

A Word From ...

... The Editor *Michael Jay*

 Normally the opening message describes the articles to follow. I won't be doing that. Instead, I'd just like to take this time to apologise to all for the length of time that you've waited for this fifth instalment of Top Hat. I can site many reasons for the delay, but suffice it to say that far too many situations conspired against us this time around. We will endeavour to publish the next issue in a more timely manner.

Take care and thank you for reading.

- Michael Jay - 

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We've All ...

...Been There

Essay

Tony Spallino

 I think it's safe to say that we've all been in this sort of situation: For one reason or another, you are just not practicing your magic anymore. It could be any one of a number of reasons, getting married and having a family (my own personal situation), a new job that takes up most of your time, a personal emergency such as health issues (which will hopefully never happen to any of you), or you just don't feel like working on it anymore. It happens to all of us. How long this break lasts will vary from a few weeks to several months to many years. The big question is, "What do we do about it?"

This article is about my own journey dealing with this and maybe it will give some insight into this predicament.

My own situation is probably typical of many of you. Work was crazy busy, I had recently gotten married, various things around the house needed to be taken care of, and the list goes on. I found myself unable to get in any sort of practice. I kept telling myself, "I'll get to it later!" A couple of years passed and I still hadn't cracked out a deck of cards. Thankfully, I'm not a professional magician (I'm a very happy amateur), so I didn't have to worry about bringing home a paycheck from this. Still, it was bothering me more and more as time went on.

Just as important, was the emotional impact that it was having on me. At first it was OK, but as time went on I got very anxious about getting back into magic. It started to feel like something important was missing from myself. That's when I knew it was time to get back into it...somehow. You start to feel like you're on

a 5 step program of some sort. You have some anger that you can't work on your magic. Then you start to make excuses, trying to rationalize the reasons why. After a while, you start to get to an acceptance about what is happening and decide you have to make changes in your life to handle it.

How to resolve such a troubling situation? The first thing to do is look on the positive side. Being a dedicated amateur meant that I could carry my magic in whatever direction I wanted. The sky was the limit! I had one main question burning in my brain: What did *I* want to do?

This is a great opportunity for you to reinvent yourself. If you have a performing character you can tweak it or even change it entirely until you get to where you want to be. If there's a particular effect you wanted to try, then now's a good time. Take a good look at all the effects and performances that have worked for you and the ones that haven't. Look at yourself with a fresh pair of eyes. For me, this was the greatest thing about taking a break. I completely reexamined my own work and have decided on a path that is more me than ever before.

The big thing you have to look at now is your practice time. Martial artists will talk about the stronger tree is the one that bends in the wind instead of fighting it. That's what you have to start doing. My situation is not going to change, probably neither is yours. Fighting it will just result in more aggravation. How can you adapt to it? Are there different times you can practice that you had never thought of before? Instead of one long practice time, can you break things up into several smaller practices? Readjust your schedule to accommodate practice sessions. Since I stay up later than my family, I found myself watching magic DVD s and practicing after they went to bed. I thought more about taking books with me on trips than I used to. I started packing coins and decks of cards with me everywhere I went, just for those few minutes that might come up. Don't pass up a chance!

A big question for me was whether to get back into magic with effects I already knew or start with something completely fresh? I think this question is personal to you. There are advantages to both. Starting with known effects gives you a chance to get back into your magic without stressing over learning something completely new. You can be in a comfort zone that might help you feel good about your magic again. Conversely, working on something new and fresh can also be a lot of fun! While in a magic shop the other day, I found a great Hot Rod and I have been having lots of fun with it! It has really reignited the fun I have with magic. Sometimes you might even be able to use both, the familiar and new, to get those creative juices flowing.

The last lesson that I've really had to learn is that you have plenty of time. Take some of the pressure and guilt off of yourself. So what if you took a break? Whether it was because you needed a mental break or because life got in the way, it happens! The world is not going to end because you had to step away from magic for a bit. The important thing is for you to feel good about it and to get back to working on the art of magic that we all love!



The Long ...

... Card Trick

Effect

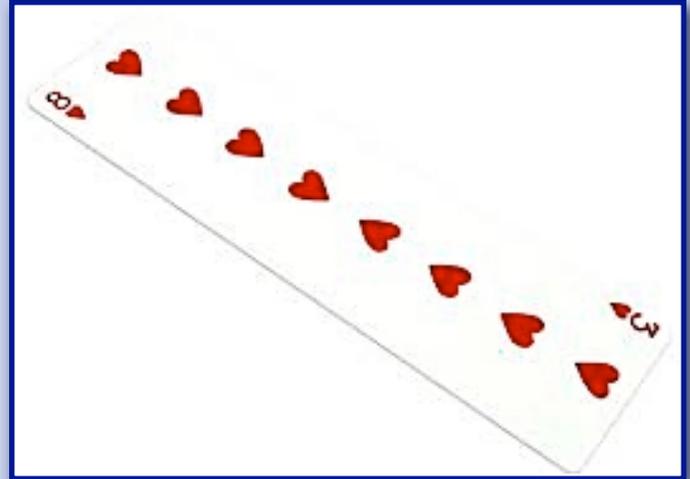
Elliott Hodges



I want to share a few thoughts about the "long card" prop. It's a strip of plastic with a high playing card value at one end and a low playing card value at the other. For instance, my card has the 10H at one end and the 3H at the other with heart pips running down the middle. (Pictured below is with an 8 and a 3, but it will give you the idea.)

The trick is, of course, to force the 10 of hearts on a spectator, but begin to pull the long card out from your inside pocket showing the three. They tell you that it wasn't their card before you pull the card out the whole way, showing that you were right. This normally leads to much gasping and hilarity and occasionally fainting on the spectators part.

For me it has always garnered good reactions and is a great example of leading the spectator up the garden path. A few years ago, however, I discovered a new way to do it which leads to bigger and better reactions.



There are two phases. Have stacked on top of your deck the 3 of hearts and then the 10 of hearts (in our example).

Force the 3 on the spectator, have them remember it and show it to everyone before returning it to the deck. As you do this say, "It really doesn't matter where you put your card back because in my pocket I have a prediction card that I put there earlier. Was your card the three of hearts?" As you name the 3, pull the card out to show just the three.

Let them react, laugh, sign their life over in service to you etc. and hopefully they'll ask, "Can you do that again?" If they don't then ask them if they want to see it again.

From this point you proceed as in the standard trick. Force the ten on the spectator and say, "Now hopefully your card wasn't the three like last time, but was it a heart?" As you say '...three like last time...' pull the card out to show just the three again and hold it in that position.

When they confirm it was a heart, ask what heart it was and when they say the ten pull the card out the rest of the way.

That's it in a nutshell!

The first phase really seems to set the second phase up nicely. Quite often, if I can only perform one trick to a group, it will be this one because there are two magical moments in the one trick.

Hope you try it - let me know if you do.



The Audience Is Always Right (Even When They Are Wrong)

Essay

Stuart Bowie



In many forms of magic the audience comes together expecting to be entertained. One of the differences about working close up is that the potential audience may not have chosen to watch; indeed they may not even be aware that entertainment is on offer. Different people react differently to the unexpected offer to watch magic and by now I recognise categories, each responding differently to the

approach of cheerful Charlie with a breezy "Hello. I'm the magician!" The scale runs roughly from the 'Magic Hater' to 'Magic Lover'.

The **True Magic Hater** exists. Now I know that comes as a shock so I'll say it again s-l-o-w-l-y. The True Magic Hater exists. There are people who hate magic, hate magicians, hate everything and anything connected to magic. Take my advice. When you meet one of these cut and run. This is not the time for proselytising. It is not your job to convert the unconvertible. Paradoxically in small numbers the True Magic Hater is a bonus. Encounter one on a busy night and it is one less table to do!

A close relation is the **Pseudo Magic Hater**. The P.M.H. believes they hate magic and if asked "Would you like to see some magic?", will always say "NO!" Tommy Wonder pointed that they are avoiding what they imagine your magic to be like. As they have never seen you perform, how can they not like your magic? The P.M.H. can be converted. Show them one trick. If they still don't want to watch then smile, thank them and depart for pastures green. Get it right, though, and more often than not you can convert the Pseudo Magic Hater. They might even become fans.

True Lovers can be spotted a mile off, they are the couple letting the food go cold and eating each other. This may seem pretty obvious but True Lovers have other things on their minds and do not usually want to see a card trick. Speak to them, but keep it brief, wish them happy whatever, smile and tip toe away. They may not see you go. On second thought they might not have seen you arrive. But beware, if you ever encounter groups of people behaving like True Lovers you have probably wandered into the wrong venue. Groups of people eating each other are definitely not interested in seeing a card trick. Leave immediately before the police arrive. All publicity is not good publicity.

Scientists have never heard about the "willing suspension of disbelief." They insist on dreaming up impossible conditions for the performance. "Ah! But can you do it if I look inside, underneath, tie you hands up and suspend you from the ceiling?" Well, "No actually, this is a magic performance and I cheat." I often wonder if the Scientists leap up in the middle of Shakespeare to declare "If you really are Hamlet let me see your birth certificate." Scientists are a pain. They limit the material you do to the perfect angle and deprive themselves of some of your best work. As always be nice. No one employs a magician to upset the customers, so don't engage with this game because even if you win you lose. Show them some of your very best lateral brain stoppers and remember to smile as you exit gracefully.

My least favourite is the **Smart Alex Kid**. Typically a boy between nine and eleven years old, supremely confident, supremely wrong, the S.A.K. provides a running commentary to the performance with false yet confident explanations. The worst thing is that the S.M.K. is nearly always accompanied by the **Smug Parent**. The S.P thinks that the sun shines out of their S.A.K.'s bum. The look, if not the intervention, says "There then, Mr. Magician, you can't fool our Kevin who is so smart!" One of the comforting things about the Smug Parent is that they are notoriously unreliable. Do something that clearly does fool Kevin and the SP is quick to change sides. "There then, Kevin, explain that!". Do I sound as if this is confrontational - a battle? Don't be deceived, this is not a battle - it's outright war.

Beware the **Bored Couple**. Married for eight hundred years they said everything there ever was to say during the first three months. Now they have come out for the night, hoping to relieve the boredom. You provide entertainment, human contact and conversation. They will watch you all night. Don't get enmeshed. One foot into the tar pool and you may be there for life. Two tricks, maybe three. One

conversation only. Take your pick - how you started in magic; is Derren Brown really the devil incarnate; magicians of the past; how you learn new tricks; joining the magic circle; whatever. One, and one conversation only, then LEAVE. I'll say that again LEAVE. If your ego needs this prolonged attention you are seriously sick. LEAVE DAMN YOU!!!!

Most audiences, thank goodness, are **Middle of the Road Lovelies**. They like the magic, laugh at the right places and clap to order. Afterwards they tell the management you were wonderful and to keep using the magician. They are the stock in trade of the working magician. Look after them. Do your very best stuff. Be polite. Keep them wanting more. Smile. (Lots.) Middle of the Road Lovelies make the world go around.

Last but not least the **True Magic Lovers**. Yes they do exist. I'll say that again s-l-o-w-l-y. True Magic Lovers exist. The True Magic Lovers love magic. They will love you. Whatever you do they will be amazed. They just love magic, good magic, bad magic, they just love it. True Magic Lovers are not critical and will appreciate your best stuff as well as the *vin ordinaire*, but at heart they just love magic. Save them. Cherish them. There are so few, so refined, so developed in taste, so discerning, as we:

The True Magic Lovers!



Do You Do ...

... Kids Parties?

Essay

Gary Scott



Do you do Kids parties?

Well here we are with the most common question proposed to the magic community by laymen after seeing you cut somebody in half, pull out their small intestine and restore them. Ok, maybe not that extreme, but why, as a magician, especially if you're a working magician, do laymen have the assumption that magic is for kids? No matter what you do, magic is for kids.

Is it to do with bringing back that moment of childhood wonderment as proposed by Paul Harris? No!

Are the effects in your shows performed in a childlike manner? No!

So what is it about magic and magicians that screams, "Warning: Outside of this stage setting/corporate function/trade show, or any other kind of non-child working environment, magic is just bullshit for kids?"

Nothing, and I mean absolutely nothing, in my repertoire could be considered a childlike presentation; I have not worked a children's party/show for over 6 years; I do not promote myself in any way as a kid's magician/entertainer.

This is not a new point of view. This goes back over a hundred years. Can you believe it? Yes, over a hundred years. Some of the older texts that you probably own already have described this problem.

Here is my favourite quote, so far, from my favourite book on magic, about this rather strange perception:

"People nowadays are beginning to look upon the magician as one who can especially amuse the children. The magician has lost the dignity of his calling and is in imminent danger of seeing his self-respect go with it." *The Dramatic Art of Magic* by Louis C. Haley (1910)

So, how did this all come about?

With magic's widespread appeal, you would think that the adult laity would have a more perceptive view on magic and magicians. For some strange, unknown reason the perception of magic is that of a thing for

children. I could go and perform 'Saw' a thousand times, set myself on fire, walk on glass, perform Lance Burton's candles and doves act and do a torn and restored card, yet the assumption that I perform for children at birthday parties will still come up. If I say that what I do is for adults, all of the sudden I become Roy 'Chubby' Brown / George Carlin pulling a rabbit out of a hat or making balloon swords.

I have a theory about the change and it is technology based (and it is only a theory - mine of course). I have no evidence, but then again we really have no answer.

Just as the golden era of magic was coming to an end, the popularity of going to the theatre was also being minimised by a strange new attraction. Film. People had now been taken out of a live setting and science had created a new and wondrous thing. A recording of past events that could be projected anywhere for others to see. How is it possible to create something so marvellous, created by normal man, without the need for someone to possess magical abilities? This would automatically see the shift in public perception of what a stage magician was all about. Science. Science is not magic, therefore neither is the magician.

So what happens to the magician now? What was his role as the technology changed?

To entertain? Be a generic entertainer perhaps?

Well that is what happened. The magician found himself sandwiched between performing dogs and jugglers during the Vaudeville boom. It absolutely killed the magician as a serious performer of the time. Before Vaudeville, magicians were the greatest and most well paid entertainers of that generation.

After the Vaudeville era came to a crashing end, what became of the magician?

There is a gap between the end of Vaudeville and the working magician of today. The stage, unless you were a household name, became obsolete. The magician would have to find different venues to work his craft. Cinema (and eventually TV) became the norm for entertainment. There have been spurts of greatness, although it was mainly television based.

We had Doug Henning in the 70's. In the 80's we had David Copperfield and Paul Daniels. The end of the 90's saw David Blaine come into prominence. These guys had people running back to the theatre to see the magician on stage.

Today, if you were to ask laity what a magician does, they will probably reply with something along the lines of, "He does tricks at kid's parties and at weddings doesn't he?"

Not having his own TV special or series, the magician has been condensed to a silly little guy going around tables, at various functions, doing silly little tricks.

The unknown magician wants work and any work will do. What happened to the idea that magic is art? What happened to the grandeur of magic?

A mixture of technology becoming the top-end of entertainment and the idea that a magician needed to find a working stage forced the magician into the home as a performance venue and there you have the younger members of the family entranced by the magician. So at a reduced rate (compared to a stage performer), the magician became exposed in that environment which forced the change in presentation geared towards the children.

Is there anything we can do to bring back the respect of the magician as an entertainer for adults? (Note that I never wrote adult entertainer.) I'm wondering if we, as magicians, can learn to say, "No?" Say, "No," to performing across the board just for the sake of a pay check. Maybe we should stick to our respective

genres, so upon meeting a layman for the first time, they may even learn to ask the question, "What kind of magician are you?"

Why not let the children's entertainer be the children's entertainer? Why not let magic regain its status as the greatest of all the performing arts?

So there you have it. My opinion, and it is only my opinion of course, on how the expectation of the magician being the 'Child Party Performer' came to be and a possible solution.

I think I can sum up what I'm trying to say with the words of Max Maven, "Magicians have taken something inherently profound and rendered it trivial"

Well a short and sweet conclusion and, perhaps, something for you to think about.

See you on Magic Bunny



The Personality ...

Essay

... Lie

Dan Cunningham



The perceived personality problem of David Blaine and Dynamo is a fiction that exists only in the mind of magicians. This is evident due to the sheer amount of negative comments that can be found on many a forum and the criticisms levelled at these two performers include the words insipid, dull, one-dimensional, and even boring.

In actual fact David Blaine and Dynamo have personalities that are suited perfectly for their profession. Their profession can be, in my estimation and seemingly those of the general public, summed up in these words: Person who does tricks.

They are not comedians, entertainers, story tellers, jugglers or jesters. They are magicians and magicians are expected to do tricks.

I've often wondered why two of the most successful magicians today are considered to be deficient in this way. After many long discussions, I've noticed a startling tendency amongst magicians to consider their tricks to be of little importance or, at the very least, not as important as the presentation or performance.

Maybe this is simply a question of semantics? In order to eliminate as much confusion as possible I will define a couple of terms as best as I can. In so doing I will suggest to you that if you disagree with these fundamental definitions then you will almost certainly disagree with the rest of this article. I also would like to apologise if this information is insulting to your intelligence, but I believe that these definitions are of critical importance.

- **Effect:** What is perceived to have occurred in the collective mind of the audience.
- **Method:** What actually happens.
- **Trick:** Effect and method combined.

I have engaged in discussions which have yielded statements like, "The trick is 10% important and the performance is 90% important" and "Seeing your face is more important than the trick." I sometimes wonder if the word 'effect' would be a better description than the word 'trick,' but it is not my position to encourage the readers of this fine magazine to substitute my words for theirs. So being the lily livered liberal that I am I will water down the above assertions to this: The trick is not as important as the performance of it or the personality of the performer.

This seems to be the position of too many magicians and I think it could provide us with a clue as to why the observable consensus believes that David Blaine and Dynamo would benefit from having more of an engaging personality, regardless of the undeniable success in which they both share. To that end, I will now examine this admittedly paraphrased statement with the following two questions:

1) Is this statement true?

The first thing we should consider that there is a seemingly never ending endeavour to improve on existing magical effects. These improvements are rarely designed to make life easier for the magician, but rather they are designed to make the effect seem even more impossible. If the tricks were not important then surely all the improvements would be geared towards making the tricks less demanding, and subsequently less impressive, by allowing the performer to focus on presentation. How much money needs to be spent, on a very regular basis, on the latest and greatest trick before we make note of the fact that this is simply not the case? (The mention of a forum on the green place was almost accidental.)

Maybe we should take a couple of tricks used by your common, or garden variety, magician as examples. How about an ACR? What is it about the trick impresses the spectator? What is it that the spectator enjoys? The answer to these questions is simple. They enjoy and are impressed by the illusion of a card going into the middle of the deck and returning to the top magically. This trivial feat could be considered impossible and subsequently the spectator enjoys seeing something impossible. They are enjoying the magical effect, and so they should be, given that your goal is to appear to be someone who has the command of what is possible and what is not. Is it the amusing patter that they enjoy or the elaborate story that sometimes accompanies it? Maybe, but this surely is secondary? The thing that they will remember is the fact that something impossible has occurred, not that the deliverer of this miracle was witty or amusing.

How about a ring flight? What is the selling point of this trick? If you were involved in the advertising blurb for this what would you say? Would it be that this trick affords you the opportunity to be witty? Or is it that something that seemingly cannot happen has happened?

Let's continue with the example of the ring flight. How come gentleman like David Bonsall manufacture this for others to use? Surely if performance and personality are more important than the actual trick then he would have little success with his sales, since the refinements of this trick have taken place as Mr. Bonsall has been performing in his own unique style and this would be difficult, if not impossible, to replicate. This would be the case if the trick was dependent on the delivery, or even the deliverer. The fact is that if someone who didn't even speak the same language as you took a ring from your finger, made it vanish and appear on a keyring in their pocket, then that would be impressive, irrespective of the personality of that someone.

It should be obvious to you by now that I disagree with the majority, but I am mindful of the fact that performing a trick in a working environment has more challenges than perhaps that of an amateur. Maybe the working professional has more reason to believe that the tricks are not as important as the performer?

There is no doubt that there are some requisite skills of the working magician that are not absolutely necessary for the enthusiast. The working pro needs to be able to acquire attention quickly and in a manner that will facilitate the performance of his repertoire. But this does not change the fact that his repertoire consists of tricks. Once the performer has some control of the attention of the audience, the tricks are now very important. My reasoning is that the person interrupting them is a magician and, as we know, using the aforementioned trustworthy barometer of the unwashed public, magicians perform tricks.

Let's use the example of the ring flight once more. Now I know I am using this trick as an example often, but with that admission I would ask you to be aware that I could comfortably replace this trick with many

a standard fare of the working magician without much difficulty. After you have the attention of your audience what are they expecting? Those that think that Blaine and Dynamo have some issues with their presentation may think that the audience are expecting an amusing banter filled presentation of a borrowed ring appearing on a key chain. Those that have been more observant will be aware that your audience are expecting to see something impossible, for example...simply...a borrowed ring appearing on a key chain.

Some may repeat the idiom, "They don't remember what you did, they remember how you made them feel." Maybe this is true. But from the testimony of those who are frequent contributors to The Bunny, those that pay their mortgage with the money earned by performing magic have relayed, in some considerable number, stories where a spectator will ask something along the lines of 'Can you do put a phone in a bottle' and so on. Surely this would suggest to you that spectators have a habit of actually taking notice of the impossible feat that occurred? How many times in your working performance has someone asked you, "Can you be as engaging and as entertaining as Dynamo?"

They remember the performer because of the trick that was performed.

2) Why is this statement made?

Well, as with any idiom, it sounds quite profound, but I think that guilt plays a bigger part. When we magicians talk amongst ourselves we will often scoff at how simple the mechanics of the trick actually are. We enjoy the fact that something very, very simple can fool the minds of even the smartest of spectators. But that fact, as amusing as it is, can also be a little unsettling. The fact is that the tools of our trade are oftentimes ones so simple that they can be mastered by children; the ingenious thinking behind most magical effects makes them accessible to everybody. Who can blame us for deluding ourselves that the tricks aren't that important? It only makes sense that, a second after thinking 'If they new the secret behind that trick they could do it as well as I could,' we would reassure ourselves with the thought 'But the trick isn't important, its the performance that matters - I'm what matters.'

As I stated before, the general public expect magicians to do tricks. How can we be expect to be taken seriously when we constantly tell ourselves that the very thing that our audiences wish to see is of little importance?

Dynamo and David Blaine have got it right.



All But Gone

Effect

Mathew Parrott

 **Effect:** The magician fans out a deck of cards showing all the cards. He has the participant select a card and place it in the middle of the deck. Turning over the deck he gives the bottom card a rub and it goes blank. He fans out the cards again and shows them all to be blank but the selected card.

Needed:

- * A deck of cards
- * A blank face card
- * A lefty Bicycle deck card (lefty cards pictured opposite)

Set up: Have the blank face card second from bottom in the deck. Take a lefty



Bicycle card and place it on top of the deck, remove the matching card from the normal deck and place it on top of the lefty card.

Method: Use a standard fan to show the deck as normal. Try to fan it so you don't fan the first and last few cards, that way you won't show the blank face card second from bottom and the blank index second from top.

Force the top card however you please, personally I use a slip force as it maintains the rest of the deck in the needed order. There are two methods to move the lefty card to the middle of the deck, either you can have the participant place the card back on top of the deck, double lift and place in the middle. Or simply as the participant is having others look at the card slip cut the lefty card from the top to the middle, which is my preferred method. Have the spectator return the card anywhere into the middle of the deck.

Turn the deck over and show the bottom card. Use an Erdanese Change (Erdanese, 1902) to change the card to the blank card below. After that it is a simple matter of using a reverse fan to show all the cards blank, but because of the lefty deck having the pips on the other side there appears to be one card left in the middle of the deck.

This can work as a standalone card effect in a close up routine or you can simply say "well I can't use this deck anymore," pack it away and pull out another deck. Another way is to control the blank face card and the lefty card together and ditch them using any method you wish. You're then left with a normal deck.

References: Erdanese, S.W. (1902). *Expert at the Card Table: The Classic Treatise on Card Manipulation*. Location unconfirmed: Self Published





60 Second Interview ...

... Ali Cook

Interview

Alex Radway



Hi Ali, thanks for taking the time to speak to me today, 20 questions. Start.....now!

What was the last trick you saw that completely fooled you?

When I saw Siegfried and Roy's show as a teenager, one of their opening illusions was of their lead dancer visually melting away from a water tank.

It was magic. Also the first time I saw Teller turn coins into goldfish. I was astonished.

You were part of the "50 Greatest Magic tricks" series a few years back along with your Monkey Magic co-stars, if you had to pick your number 1 routine to watch, what would it be?

Juan Tamariz's FISM winning act. The Paris act. (Weirdly not on the list)

When someone says, "you're a magician? Show me a trick!" what do you show them?

I usually do a watch steal under the guise of a Dai Vernon's three coins across in The Further Lost Inner Secrets.

As we all have one, what's your most memorable time you completely messed up a trick/routine?

Well I remember being about seventeen performing card in ceiling in an old stately home at a corporate in Derbyshire. I threw the cards up and it stuck to the ceiling but the rotting plasterboard cracked and a clump of ceiling crashed to the ground. You can't close bigger...

When performing (either stage or close up) what is your favorite opener and closer?

I change my show every year now, coming up with a new hour of material but in the last couple of years my favourite opener was Servais Le Roy's swapping of the heads of Chickens and Ducks which I performed on Penn and Teller.

My current favourite closer is the water tank I performed on The Slammer and Penn And Teller.

Which effect out there do you wish you could have been the one who invented it?

Dai Vernon's triumph. There have been so many variations but I still think his is the best and most elegant solution.

You've had the chance to meet a lot of other magicians on your various TV shows, who do you admire the most?

I admire Darwin Ortiz's thinking, David Roth's handling and overall I really enjoy the thinking and performances of Juan Tamariz and Ricky Jay.

What is the best piece of magic-related advice you've ever been given?

A stand up comic friend of mine said that a stand up gig is your relationship with the audience. You just happen to be telling jokes. I think magic is your relationship with the audience, you just happen to be doing tricks.

Are there many additional challenges performing on TV and to a TV studio audience than with a regular stage show?

It's completely different. What works well on stage may not work well on TV and vice versa. As a general rule though it's much harder to perform live as you have to hold an audience for say up to an hour and a half and you learn how to stand your ground when saying opening a comedy club or working a room where they aren't familiar with your work.

On Monkey Magic, how did you end up with the name Monkey Boy?

It was Andy Nyman's idea.

If you had to give away your entire magic library except for one item, what would you keep?

I'd keep the Five Points In Magic by Juan Tamariz.

Great, thanks for those, now for some non-magic questions:

When you're not thinking about magic, what's on your mind?

I really enjoy reading books by Alain De Botton. So I guess I have a layman's interest in philosophy.

What is your most treasured item in your house?

My bed!

If you weren't a magician, what would you be doing for a living?

I wanted to make music like Daft Punk when I was younger.

Do you have any non-magic related hobbies/interests?

I really enjoy acting and writing and stand up and... they're pretty related aren't they?

What was the last film you saw? Any good?

I watch about ten films a week. The last film I really enjoyed is an old film called Mystic River. It's superb. I also really enjoyed Shame directed by Steve McQueen and Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy.

What was the last piece of music to get stuck in your head?

I'm almost embarrassed to admit but its We Found love By Rihanna featuring Calvin Harris

Ah, i must admit I find that track very catchy too! If the world were going to end tomorrow, what would you do today?

Work on my pinky count of course.

Who is your current/childhood celebrity crush?

Probably Rihanna or Freida Pinto.

However I pretty much have a crush on everybody. Walk into Starbucks I'll fancy the girl behind the counter turn around I'll fancy the woman sat opposite me. Even the dodgy looking receptionist at the doctors I'd give her the benefit of the doubt and imagine what she looked like twenty years ago.

And finally, very important question: what's your favourite ice cream flavour?

Chocolate!

Brilliant, thanks a lot for those Ali, enjoy the rest of your day!

As well as performing all over the country, Ali's TV credits include The Jerry Atrick Show, Monkey Magic, The Secret World of Magic, Dirty Tricks, and Penn & Teller: Fool Us.

www.alicook.com



Respect The Art

Essay

Mark Williams

 Magic has seen quite a number of changes and not all of them have been good. Lost in the shuffle (excuse the pun) is respect for our Arcane Arts.

There has been a flood of one trick DVD's to hit the market, lately. Some of these have been really good, while others have been wrongly advertised and turned out to be complete trash. Gone are the days when books were printed with a plethora of magical effects and general presentational ideas.

Some of the "newbies" in the magic market are quick to produce and market effects without doing the proper research. They give little credit, where credit is actually due. They are in it for the money and nothing else. By not researching their latest and coolest move or effect, they totally disrespect our Art. Many times, they soon find out, they have re-invented the wheel. Yet, by the time they realize it or it is pointed out to them... well, it's already too late.

Combing the tomes that have been written on Magic, one can discover many hidden gems. There are even some diamonds in the rough. New discoveries await those who dare open the penned pages of a magical publication. Secrets shine through like beacons and advice is freely given to anyone who comprehends its meaning. Such literature should be the starting point for what is deemed to be new. Often these treatises are overlooked in favor of a quick buck. Had the time been taken to find the proper credits, then their new trick becomes an old veteran.

Respect our Art. Do the right thing and reach out to these bound behemoths of magical knowledge. Give credit, where credit is due. Be inspired by standing atop the shoulders of giants. Do not allow the monetary reward to cloud your judgment. Discovering the roots of our Magical Arts will reward you in ways you never thought possible. You will become a better student, a better magician and a better person.

Best Magical Regards!



Allen Tipton A Tribute

Tribute

Dean Jorgensen

 There are no words to describe how kind, genuine, unselfish and loving Allen Tipton was. There are also no shortage of people that will tell you tales about Allen, how generous he was to them, or how he helped them out with something

A man whose knowledge in magic was only part of the man, but the man I know best to write about.

Allen took me under his wing and turned me from someone who had some children's magic props into somebody, less than a year later, who was confident enough to entertain 450 children to rave reviews.

The act, confidence and showmanship were mine, but I owed so much to Allen. His endless tweaking and improving of effects that were at one time good, turned great. Contact on an everyday basis that started out with improving my act, turned into a friendship I treasured so dearly. A knowledgeable gentlemen with a wealth of experience in so many fields and always willing to share so many great stories.

I will miss Allen every day, and even more so when I have a children's gig as he would always go over everything and put things into a running order for me, as well as advise me on what to drop and what to keep in the act. This would always give me 100% confidence and ensure a fantastic performance.

Sounds like a cliché but if the World had more people like Allen, it would be a better place. Said about so many, but so true in Allen's case.

RIP Allen



Secrets Behind The Magic The Actor's Box Of Tricks - part 3

Essay

Allen Tipton

 Secret No. 4: PROPS

Make sure the audience can see ALL of the prop or props that you are using (e.g. close up with a deck of cards: Do not do everything with the deck held flat. Around a table not everyone will see the faces of the cards. Also if you persist in looking down at them you will lose eye control over your audience.). Keep most props basically just opposite your diaphragm (your middle) and occasionally to one side of you, but again ask yourself, "Can they ALL SEE the prop or props?"

Never, unless the trick's plot calls for it, hold the prop in front of your face. If you are working on a platform or stage remember that if the prop is too high in front of your body, the front rows cannot see your face. Remember that some misdirection cues come from you face.

Here is where mirror rehearsal can be useful, but never rely solely on it. Practice with cards, a tumbler, a silk, coins etc. in front of the mirror - NOT necessarily doing the trick, just showing the prop off. Can the man in the mirror see all of it (or whichever part of the prop he should see)?

Keep everything visual and note:

Are you over displaying it? Under displaying it? Too quickly? Too slowly? Are THEY SEEING what you want them to see? There is an old saying and a true one, "If the audience can see, they hear better."

Secret No. 5: REHEARSAL

In rehearsal you need to be aware of your limitations. Ask yourself: Does the handling/sleight I am using require a knack, a skill I don't have?

For years as a boy & as a teenager and in my 20's I tried back palming. My hands are broad and my fingers are fairly long BUT even after years I could not back palm without exposure and returning the cards back to the palm—I found impossible. For exercise in the privacy of my room? Yes. For in front of the Public? No!

Ask yourself, "Is it attainable or not by Me?" Even after extensive practice and rehearsal, can it be achieved by Me? By all means dream and use the sleight for yourself, but can you get away with it safely and without exposing it in public?

Be serious about this and, most importantly, be truthful with yourself.

If it is not working for You, then look for an alternative. A safe alternative. Leave the non worker out of the Act.

Magician's ego is the cause and source of more exposure and lack of respect towards magic by the public than anything else. The success, enjoyment and liking of a magic performance, in public, is in your hands. Do not let down those who have gone before you.

Magic is usually a solitary art. We all 99% of the time rehearse ALONE. Never a good thing. Learn the moves, learn the handling, have a basic routine and although at this stage you may have to improvise the patter—try rehearsing with a trusted close friend, but not a magician. You will only get the 'I do it like this or this is my move' syndrome. He is NOT YOU!

Get the routine to flow and work at the correct pace. See if you know someone who has theatrical experience and whose work you have seen and respect.

The exceptions to the above - 'do not ask another magician' - are known magicians (such as Duncan Trillo, Brian Sefton, Colin Rose etc.). In other words experienced magicians who will teach & direct the things BEHIND the magic for you.

Copperfield, Stan Kramien, Darren Browne, Doug Henning et al used a director. Even Dante had his first script for 'Sim Sala Bim,' written by Hollywood's Irving Thalberg.

CLOSE UP

Make up a 3 sided mirror like the ladies old dressing table mirrors—use 3 plastic mirrors and hinge them together with carpet tape. You can then watch your hands when learning the necessary sleight/handling from the front and the sides.

MENTAL REHEARSAL

Actors use this all the time. They go through their moves, their inflexions, their lines, their handling of props etc. in their minds, silently. You have to train yours to see all your effects inside your head, visually. Johnny Hart always did this. In this way, when you are on a train or a bus (not if you are driving a car) you can go through any routine or any act, without disturbance, in your head.

AFTER A PERFORMANCE

Analyse what you did. How did it go, or not go, with that audience? You **MUST** be truthful with yourself. If you can, get it on video, but remember the camera has a fixed, unrelenting eye and will only see your act from one point of view. Your audience sees you and your act with 2 eyes.

A better idea that I came across years ago was to have a portable audio recorder on the floor or side of your performing area and record your performance in sound only. When you play it back you'll have no visuals to distract you. Listen to your voice and script, but more importantly listen to your audience's reactions to the gags and the tricks.

You will learn a lot from this.



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Submit your article or effect to be included in the next issue to:

tophatv2@gmail.com

Deadline for submissions is:
31st May 2013

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Editor	Michael Jay
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Parting Shot



First, take a long hard look at what you do and only keep a few of the effects you do really well. Put away the rest and come back to them once you have had enough experience in the effects you do.

Second, invest in a small library containing books recognised as the standard works in both close up and stage.

Most of these books are not likely to be new titles.

Finally, (and this is important, even if you only do close up) get some stage experience, but in a non magical role.

This can be done by joining a local drama society. This will help you learn how to perform, in a relaxed manner, in front of an audience.

- Dale Shrimpton -



and don't forget to follow us on Twitter! - @MagicBunnyForum