

Secrets

THE MAGAZINE OF THE YOUNG MAGICIANS CLUB VOLUME 25 No 3 JUNE/JULY 2018



INSIDE
WONDERS FROM THE WORKSHOPS
THE MAGIC CASTLE • ROB JAMES
MATT PRITCHARD AND LOTS OF TRICKS



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Last *Secrets* I wrote: "One of the things I was most keen on when I took on the Editorship of *Secrets* over two years ago (how time flies) was to share your views and thoughts on magic in the magazine. One way of doing that is to have a YMC Member write a short report on the YMC Workshops that happen each month. I have been delighted with the pieces that Members have sent me so far but, in recent months, have found it harder to find Members who want to have a go at reporting... If I can't get

people to write the reports then a section of the magazine that I love will have to change, so if you have thought about having a go at reporting then don't assume that someone else is already doing it and do get in touch. I would love to hear from you." Thank you to Sam Saffron who did contact me and whose wonderful report on the April Workshop you will find in these pages. If you did think about contacting me and decided not to because you thought someone else would then please do get in touch, as so far Sam is the only person to contact me!

Also in the last issue I mentioned a forthcoming trip to the US and my hope to write something about it in these pages. As things turned out there is so much to say that I will be splitting it over two issues (and those are just the things that I am able to tell you about at the moment)! If you turn to page 8 I have tried to give you some idea of what it is like to work at The Magic Castle, perhaps the world's premiere magic venue, as well as some tips from my week there that will help you with your own magic.

Elsewhere in these pages you will find the usual selection of reviews, news, puzzles and tricks. With the tricks I always try to make sure that there is something for a range of difficulty levels and styles of magic but I would encourage you to spend some time with each trick. Particularly as you learn more about magic, and start to work on some of the more technical material, it is easy to dismiss 'simple' tricks but you will often find they are just as, if not more, effective than more complex routines.

Happy conjuring!

Will Houstoun

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The Magic Castle

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At a recent club night of The Magic Circle, we had an evening of Magic Room 101. *Room 101*, for those who do not know, is a TV show where guests have the opportunity to "get rid of" something that they dislike. In the TV show it can be anything, from food, to behaviour, to technology, etc. For our annual Room 101 at The Magic Circle, the

items have to be magic related.

On this particular occasion, there were some very valid suggestions made. One was the second-rate counterfeit cartoon characters who walk into a venue in the middle of a performance (particularly children's birthday parties) and who immediately distract the attention of your audience. It might be a naff Mickey Mouse lookalike, a pathetic Buzz Lightyear copy or a tacky fake Shrek. Often the poor costume has been hired from the local fancy dress shop and is being worn by the dad of

the birthday child and once he has entered in costume, now has no idea what to do. Meanwhile, the magician's show has been totally disrupted.

Another Room 101 suggestion was old artwork on magic props. Some dealers are still selling magic props that look like they were designed in the 1940s (and in many cases, probably were)! These might include bright red wooden boxes with gold trim taped on, bright yellow folders with fake Chinese looking motifs or illustrations of people or animals that look like they have come straight out of the 1934 *Boys' Own Annual*. It really is not difficult to update the look of your props with all the resources now available to us all with the use of computers.

Other items proposed to be banished to Room 101 included:

- Magicians who use the phrase "award winning magician" in their publicity when the only award they have won, if any, is a local club competition, or else they were in a prestigious competition but achieved third place!
- Magic in TV shows that looks like camera tricks, even when it is not!
- YouTube and other online video clips, of magicians performing routines which are unrehearsed or poorly performed.

The proposal which grew an instant round of applause, the loudest of the evening, was the penultimate suggestion of the



Spelmann's Got Talent

Continuing the now established trend of magicians being well received on *Britain's Got Talent* it was a pleasure to see Marc Spelmann receive a coveted golden buzzer on the programme. Circle Members now have at least one good reason to look forward to the live sections of the show!

The History Gathering @ The Magic Circle

The History Gathering at The Magic Circle will take place on June 9 and talks include Peter Brunning on Jardine Ellis, Andi Gladwin on Edward G Brown, Richard Evans on The Pinchbecks, Richard Kaufman on Cliff Green, Kobe Van Herwegen on Suzy Wandas, Laura London on Talma, Paul Kieve



evening and one which, I suspect, will apply to many of you. "People who shuffle and manipulate cards during shows and lectures." said Andy Clockwise as spontaneous applause filled the theatre. It is very rude to those performing or lecturing and disrespectful to fellow members of the audience who are distracted by the constant sound and movement in their peripheral vision, was how the argument was stated. Those of you who come to our Workshops will know that we regularly have to ask YMC Members not to do this! People who persist do not seem to realise just how irritating it is to others. I have even known it to be done during meetings I have attended! This behaviour was dispatched to Room 101 so hopefully it will not be necessary to ask members to stop at future Workshops!

So what would you put into Magic Room 101? I would be interested to hear your suggestions. Let me know by emailing them to me at chairman@youngmagiciansclub.co.uk and if I get a range of interesting responses, I'll tell you about them in a future column.

Enjoy your magic!

on Servais Le Roy and Barry Murray's film *Cavalcade of Conjurers*. To buy tickets, visit The Magic Circle web site, and click on the word 'EVENTS' at the top of the page. This will take you to the 'PUBLIC EVENTS' page. Scroll down to June 9 and you will see all the information on the day. You can then click on the blue 'BUY TICKETS' button to purchase your ticket.

During the interval, The Magic Circle museum and the Club Room bar are open once again and you'll have a chance to explore the fabulous headquarters. Then it's time for a dazzling show in The Magic Circle theatre to finish off your evening. Individuals can book online. Suitable for ages fourteen and above.

What's on at the circle



Full details of all public events and booking rates can be found at www.themagiccircle.co.uk

At Home with The Magic Circle 5 June and 19 June

A regular evening of mystery and wonder featuring some of the club's top magicians. This event features history, close-up and stage entertainment. Doors open at 7pm and the Club Room bar and museum are open. Parlour magic begins at 7.30pm.

History and Mystery at The Magic Circle 11 June

Enjoy a visit to the House of 10,000 Secrets with a unique experience at The Headquarters of The Magic Circle. Be enthralled by tales of past Masters of Magic during a guided tour of the building which houses priceless treasures, memorabilia and magical posters. Make a wish while turning three times on The Magic Circle emblem beneath the magnificent staircase which leads to the Devant Room displaying unique apparatus of the past. Marvel at the hand-painted murals on the staircase depicting magic from its early beginnings to the present day.

Enjoy some entertaining close-up magic presented by a skilled member of The Magic Circle and a unique live magic performance in our fully equipped theatre which includes a hearing loop.

Doors open 11am, event starts at 11.30am and lasts two hours, which leaves plenty of time to explore the rest of London. Suitable for ages fourteen and above.

trick

Twister



Effect

The effect of this highly popular trick of mine is that the four kings magically reverse themselves, one by one, and then transform into the

four aces. As an extra, optional ending, the aces are cut into the deck, and the missing four kings are seen to be face up in the deck. One of the things I'm mostly proud of is that you do the whole thing with a (thin) five-card-only packet.

Twister first appeared in *The Card Magic of Paul Gordon* (1994), and then in *Nocturnal Creations*, and finally in Harry Lorayne's *Apocalypse*.

Set-up

The aces are on top of the deck in, from the top, B/B/R/R order; the kings are face down on the table in alternating colour order (Figure 1). To perform this routine with a shuffled deck, simply cull the aces to the top whilst removing the four kings. Or, go into this routine after any four-king routine that leaves the aces on top of the deck.

PERFORMANCE

Phase One

Obtain a left pinky break under the four aces as you reach to pick up the four kings. Flip the four kings face up onto the deck, immediately picking up the block of eight cards at your left fingertips whilst the left hand still holds the deck in dealing grip. The packet is held from above in Biddle Grip. Whilst squaring the packet of cards with both hands, get a right thumb break above the lowermost red ace in preparation for Marlo's ATFUS (Any Time Face-Up Switch). I always prefer to use my left third fingertip to pull down on the lowermost ace to prepare for ATFUS. I think it's better than lifting up with the right thumb (Figure 2).

To perform ATFUS, use the left thumb to peel off the first king and place it to the bottom of the right-hand packet. The left thumb now peels off the second king from face to rear.

Now, just before the left thumb goes to peel the third king from the face of the right-hand packet, the three cards below the right thumb break are dropped onto the top of the deck. The third king is peeled to the bottom of the right-hand packet, and the fourth king is simply left on display at the top of the packet.

Position check: On top of the deck is a face-down red ace followed by two face-up kings. The small in-hand packet consists of three face-down aces sandwiched between two face-up kings, one red and one black. Place the deck face up onto the table in front of you, as you will need it later.

First Count: Perform any magical action with patter to match, and Elmsley Count the packet to show that one king

has turned face down.

In actual fact, the spectators have seen the same red king twice.

Second Count:

Holding the packet in Elmsley Count grip, use your left thumb to peel off the first king into your waiting left hand. Repeat with the second king. Then, with your right thumb, block push-off two cards as one,

The count looks the same as the Elmsley Count, but you've shown two face-up kings and two face-down kings.

followed by the last card, onto the cards in your left hand. The count looks the same as the Elmsley Count, but you've shown two face-up kings and two face-down kings.

Third Count: Hold the packet in right-hand Biddle Grip, and use your left thumb to peel off three face-down cards into the waiting left hand. The three cards are held in left-hand pinch grip, with thumb on top and fingers underneath. The right hand holds a double showing a face-up king. Slide this double to third from top of the left-hand three-card spread (Figure 3). Close the packet.

Fourth Count: Perform one more regular Elmsley Count to show four face-down cards. As you complete the count, however, catch a break under the (last) top two cards, and cut them to the bottom of the packet. Take your applause. Note

that at the start of the first count, particularly for other magicians, I openly display the thinness of the packet. It looks good!

Phase 2

For the second climax, patter on these lines: "Did you like it, or would you rather see a four-ace trick?" Flip the packet face up, and do an Elmsley Count to show four aces. The face (red) ace shows twice, but no one notices. They are too astounded to notice!

Phase 3

This may well be an anti-climax, but it does clean up the packet and the deck. You will have to decide for yourself whether or not to use it. Whilst

holding the face-up ace packet in your left hand, pick up the face-up deck and place it onto the aces. Without pausing, cut the deck at centre, flip it over, and spread it face down on the table.

Say, "If you were wondering where the kings were, well, they are still in the deck!" Show them to be face up in the centre of the deck.

Note that the aces are the sandwiched cards (Figure 4). Do not be tempted to reveal them. Just use them for your next trick!

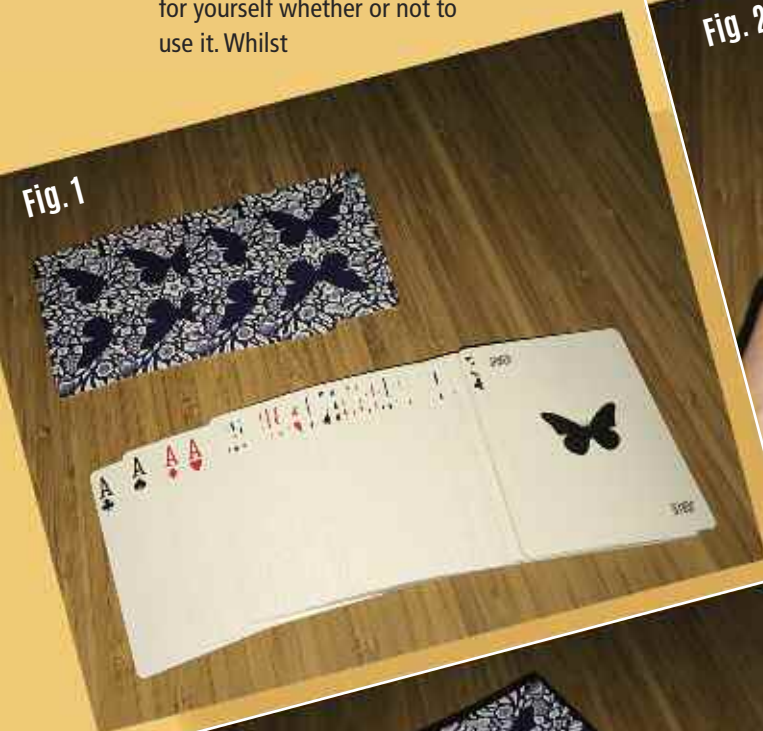


Fig. 2



Fig. 4



wonders from the workshops

YMC Workshop

Saturday 14 April 2018 Reported by Sam Saffron



Under 14s winner Billy Lewis with Martin Cox assisting

Photos: Kevin Doig



14 and Over winner Charlie Robinson



David Weeks

Saturday the fourteenth welcomed April's Young Magicians Club Workshop with a large line of under eighteens arriving outside the grand Magic Circle doors. They beat the millennial stereotype of young children craning over their mobile phones and not making much conversation by having an immense queue of young children craning over their decks of cards and not making much conversation.

At quarter past, the doors opened and a tsunami of people swarmed through. Before long, the admin fees had been paid and the world's least sticky name tags had been handed out, leaving plenty of time for Members to catch up with friends, show their magic to others and lose their name tags. At twelve, everyone



Clive Hyams

was prompted up to the Theatre on the second floor for the Member of the Month competition. We were religiously greeted by Kevin's wonderful: "How're we all feeling?" to which we effervescently replied: "Fantastic!" This is not only a wonderful spirit-lifter but also a great way to pick out all the first-timers as the only ones shouting, "Very well tha... huh?"

Soon the competition was up and running. This month, in my opinion, saw some great acts and was won by Billy Lewis in the under-14s category and Charlie Robinson in the 14s and over. Promptly afterwards, we all rushed straight back to the ground floor to eat

lunch and talk magic. During this time, we said our first hellos to this month's lecturers: Clive Hyams, who perused the tables sharing ideas and getting to know his lecturees; David Weeks, who taught some wonderful routines and ideas to those around him; and Martin Cox, who made fun of a little boy for eating homemade sushi.

My first Workshop was back up in the theatre with David Weeks, a returning lecturer who this month taught several impromptu tricks for any time you're asked to perform an effect and have nothing prepared. This included two ways to show any coin to be double-sided and a way to break a pencil with just a banknote. This, without giving away the secret, broke far more fingers than it did pencils. Then my group went straight back down to receive a very fun lecture on card controls taught by the sushi-hating Martin Cox. We learnt a massive array of controls such as the bluff pass, the Charlier control and the slightly long-windedly named 'Doyoulikemyjumper control', which is a classic pass performed with your back to your spectator under the guise of showing off your new jumper.

The final lecture was performed by Clive Hyams, who dedicated his whole lecture to the classic force. He made a fascinating point, stating that almost every card magician is what he refers to as a 'controller' (someone who has a card selected, lost in the deck and secretly controlled to a preferred position) or a 'forcer' (a magician who tends to force a card which they have previously memorised). He advised us always to attempt to be a forcer with the classic force and if, on the off chance it doesn't work, then become a controller. He then taught tips and tricks with the classic force and left ample time for us to

practise these by ourselves. Before long, however, it was 4:00 and the subsequent end of another amazing Workshop. Reluctantly, the Members trickled back out of The Magic Circle doors, 50% of whom no longer bearing a name tag.

YMC WORKSHOP DATES 2018

Saturday 16 June 2018
Saturday 14 July 2018*
Saturday 15 September 2018
J-Day auditions.*
Sunday 21 October 2018 J-Day.
Saturday 24 November 2018*

NB All dates with * are Ali Bongo show dates. All dates without * currently have no show.

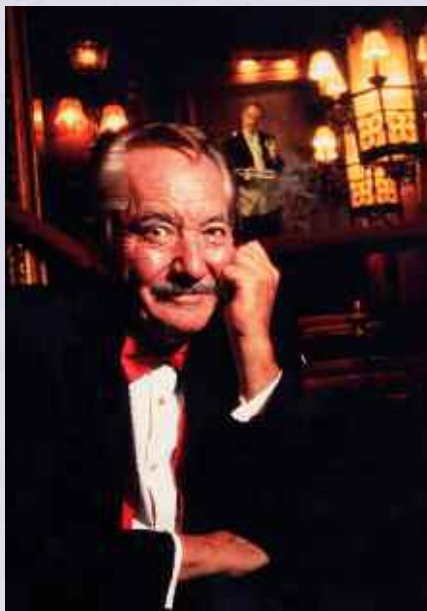
For Members only. Workshop fee £10.00 paid on the day. Workshops will run from 11am – 4pm and will be held at The Magic Circle HQ (address on page three).

Be sure to bring packed lunch (drinks will be provided free), a deck of cards, notebook and a pen as minimum requirements for the day.

Please note: you must register in advance for each workshop when you receive the email opening registration (normally one week before the workshop). You will receive confirmation that you have successfully gained a place. Email: chairman@youngmagiciansclub.com

If you would like to report on a Young Magicians Club Workshop e-mail me at editor@youngmagiciansclub.co.uk

MAGICAL HIGH - 8



In the last issue of *Secrets* I mentioned that I was about to embark on a trip to various parts of the United States of America, and that along the way I would be visiting The Magic Castle in Los Angeles and the FFFF magic convention in upstate New York. As it turned out there was plenty more magic on the trip (if you ever do go to Las Vegas you must see Mac King's show at Hurrah's Casino!), but I thought I would offer you a little insight into what these two institutions offer the magic world as well as some tips for your own magic. In the next issue I will tell you about FFFF but, for now, let's hop on an imaginary aeroplane and set off to Los Angeles on the West Coast of America...

The Magic Castle

The Magic Castle is a historic Hollywood mansion that has been run as "the most unusual private club in the world" for the last fifty-five years. It is open seven nights of the week and guests are treated to fine food in its large dining room, drinks at its many bars and, of course, magic. Showrooms are scattered all over the building and, on a weekend evening

when the club is at its busiest, it is possible to see no less than nine magic shows over the course of an evening, including everything from close-up magic or bar magic, through to parlour and even stage performances!

One thing that sets The Castle apart from the rest of Los Angeles (very much a shorts and t-shirt city) is the fact that it has a strict dress code; men must wear a suit and tie whilst women wear evening dresses. It is also considered a 'hot ticket' as somewhere that lots of people have heard of but very few have visited...

In fact, to even get through the door you have to be either a member or the guest of a member!

So what is it like as a place to work?



During my week there I performed 31 twenty-minute close-up shows as well as giving a two-hour lecture for magicians, so they certainly make you work hard, but you are also incredibly well looked after. The first thing that happens on arrival is that you are given an apartment just over the road from the Castle to live in for the week... and an apartment that is only minutes walk from one of the most famous streets in the world

(Hollywood Boulevard, where all the stars with celebrities' names are built into the pavement) is a pretty good start! You are also given a card which means that all of your food and drink for the week is paid for, a perfect treat when the place you can eat happens to be one of the best places to meet other magicians in the world!

The room in which I performed my show was the close-up room, a beautiful space that lets a small number of people watch a twenty-minute show with a clear view of a table and the possibility to do pretty much any trick you could want to. In addition, because you are doing so many shows, The Castle is the perfect place to really develop your material. It can even be considered as a performer you have to send a video of your work to the booker and meet a certain minimum standard, so you certainly know what tricks you are doing and how you will present them, but there are then so many details you can develop. Over the course of an evening you can do four shows and, in each one, you can try a slightly different timing for the revelation of an effect, or the delivery of a joke, until, by the end of the week, you have really worked out the best way to deliver each section of your performance. And you get to try these things out in front of one of the best audiences in the world.

Anyone who is coming to your show is either a magician or someone who has both decided that they want to see you and that they are willing to go to a lot of trouble to get into The Castle. So everyone at your show is going to be ready to really enjoy watching you and your magic. And the magicians who are there are also the perfect people to give you feedback and help you get better. People who came to my show at The Castle included Jim Steinmeyer, Rob Zabrecky, Mike Caveney, John Carney,

SPOTS IN THE USA

Tom Stone, Howard Hamburg, Bill Goodwin and Dan and Dave Buck. It is rare that you can get feedback from magicians as knowledgeable as this, let alone from a performance in front of a room full of laypeople, and the chance to do so night after night is a real treat!

Is there any downside to The Magic Castle? Sadly yes, there are two, particularly as far as Young Magicians Club Members are concerned. First, you have to travel halfway around the world to visit! And second, it is a club that is only open to people over the age of twenty-one. It is, however, certainly somewhere you should know exists and, during the years you have to wait before you are able to visit, perhaps the five lessons I am taking away from my visit will be helpful for you and your magic, wherever you are performing...

Five Lessons from a Week at The Magic Castle

Watch Other Shows

During the week I got to watch eight other magicians perform, and every single one of them did things that I liked



and things that I didn't like. One magician, in particular, did a trick that made one of their audience members feel rather uncomfortable. I spotted this, as something I didn't like, and the next day realised that something I did might actually feel the same to someone watching. It was gone the next show. Every time you watch another performer (they don't even have to be a magician), see what you like about their work and what you don't feel so good about. Don't copy what they did but see if you can add

something of the good to your performances and make sure you aren't doing anything similar to the things you didn't like.

Don't Worry About Mistakes

One of the great things about doing four shows in an evening is that if you make a mistake in one of them you don't have to dwell on it. Rather than feeling bad until you do a better show a week or two later you are right into another show that will hopefully go differently. Everyone makes mistakes, and it is important to remember that making one feels far more important to you than an audience. If something goes wrong in your show try and work out why so you can make sure it doesn't happen again, but then forget about it. Dwelling on it won't help make you a better magician.

Try New Things

Each time I visit The Magic Castle I try to do something new. It is fun to show the friends I see there often something they haven't seen before and, more importantly, it means I keep developing as a magician. If you have a routine you are completely comfortable with that is



Photo: Taylor Wong



wonderful but if you just keep doing it in exactly the same way you are not developing. Take every opportunity you can to develop new material or change the way in which you are doing/presenting your magic. The change doesn't have to be a big one, but unless you keep changing and trying new things you are not getting better.

Get Feedback

One of the great pleasures of performing for your friends or for magicians you admire is that you can get feedback from them. Whilst I was at The Castle Jim Steinmeyer pointed out a different presentational angle I could use for a trick I have done for years... that I had never thought of! Often people watching your material will have ideas that you haven't thought of, so make the most of them and do ask for their feedback. Do remember that people might not volunteer their ideas unless you ask (feedback that has not been asked for can be seen as rude) and, most

importantly, that once you have asked you should listen to and consider what they have to say. You might not end up using it but it would be rude to ask their opinion and then argue with them about whether you think they are right or not! So listen to what they say and then decide later whether you want to apply it or not. You might just get an idea that takes your trick to a new level.

A Show Is Never Done

By the time I was on my thirtieth show of the week you might have thought that everything I did would have been well

organised with a finalised script and an understanding of precisely how everything I did worked. In fact this couldn't be further from the case... Right up until the very last show I was seeing how I could make my script more efficient (removing unnecessary words) and changing the timing of my delivery. Every time you do a trick, even if it is one you have done hundreds of times, choose one thing you are going to try and improve and then, after your performance, see if you think it worked. If it did, keep the new version. If it did not, try something else next time.



trick

CHRIS WARDLE



The Seven of Spades Prediction

Effect

The performer has a deck of cards on the table, plus an A4-sized whiteboard and dry wipe pen. At the top of the board is clipped a postcard on which there are the following instructions:

through the cards face up, ending on the Seven of Spades.

The performer says that they knew this would be the spectator's lucky card all along, as turning the whiteboard over it has a giant Seven of Spades on the back!

Working

This is just another dressing for the use of the principle of nines. If you carry out the calculations above, with any year, you will end up with 9, 18, 27, 36 or 45. You therefore place five Sevens of Spades in these positions in the deck, taking four from other packs and removing the other Sevens (Clubs, Hearts and Diamonds) in the deck, so it does not appear too large. As the cards are well spread out, the spectator can deal them face up on the table and count themselves as they will not notice, amongst all of the other cards, that they have already passed a Seven of Spades during their count. They are too busy counting and there are four cards of each value in every deck in any case, so the method is easily disguised.

Here is an example of the calculations:

Choose a year which is important to you: 2005

Multiply the year by ten: 20050

Subtract the year you chose to generate a random number: 20050 - 2005 = 18045

Add the digits of your answer together: 1+8+0+4+5 = 18

You can buy A4-sized mini whiteboards at discount stationers or Pound Shops and then just enlarge a Seven of Spades on a photocopier and glue this to the back of the whiteboard. Have the instructions attached to the front, so that the audience know that you are not just deciding what to do with the numbers as you go along to produce a different result ... and it will also remind you exactly what to do as well!

Choose a year which is important to you:

Multiply the year by ten:

Subtract the year you chose to generate a random number:

Add the digits of your answer together:

The performer patters on the theme that we all have years which are special and important to us, perhaps when we moved to a new house, when a younger sibling was born, when we achieved something significant in our personal life, etc., and a spectator is asked to name a special year.

As we get older, they say, these very significant, special years happen approximately once in a decade, so you will multiply the year by 10. (This means you simply add a '0' to the end of the year.)

Now to randomise the number, the performer subtracts the original year chosen from the total, adds the digits of the answer together and writes all of this on the mini whiteboard.

The performer states that by carrying out this calculation, involving personal information and an element of random chance, a number has been reached which will be counted through the deck of cards to find the spectator's significant, lucky playing card.

The spectator takes the deck themselves and counts

trick

Black Balled

IAN ADAIR



Effect

A cloth bag contains six balls, five white and one black. The bag is otherwise shown to be empty, and it actually is! All six balls are dropped inside the bag which is then shaken, the balls inside being

thoroughly mixed in the process. The performer now approaches five spectators, asking each to insert their hand into the bag and bring out the first ball they touch. The amazing thing about this trick is that every time you do it the spectators will remove all five white balls, leaving you with the final ball, the black one. The cloth bag can also be shown empty at the end.

Requirements

Six balls: The ones I used are toy golf balls which come in packs of six, and which cost £1. These are hollow and made of plastic. I managed to paint one of the balls black, using an

aerosol spray can. However, this ball can be painted by brush. Alternatively, cheap ping-pong balls (table tennis balls) can be used.

A Flat Change Bag: I already know some readers will definitely own one. This inexpensive versatile prop is sold by magic dealers, or you can make your own. It consists of a cloth bag with a central 'divider,' an additional piece of cloth which, when sewn inside, results in the bag having two separate compartments.

At the beginning of the performance, have all six balls inside one compartment of the bag. It is wise to have a clear plastic bowl on your table so

the balls can drop out of the bag into this, rather than rolling everywhere on your stage!

Working and Presentation

Display the cloth bag. Explain that inside the bag there are six balls, five being white, the odd one being black. Further explain that the black ball has certain magical powers.

Tip the open mouth of the bag over the clear bowl so the audience can see all the balls drop out. Turn the bag inside out to show it is empty, and if you want to, hold two diagonally opposite corners and twist it, proving there are no other balls hidden inside (which there aren't). Hold the bag, gripping it with the thumb and fingers of your left hand, keeping one of the compartments open.

You will now pick up the balls in a certain way, sometimes two at a time, sometimes one at a time.

Start by picking up two white balls in your right hand and drop them inside. Pick up another white ball and drop it into the same compartment. Now, switch over the compartments. This can be done one-handed, with the fingers simply pushing the 'divider' to the opposite side. Now pick up the black ball and drop it inside this new compartment. Switch back again and pick up the remaining two white balls, making sure these are inserted into the compartment which holds the other white ones.

Shake the bag vigorously, stating that you intend to mix the balls. Select five spectators from your audience.

Using both hands, open the mouth of the bag so the compartment which contains the five white balls becomes available.

Make a point of asking each of the spectators, individually, simply to reach inside the bag and bring out the first ball they touch. This is for a good reason, which you will discover later.

After four spectators have removed their (white) balls, only two remain inside the bag, one white and one black, both being in different compartments. Ask the last spectator to feel through the material of the bag (from the outside, of course) and verify that there are two balls inside. The spectator will obviously state that they can feel two.

Grip the open-mouthed bag so the compartment which contains the white ball is the one which the spectator's hand will enter. Ask them to reach in but remember to say, "Please

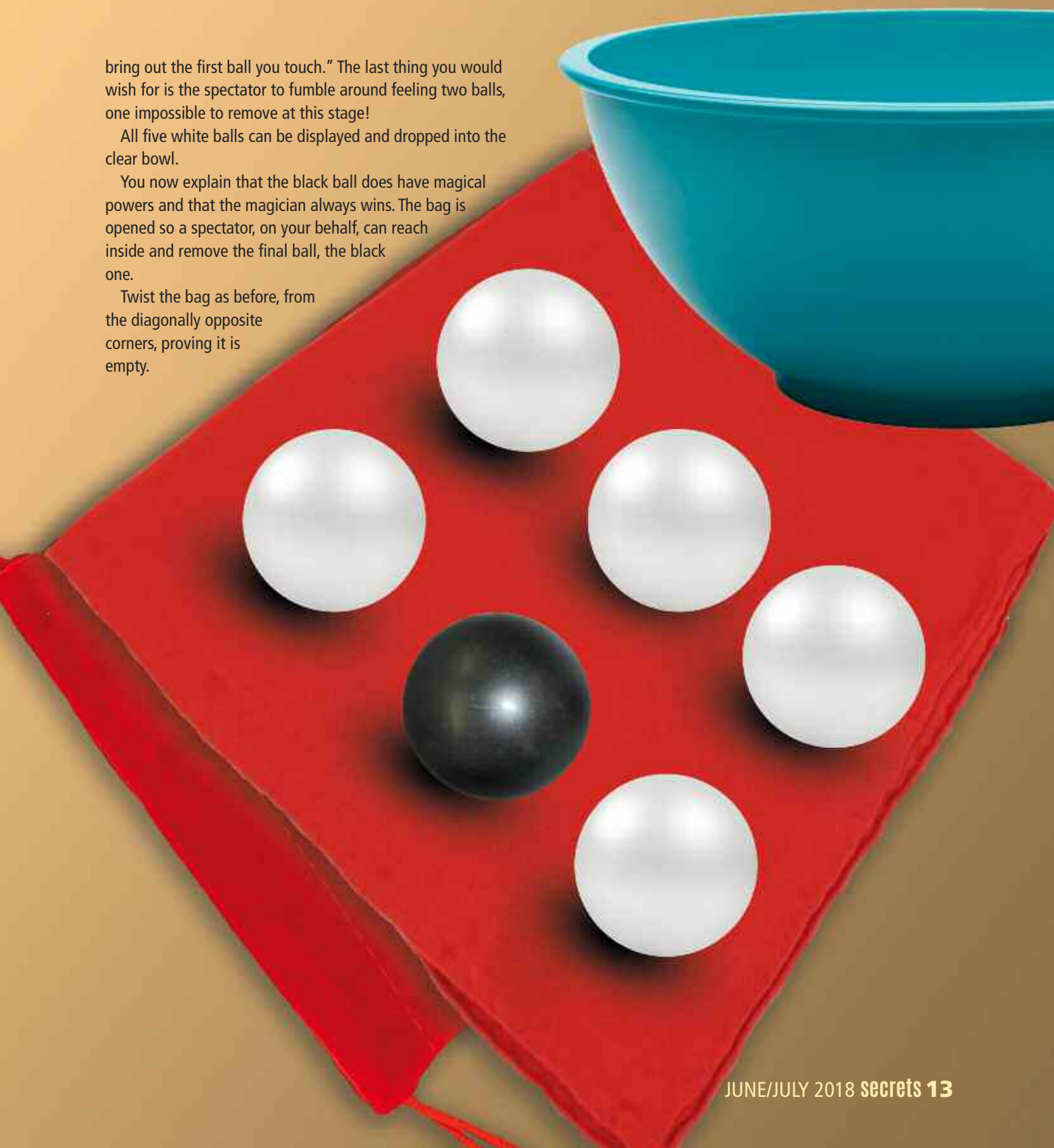
Make a point of asking each of the spectators, individually, simply to reach inside the bag and bring out the first ball they touch. This is for a good reason, which you will discover later.

bring out the first ball you touch." The last thing you would wish for is the spectator to fumble around feeling two balls, one impossible to remove at this stage!

All five white balls can be displayed and dropped into the clear bowl.

You now explain that the black ball does have magical powers and that the magician always wins. The bag is opened so a spectator, on your behalf, can reach inside and remove the final ball, the black one.

Twist the bag as before, from the diagonally opposite corners, proving it is empty.



Cover Conjurers

This month's Cover Conjurers features pieces from two Magic Circle Members, Rob James and Matt Pritchard. Rob is a particularly successful working close-up magician and spoke to me about the world of professional magic, giving some valuable advice as to what makes a successful close-up magician in the process. Matt won The Magic Circle's Hoffmann Memorial Lecture competition, looking at the compatibility between magic and technology, and you can read an excerpt of his essay below.



Rob James: Keeping Magic Alive

by Will Houstoun



Birdcage vanished

Will: One of the things I think is intriguing about people going pro is that it seems lots of people really like magic and then, because they really like it, they do it professionally. They then realise that there's all sorts of stuff they avoided as an amateur they now have to deal with and they stop liking it so much. Did this happen to you?

Rob: In the early days it was very much a honeymoon period. I can still remember the buzz and the adrenaline rush that I got after the first proper gig that I did. Then, the more I worked, the more I had an issue with the things you often have to deal with commercially; drunk wide-boy bankers and the need to constantly battle for attention in loud, dark rooms. These things all start to grate pretty quickly.

I remember one gig I was doing with another magician and I was doing what I thought was good, elegant magic for a

table. It was going fine, the reactions were fine. And then, three tables away from me, the other magician had them crying with laughter. I thought: "What's he doing that's so funny?" He was just doing gags with squeakers, pulling stuff out of their pockets that apparently they had on them. That sort of thing... But you have to learn from that. In that environment you can't then keep doing the stuff you like. If you're a commercial act and you're trying to get booked you have to adapt and become more like what they want.

Very quickly my love of card magic, for example, fell off a cliff. "Why am I learning intricate sleight-of-hand, because it doesn't connect with the public?" I put mentalism into my act. I don't really enjoy mentalism but the public do therefore I did it.

Will: Do you think you can become a commercial act without compromising on all these fronts? Or do you think you have to compromise and that's why everyone is doing the same generic shtick?

Rob: I think that you can carve your own groove and be successful as a commercial act doing your own thing. But you have to really commit to it. You have to have real faith in your ability to make it work and be prepared for failure. Piff the Magic Dragon is a great example. He committed 100%. He had a few ups and downs and now he's very much up. You get silent acts that have a seven-minute piece that is completely different from anything else and that's why it gets booked all over the



Close-up onstage



First Stars of Magic



Cups and balls

world. But in terms of the bread-and-butter work that exists in the UK, I think you just have to look the part, be easy to work with and you have to perform very commercial material.

Will: What is the look?

Rob: I think the current look for a British close-up magician is sharp suit, expensive shoes, and big chunky watch. They're trying to create a feeling of value so that bookers think: "This guy is extraordinarily successful, makes a lot of money. He dresses well. He's charming, charismatic and we are lucky to have him."

Will: And do you think the look or the material is most important?

Rob: For a while I had a website where I was booking other magicians. There was someone on there who easily was the best looking and had a great picture.

Whenever I got an enquiry it was always for him. It didn't matter what gender they were and it didn't matter how old they were, they all asked about this one guy. There were other people there that were not conventionally attractive but were very good magicians. I would suggest them and the booker would not be interested. We forget how image conscious the world is and bookers are making this sort of decision about us every day. I'm not talking about world-class performers with a unique act, rather a standard commercial jobbing magician. The busy ones are people that look good, are easy to work with and fit in.

Wonder Workers: An Essay on the Compatibility of Science and Magic

By Matt Pritchard

Twentieth-century science forced magicians to evolve both in style and tricks. No longer did they have access to secret powers but instead were mere wonder workers. It was during this time in 1876 that Professor Hoffmann (Angelo Lewis (1839-1919)) dropped a bombshell. His first book *Modern Magic* exposed the workings of magical effects to the general public. Anyone with an interest in understanding stage tricks could now go to a bookshop and find out. Initially seen as a massive betrayal to the magic

community it proved to be a catalyst for magicians to abandon old tricks and develop new, more baffling illusions. The golden age of stage magic had arrived with numerous illusionists touring the world with their wonders.

With performers vying for the top spots by claiming more outlandish feats and stealing each other's secrets, it was hard to be distinctive. When the medium of moving pictures first appeared in the 1890s, enterprising magicians were quick to incorporate film in magic shows; often mixing live action and filmed sequences in the shows. They were also part of the first group to experiment with and develop film special effects. Two pioneer film wizards were Georges Méliès (1861-1938), the new owner of Robert-Houdin's theatre, and David Devant (1868-1941), the first president of The Magic Circle. For a few years there was a sweet spot where magicians held a secret that few others possessed. However, as the use of film as public entertainment grew it caused a huge blow to live entertainment. Theatres closed or were converted into cinemas. Magicians were badly affected as working venues dried up and because Hollywood special effects robbed them of the monopoly of their eye-popping illusions.

The sweet spot where magic and technology blur is often short lived since knowledge only goes one way. For a magician to inhabit this sweet spot they have to be constantly moving and evolving to stay ahead of the crowd. Currently we're seeing an increasing number of magic shows incorporate

Augmented Reality ▶





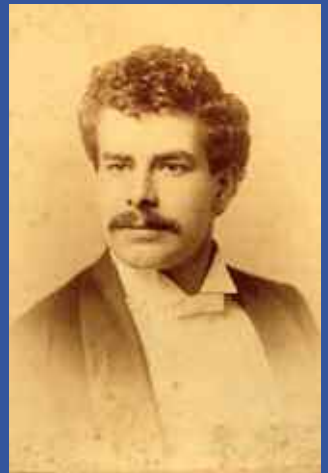
Robert Houdin



Lombard Kingdom Brunel



John Henry Anderson



David Devant

(where a film of the live stage action is digitally manipulated adding extra details), holograms (a modern day twist on Pepper's Ghost) and projection mapping (surfaces are changed by having images projected onto them). Magicians like Marco Tempest, Xavier Mortimer and Jamie Allan are contemporary magicians exploring the use of this technology. The shows are a visual treat but the danger is

magicians will be left behind again as the technology becomes more widespread and becomes the standard. We're already seeing this now with wireless technology and phone apps. Mentalists who have relied on electronic help are now being accused of technological trickery and finding their £1,000+ investments available in a different guise at high street electronics stores for £25.

I feel, to combat the public's suspicion of electronics, we will see magic return to a more organic and sleight-of-hand based art. Strange paraphernalia will be stripped away, the magic will be more pure and the magician more centre stage. In fact we're already seeing a move in this direction. Recent series of *Britain's Got Talent* have seen magicians progress from being a laughing stock to finalists.

member profile

Josh Weinstein Age: 11

How long have you been a Member of The Young Magicians Club?

1 year

Who are your favourite magicians?

Dynamo and Penn and Teller

What kind of magic do you enjoy the most?

Mentalism, because it gives a strong effect which the spectator will love without telling them anything about how it works.

What do you think makes the perfect trick?

A trick that wows the audience, is delivered with the right amount of build up and is well presented.

What do you think makes the perfect magician?

Someone who is able to make magic out of nothing, for example Dynamo, and someone who pushes the boundaries and constantly challenges themselves.

What is your favourite magic book?

Close Up Magic Secrets, by Diamond Jim Tyler.

What is your favourite magic DVD?

Secrets With Invisible Thread

What is your favourite non-magic book?

War Horse by Michael Morpurgo

What is your favourite film?

Rocky 4

If you could interview any three people – real or fictitious, dead or alive – who would they be and what question would you ask each of them?

Slash:

How did you develop your musical talent?

Axle Rose: How did you start getting into rock?

Rocky: What kept pushing you when people told you, you were useless?

What is your strongest non-magical performing influence?

Slash, the lead guitarist from Guns n Roses.

What put them there weren't fancy trick boxes or gyrating dancers but a likeable person, telling a story, making a connection and sharing their wonder with the audience. Essentially breaking what in theatre is called the fourth wall that divides performer and audience. New technology might give the performer a temporary edge but, as ever, long-term survival is more about the magician than the magic

Have we surpassed the age of magic? I would argue that as a society we have

largely lost the spirit of magic. As G K Chesterton said: "The world will never starve for want of wonders; but only for want of wonder."

Technological advancements have been so huge that most people (and businesses) are unaware of what can be achieved. They exceed most people's thoughts and dreams. Trying to keep up is a daunting prospect. The sheer amount of knowledge is beyond the scope of a single human. Furthermore, we live busy, rushed lives. Everything is 24/7. We wake up and already our phones have amassed a string of notifications. Time cannot be wasted and yet the most meaningful and memorable times are when we slow down.

Perhaps now more than ever there is a

place for wonder workers. To grab our attention; to overcome bad assumptions; to perform the impossible; to take us to new territories; to show us new things; to fuel our dreams. Magicians are seen as entertainers but I feel we should aspire to being more than just that. I like to think of myself as a "Curator of Wonder," someone who searches, filters and shares marvels in the hope it will spark curiosity in the audience to embark on their own journey of discovery. To create a memorable moment that will propel them forward. I'm going to leave the last words with David Copperfield, a man with a real drive for the impossible:

"My job is to make people dream. Of course, there's a lot of technical stuff behind the scenes and a lot of hard work behind it, but I get to watch people see the result of that hard work and feel that wonder and feel that discovery, all the time."



Early projectors at The Egyptian Hall

What is your strongest magical influence?

Dynamo

Top tip for improving your magic?

Keep practicing and don't lose sight of your own style.

What do you like best about the YMC?

The Workshops. I love how every person has a different skill to show us, that we can learn from them, and how everyone is so kind.

People you would like to thank in magic for either their help or encouragement?

My Mum and Dad. My Dad got me into it with a simple vanishing coin trick when I was four years old. I've been hooked ever since. They both support my magic and let me perform tricks to them over and over again! And my brother Ollie, for being tough and pointing out my faults, and always trying to catch me out... And telling me when to stop!

Bonus question from Jack Mawson: If you could spend a week with one person, dead or alive, who would it be and why?

Dynamo. He is so clever with his tricks and I feel I could learn something with him around.



reviews

Simon Drake: The Lecture

by Simon Drake

Instructional DVD. £20. Available direct from
www.houseofmagic.co.uk/magic-shop

Reviewed by Katherine Rhodes

At the forty-first International Magic Convention in London Simon Drake gave his only ever lecture to date to a packed house. The lecture was recorded for archival purposes and never intended for release, but after many requests and a fair amount of cajoling Simon has finally agreed to make the recording available as a limited edition DVD. Three separate sources have been combined and digitally enhanced to create the ultimate representation of this one-off event.

The topics covered span elements from Simon's entire career. His start in magic and those early years are covered as is his current venue, Simon Drake's House Of Magic, and everything in between. Simon recalls his time on the fabled 1979 Kate Bush tour as well as stories of other artists he's guested with, amusing stories and invaluable advice from his time teaching Oliver Reed and even a section on a ventriloquist dummy. Making things, from books that burst into flames to incredibly intimate and minute automata, is covered. Simon explains in depth some of the effects he has created for stage and screen and demonstrates many of his creations, his views on performing and there is also an audience Q&A.

Obviously *The Secret Cabaret* features. This legendary TV show changed the face of British television magic and Simon talks about many aspects of it, culminating in an astonishingly detailed explanation of his classic Silhouette Routine, demonstrating some of the techniques devised and showing many behind-the-scenes pictures to illustrate how this signature routine was created and executed.

There is also a master class on the Dancing Cane. Simon's presentation and understanding of what is considered by many to be the finest version ever leaves no stone unturned and shows how to avoid the common mistakes and elevate this trick to a truly magical experience.

Filled with much humour, delivered in his typical cheeky manner, this DVD covers so many things it is impossible to include them all in a single review. Every magician will gain something from this lecture and it is a must-

see not just for Simon's fans but any serious student of magic.

Highly recommended. Get it while it's available.

Lubor's Lens

by Lubor Fiedler and Paul Harris

16 Min. instructional DVD with props. \$15 (£10) from your favourite dealer. Dealers contact Murphy's Magic supplies,
www.MurphysMagic.com

Reviewed by Noel Qualter

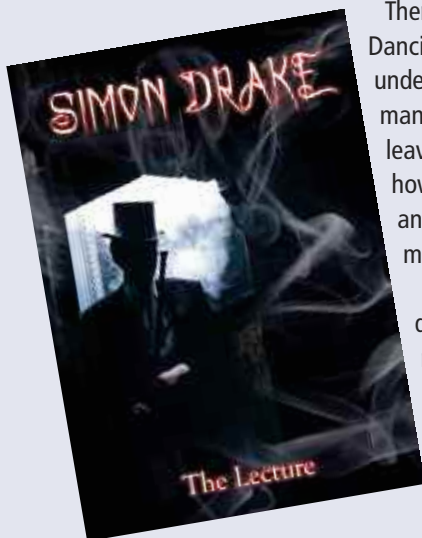
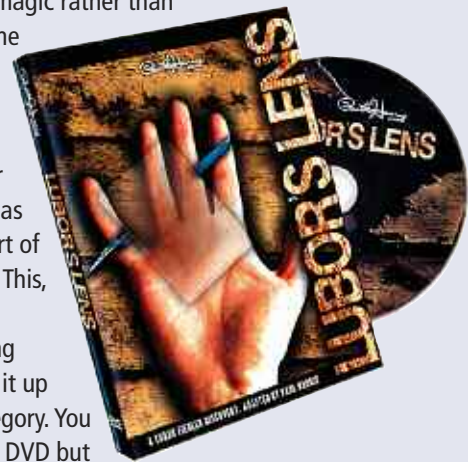
Paul Harris has an almost perfect reputation in magic. His innovative, creative magic created a whole new style in the 1970s and 1980s, and his influence is just as strong today. In recent years though, Paul has focused on the Paul Harris Presents range, which has been a bit of a mixed bag.

This latest release shines a light on a prop devised by a true genius of magic and puzzles, Lubor Fiedler. Our community is very lucky to have such an insanely smart and talented man focusing his attention on magic rather than something that would come easy to him, like taking over the world.

Paul Harris popularised the lens invented by Lubor and, over the years, Paul has sold it or included it as part of several different products. This, however, is the definitive teaching on this fascinating optical illusion and ramps it up into the strong magic category. You only get one lens with the DVD but you can buy refills if you happen to scuff it up with use. You do get a pouch with the lens to keep it safe.

The best routine on the DVD is the previously released Reality Twister. It's a very visual piece of magic where the middle section of a pen disappears, when viewed through the lens, and finally ends up permanently twisted. I really do advise you to check out an online demo as it's super visual. You can knock-up extras for the giveaway in 30 seconds or less and I really do advise you to give away the pen.

The big question that you need to resolve if you are to use Lubor's Lens is: what on earth are you pretending the lens is? You can't introduce it as an optical illusion lens as you'll destroy the magic for the mid-point of the routine. Your host on the DVD is Bro Gilbert and he has a suggestion, although that wouldn't suit me.



My only thought is that you could find a piece of plastic the same size and glue a crocodile clip to the back of the regular plastic. Then print your name on a suitably sized piece of paper and slide it between both regular plastic and lens. Now you can introduce the 'name badge' saying you've been attending/performing at a conference and picked up a freebie pen. Now all heat is on the crazy pen that you've noticed has 'weird powers'. In performance you just dismantle the 'name badge' to use the lens in the routine.

Paul Harris only appears at the end of the DVD to offer some further thoughts and reiterations of important points Bro already covered. Lubor's Lens might look like a toy but you can create strong magic with this. It just needs a little thought.

The Method of False Solutions and The Magic Way

by Juan Tamariz

10.5 by 7.4 ins. hardbound book with photographs, 296 pgs. \$47 (£29) from your favourite dealer. Dealers contact Murphy's Magic supplies, www.MurphysMagic.com.

Reviewed by Mike O'Brien

It is some considerable time ago that the first edition of this book was published. It soon sold out and the only way to get a copy was by going onto eBay and buying a copy there at a sizeable premium to the original price.

The new, revised and enlarged edition is hard covered, 267 pages long and with 253 photographs and illustrations. The photos are larger than in the first edition and are better for it. The book has been published by Hermetic Press Inc.

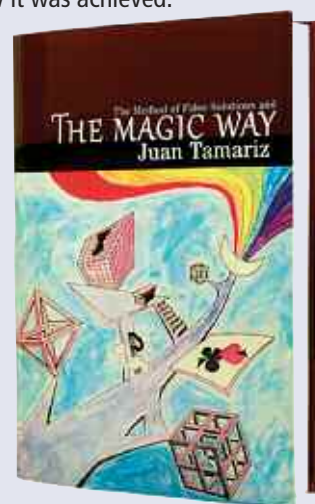
So what is *The Magic Way*? *The Magic Way* is basically a

book on Tamariz's theory of how to create a magic effect or to improve an old one. Its main aim is to produce an effect that is totally baffling and entertaining and to give the impression of real magic. Ideally the spectator should be so entranced by the effect that he has no desire to know how it was achieved.

To follow *The Magic Way* the reader needs to follow eight basic steps and these steps in turn are broken down again. The first step starts with a description of the effect that you are trying to create. Tamariz demonstrates the method by taking the basic effect of vanishing a coin and then reproducing it from the magician's ear. Apart from established methods to bring about an effect *The Magic Way* could result in new methods being developed.

Following an example of using the method for the vanish and reproduction of a coin he then applies the system to firstly the Ambitious Card and then to Koran's Divination. He then shows how it has been applied to the Spirit Slates, which he tells us has an impact on an audience greater than any other effect that he performs. Finally in this section he then works through one of his versions of Oil and Water. The final part of the book describes a further nineteen methods for performing Oil and Water, all developed with *The Magic Way*, to show how fertile the system is in bringing about new solutions to an effect.

If you wish either to create your own effects or improve existing ones then this book is for you. Also the effects explained, e.g., Koran's Divination and The Spirit Slates, are well worth knowing. Highly recommended.



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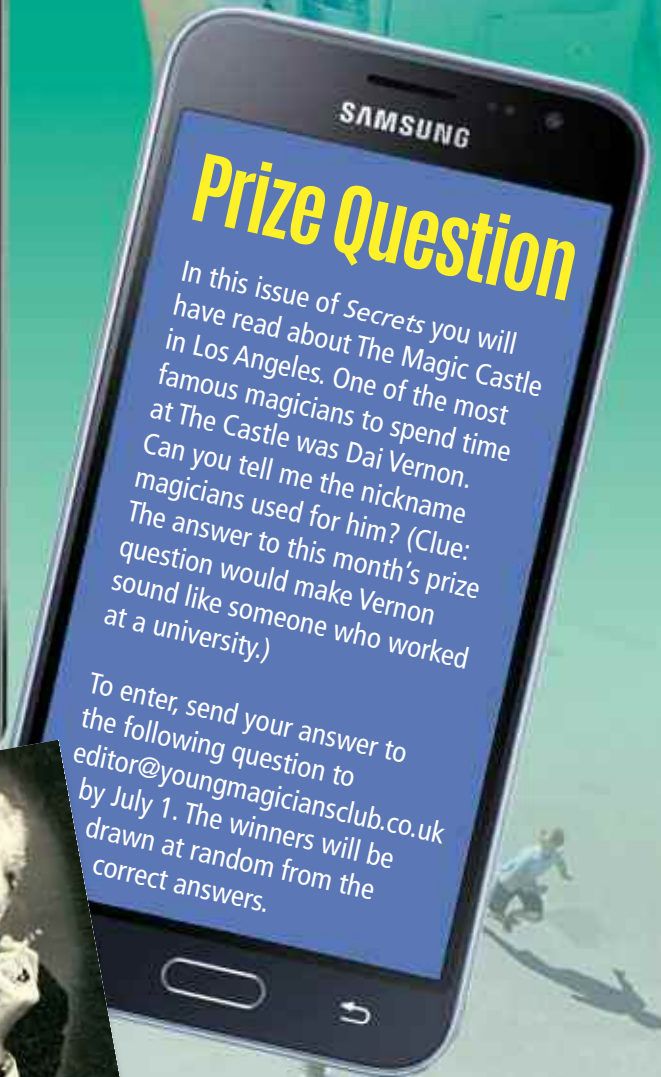
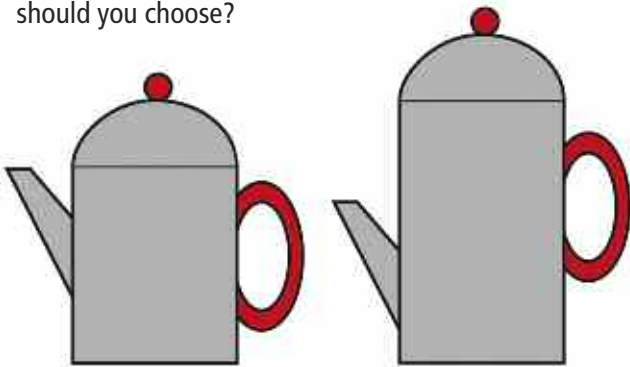
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Inexhaustible Kettle

For your next show you are going to perform the inexhaustible kettle, the classic trick in which a kettle magically produces any drink that someone from your audience names until many different drinks have been produced. You have worked out how to make the trick work with any kettle and, in the shop, you find the two kettles pictured. You want to be able to hold as much liquid in the kettle as possible ... Which one should you choose?



Prize Question

In this issue of *Secrets* you will have read about The Magic Castle in Los Angeles. One of the most famous magicians to spend time at The Castle was Dai Vernon. Can you tell me the nickname magicians used for him? (Clue: The answer to this month's prize question would make Vernon sound like someone who worked at a university.)

To enter, send your answer to the following question to editor@youngmagiciansclub.co.uk by July 1. The winners will be drawn at random from the correct answers.



Last Issue's Answer

Last month's question was as follows: What did Chung Ling Soo use to magically catch a bullet fired from a gun in his famous performances of this classic trick? (Clue: The answer to this month's prize question is something you can discover in these very pages...) The correct answer was a willow-pattern plate. Congratulations if you got it correct, and even more so if you were the randomly selected winner!



Inexhaustible Kettle - Solution

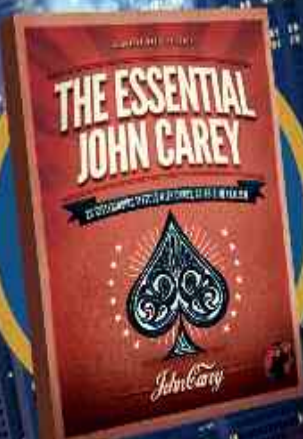
You might think that the tall one would be better, as it would hold more liquid, but in fact the short one would be better. This is because even though the tall kettle is larger its spout is lower down and you will actually be able to fit less liquid inside it than the shorter one before it pours out of the spout!



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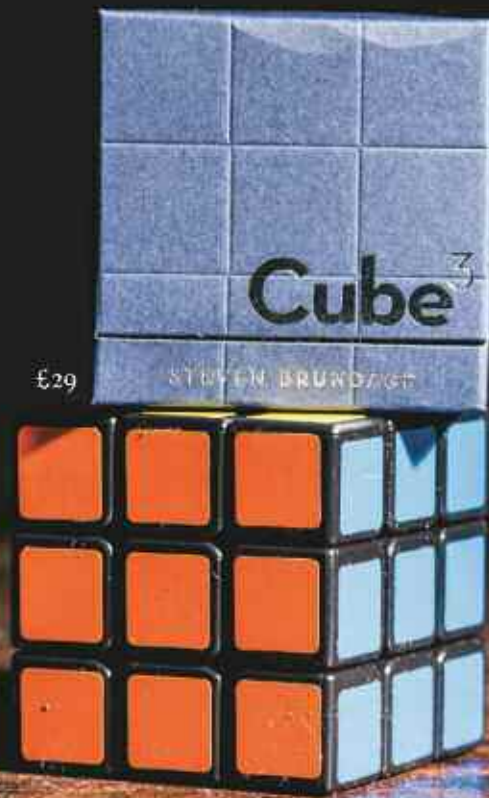
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