middle, which is a coin routine that was introduced via the pen and uses the pen intermittently throughout. Finally, you have a fast paced finisher, which is the "Recapped" presentation.

From the Desk of Michael Jay (cont.)

Please understand, the point of this article is not to teach you how to do what I've described, but rather to give you something to think about in making your own magic stronger. I use the material above as an example. You may use the example as is, or you can use it as a guideline in how you should be putting your material together. Whatever you decide, look into the power of not only routining your material, but routining your routines to get the most power out of your magic presentations.

Until next month, you all take care.

By Michael Jay

I would like to thank all contributors this month for another fantastic read. If you would like to send in articles for August's edition, you can do so by emailing them to TopHat@magicbunny.co.uk before the 25th July. Pictures and text formatting also welcome!

Jon Snoops