



SECRETS

The Magazine of the Young Magicians Club



Volume 20 Number 5

October 2013



INTERNATIONAL MAGIC SHOP

LONDON'S MAGIC CENTRE

SEE THE SIGHTS OF LONDON IN NOVEMBER...



Dani DaOrtiz



John Carney



Charlie Frye & co



Rob Zabrechy



Christian Bischof



Patrick Koffs



Sos & Victoria



Mike Chao



Noel Britten



The London Festival of Magic 11-15 Nov
The International Magic Convention 15-17 Nov

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Established by Ron MacMillan over 50 years ago and still a family business !



Cover Picture:
Marvin's Magic: Special Edition

Published by The Young Magicians Club,
Centre for the Magical Arts,
12 Stephenson Way,
London, NW1 2HD,
England.
Tel: 020 7387 2222

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Designed and printed by PNC Print & Design
020 8953 6116 artwork@pnc-print.co.uk

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Volume 20, Issue No 5 October 2013

Welcome to Secrets Magazine

Editorial

Mandy's Magic Words

Hello everyone!

I am delighted
to welcome you
to this issue
which is a celebration of Marvin's
Magic's twenty-fifth anniversary.

This must be relevant to every
single one of you. You are
magicians and there is little doubt
you all started with a single trick
or set from the Marvin's Magic
range! You were given a birthday
or Christmas present, maybe a
trick deck or perhaps Dynamic
Coins, and your reaction to it sealed your fate and is the reason you
are reading this magazine today.

You see, most young people are bought one of these at sometime
in their childhood but what makes **YOU** so different from the ones
who don't become magicians?

When others are given a Marvin's Magic trick, or see one performed
in one of the stores and buy it, the first thing that happens is that they
find out how it is done! What do they think? 'Oh, is that all it is? Not
magical at all, it's just simple!' Then, of course, they put the trick to
one side, the pieces get lost, and their interest wanes.....

Then - there is you! You didn't do that at all! You experienced the
feeling of delight! You were given a Marvin's Magic trick, or saw one
performed in one of the stores and bought it. When you got it home,
and learned the secret, your reaction was totally different! 'Wow!
That's cool! And I can do it! I have to get it smooth though before
I show a friend!' That is the moment when a new magician is born
- and all down to Marvin Berglas and his Marvin's Magic company.

In this issue you will hear from Marvin himself, about how the
company started, as well as from one or two of the ex-YMC members
who worked or still work for him. We also have a great prize
competition with three boxes of Freaky Illusions to be won!

So thank you Marvin's Magic for inspiring young magicians
everywhere for the past twenty-five years - and we look forward to
the next twenty-five years too!



Photo by Mark Hesketh-Jennings

Mandy

NEWS

Kevin's Korner

“And we have not arranged anything in advance?”



In my last column I spoke about choosing the right volunteer helpers. The right type of person is essential to making you look good. Go back and read it again if you can't remember my tips! But I ran out of space last time and there are other factors you should think about when making your choice of the ideal audience assistant.

There is the practical consideration. Most experienced professionals will select a volunteer who has convenient access to you. In the theatre, either someone in the front row, or a seat next to the aisle (or one seat in), is best. Otherwise it can lead to a dreadful “dead spot” if you have to wait for someone to come up. “Keep the applause going” can sound quite a desperate thing to say. Only very experienced performers like John Archer or Terry Herbert, for example, can effectively “fill the space” whilst a volunteer joins them. In his recent one-man show, at The Magic Circle, John Archer wanted to use a number of volunteer assistants during the show and he did not want to use magicians or anyone that he personally knew so he had to look around the audience. He is so skilled that he can fill any gap and remain very funny – and he displayed that skill wonderfully in his show. Not many share this skill and it is only developed by years (and many shows) of experience.

At restaurants, or dinners, the same theory applies around the tables. Using someone who is sat next to you, or next but one, is far more elegant than leaning across the table or asking someone to move! Although sometimes the practicalities of where to stand at a table give you little option, if there is a choice then position yourself next to your preferred helper from the start.

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There is a current trend in throwing an object out into the audience to select a volunteer. The advantage is that there will be no doubt that the helper is genuinely not in on the act. The disadvantage is that you have no control over who is helping. In some cases it is essential that the audience knows that you are not using a stooge. Think of “The Invisible Deck”. If the audience even suspect there is collusion between you and your volunteer, the trick becomes pointless.

I recently told this story to those at a workshop: I was performing “The Invisible Deck” at a (non-magic) conference and all the attenders were wearing name badges. A stand-up comic, who was on the same bill as me, said afterwards: “Either that was a stooge you used or it was a *** good trick!” I said: “Then it was a *** good trick!” The comic replied: “In which case you should not have used his name when you asked him to help.” I had read his badge and said: “Steve, will come and help me please. Ladies and gentlemen, please give Steve a round of applause as he joins me on stage. Now, Steve, we have not arranged anything in advance, have we?” He replied: “No” but the damage was already done. By inviting him by name I had already given the audience the thought that I might know him. The reaction I got implied that they did not suspect me - but, even so, some of them might not have been convinced. For those few, there was no trick.

Throwing an object into the audience, for example, is a convincer that there is no stooge – but you lose control of your choice. Choosing the best assistant can put doubt in the audience's mind. It's a matter of balance. There's no right and wrong answer but only you can decide what will work best for you. Just always consider all options.

Kevin Doig Chairman

YMC WORKSHOP DATES 2013

Sunday 27th October 2013 (J-Day)

30th November 2013 *

NB All dates with * are Ali Bongo show dates.

For members only. Workshop fee £8.00 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 each time and receive confirmation. Email: kevin.doig@tesco.net**

INTERNATIONAL MAGIC – SPECIAL OFFER ON TICKETS!

Convention Talent Booker Noel Britten tells us:

"I'm delighted to say that we are offering a Young Magicians' registration at a reduced price for one of the highlights of the magical year in London. The 43rd Annual International Magic Convention takes place at The Mermaid Theatre in central London (Nov 15-17) - so you get to book your tickets on www.internationalmagic.com. Just make sure you select Junior Magician in the 'Ticket Type'.

"There will be a whole weekend of magical shows, lectures, competitions and presentations which cover all aspects of magic from close up to stage, mentalism to comedy. There will be an International array of talent including John Carney (USA), Dani DaOrtiz (Spain), Paul Zenon (UK), Rob Zabrecky (USA), Sos and Victoria (Russia), David Berglas (UK), Charlie Frye and Co (USA), Patrik Kuffs (Canada), Miguel Angel Gea (Spain), Katrin (German Democratic Republic), Christian Engblom (Finland), Christian Bischof (Switzerland), Mike Chao (Taiwan) and many many others."

Noel continues: "I attended my first International Convention when I was twelve years old and, in the following years, got to see Dai Vernon, Slydini, Fred Kaps, Albert Goshman and Channing Pollock there. Since becoming the talent booker it has always been my main objective to keep bringing not only some of the legendary names of magic to a UK audience but also to encourage new talent, as Ron MacMillan the founder of the Convention always did.

"The Convention has brought some of magic's most exciting names to the UK for the first time. David Williamson, Juan Tamariz, Gary Kurtz, Lennart Green all made their British debut at this Convention; Dynamo and Derren Brown first took part in the Close Up competition long before their respective TV careers. So not only is it a chance to meet some of the current greats but also the future greats - all at one of the UK's friendliest gatherings.

If you've never experienced a Magic Convention I cannot think of a better one to start with than International Magic's weekend!"

Paul Zenon



Dani Da Ortiz



Christian Bischof



David Berglas



Charlie Frye & Co



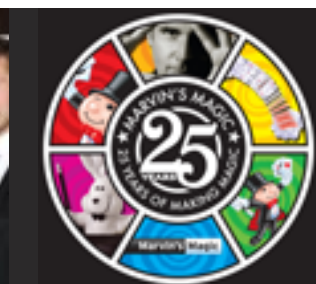
John Carney



Did you know?



- 1.** The Marvin's Magic online club boasts over 100,000 members. On Twitter @marvinberglas has over 30,000 followers.
- 2.** Marvin has lectured at FISM (the World's Magic Olympics), The Essential Magic Conference and performed at The Magic Castle in Hollywood.
- 3.** Marvin has twice entertained Michael Jackson by special request. Jacko was besotted with, and a regular at, Marvin's Magic; he even accepted honorary vice-presidency of the Marvin's Magic Club.
- 4.** Marvin was the first resident match-day magician in the Premier League, entertaining the VIPs and sponsors at Arsenal Football Club, and was featured on a commemorative banner around the Emirates Stadium.



- 5.** Marvin's face has appeared on a giant billboard in Times Square, on London taxis and on millions of packs of cereals.
- 6.** Marvin has performed on stage in front of 15,000 people for West End Live on the big stage in Trafalgar Square right under Nelson's Column.
- 7.** Marvin has been a judge at The Magic Circle's Young Magician of the Year Competition and the Magic Circle Close-up Competition; he is a Member of the Inner Magic Circle with Gold Star.
- 8.** Marvin appeared briefly as a magic demonstrator in the movie 'Staggered'. Marvin's Magic products have featured in movie blockbusters 'Eyes Wide Shut' with Tom Cruise and 'Don't Say a Word' with Michael Douglas.
- 9.** Marvin worked with John Fisher to create and market 'The Best of Magic' poster for the 1980s Thames TV series featuring top magicians and illusionists from around the world.
- 10.** Marvin was once assisted by Michael Ammar and David Williamson to co-host Marvin's Magic on separate presentations on QVC for the US.
- 11.** Marvin collaborated with Kevin James to produce the successful and award winning Freaky Body Illusions Magic Set. (See competition on page 21).
- 12.** Marvin regularly entertains the Arsenal and England Football Teams as well as the travelling Barbarians Rugby Team.

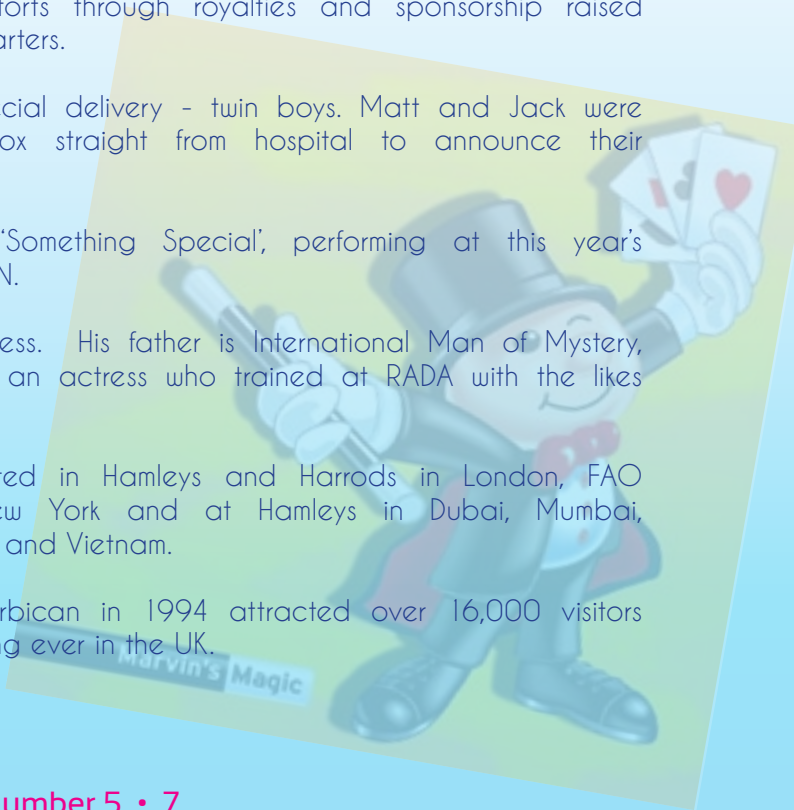
25 Amazing Facts about Marvin & Marvin's Magic



- 13.** Marvin has recently had appearances and product signings in London, New York, Dubai, Mumbai and Moscow.
- 14.** Marvin made his TV debut with his dad when aged five; thirty years later they appeared together on a TV chat show in Ireland.
- 15.** Marvin's Magic has been sold on airlines such as Virgin, KLM, Swissair and Finair.
- 16.** Marvin was an accomplished soccer player and played for sixteen years in the Arsenal Ex-Pro Celebrity XI, twice winning the Player of the Season Award.
- 17.** Marvin's Mind Blowing Magic Set was the most popular magic set in the world in 2005.
- 18.** Marvin's Magic has on three occasions featured magicians performing live in a West End store window - bringing the London traffic to a standstill.



- 19.** Marvin has featured front page, back page and centre spread in the National Press and magazines.
- 20.** Marvin's Magic was the first and only tricks and sets to receive official recommendation from The Magic Circle. Fundraising efforts through royalties and sponsorship raised over £150,000 towards the Circle's Headquarters.
- 21.** In 2000 Marvin and his wife had a special delivery - twin boys. Matt and Jack were photographed in a Marvin's Magic box straight from hospital to announce their arrival to their friends and family.
- 22.** Marvin has been chosen to be the "Something Special", performing at this year's Energy trade show for the energy giant E-ON.
- 23.** Marvin's parents were both in show business. His father is International Man of Mystery, David Berglas and his mother, Ruth Shiel, an actress who trained at RADA with the likes of Joan Collins.
- 24.** Marvin's Magic products are demonstrated in Hamleys and Harrods in London, FAO Schwarz and TRU Times Square in New York and at Hamleys in Dubai, Mumbai, Copenhagen and opening soon in Moscow and Vietnam.
- 25.** The Marvin's Magic Weekend at the Barbican in 1994 attracted over 16,000 visitors making it possibly the busiest magic gathering ever in the UK.





WORKING AT

Sacha Johnstone

For as long as I can remember, I have always loved magic and have always aspired to become a professional magician. Now, as a nineteen year old student, I am lucky enough to enjoy a semi-professional career as a close up magician - and as an employee of the world renowned Marvin's Magic. There have been several defining factors in my magical journey but there is one in particular which stands out above the rest - Marvin's Magic.

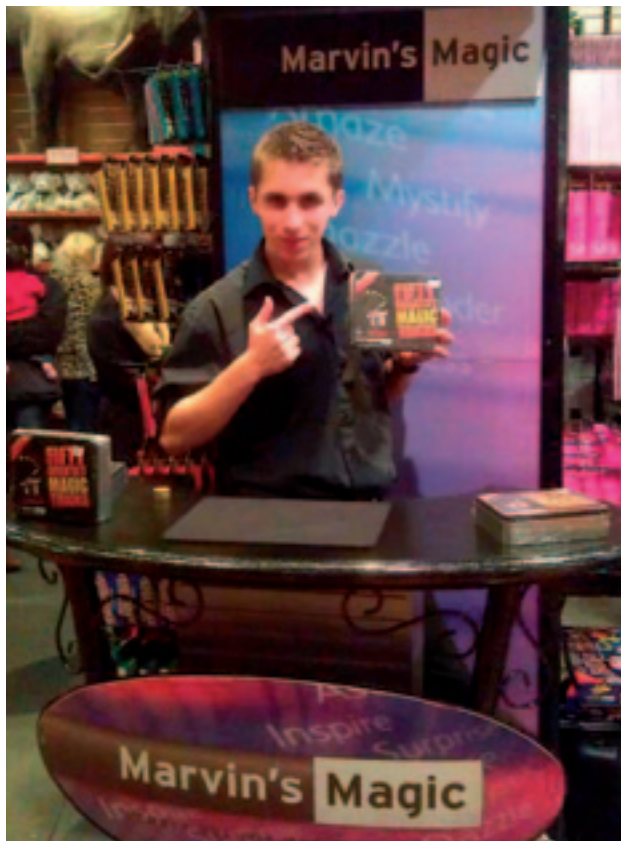
My love for magic first began at the age of two and was sparked by Sooty and Co. As my love for magic grew it was only a matter of time before my parents bought me my first Marvin's Magic set; and on my fifth birthday I was delighted to have received 'Marvin's Magic Shop'. This was a defining moment for me as a magician. Although it did take me some time to grow out of my obsession with Sooty, I never truly grew out of Marvin's Magic; and as I grew older, I never grew tired of going to Hamley's to watch the Marvin's Magic demonstrators and buy their products. I'm sure this is the case for the majority of young magicians, as we have all grown up with Marvin's Magic and it plays such an integral part of getting children involved with this unique art.

As my passion grew I reached another crucial stage in my magical journey. At the age of thirteen, I became a member of the Young Magician's Club. I began to progress with my hobby at a much faster rate than I had been previously. The opportunities and experiences that the YMC provided me with were crucial in my development as a young magician; and the things I learned every month at The Magic Circle HQ helped lay the foundations of much of what I use when performing magic today. It was thanks to YMC that my love for magic became stronger than ever. I can confidently say that it was because of the YMC that I decided to apply for two

weeks of work experience with Marvin's Magic at the age of fifteen. After what is still, to this day, the most grueling interview I have ever had, I found out I was successful in my application. I would be completing two weeks of work experience in June 2009 for Marvin's Magic in Hamley's, Regent Street.

I truly believe that I got more out of my year 10 work experience than anybody else in my year at school. Not only did I get a chance to learn and develop as a magician, but I developed a keen passion for the art of sales - and I realised I was actually quite good at it! Luckily my manager, at the time,

noticed I was actually selling quite a lot and, after two weeks of work experience, I was offered a summer job. I have now worked for Marvin's Magic on a part time basis for the past four years whilst I complete my studies. I cannot begin to put into words how much I have learned in both the art of magic, and the art of sales, during my time working for Marvin's



(or rather, I have learned far too much to put into this article!). If there's one thing in particular that I have learned in my time there, it is the following: A trick does not have to be incredibly technical and complicated in order to be impressive. Demonstrating tricks which are designed to be easy for children to perform, but impressive enough to astound adults, has helped me to focus on the importance of my presentational skills, my patter and my rapport with an audience.

As magicians it is easy for us to forget that magical feeling we had as a child: the first time we saw the

MARVINS

*By Sacha Johnstone
& Joe Derrington*

Vanishing Handkerchief, the Dynamic Coins or the Svengali cards. These classic tricks, which are so widely known amongst magicians, continue to amaze and astound people every single day. Performing simple tricks like these over and over, for over four years now, has allowed me to realise that, although having a good trick to perform is important, the most crucial part of any good magic trick is being a good performer.

What I have shared with you here is just a snippet of what I have gained from Marvin's Magic, both as a customer and as an employee. A special mention must go to the legend that is Bruce Smith AIMC who trained me and has taught me so much whilst I have worked for Marvin's Magic; and, of course, to Marvin Berglas himself for inspiring me from such a young age and providing me with some incredible opportunities and experiences, demonstrating his products all around the UK.

Here's to another 25 years!

Joe Derrington



I worked for Marvin's Magic in Hamleys demonstrating and selling magic products. As a young, aspiring magician I gained a huge amount about not only learning new tricks but also, more importantly, communicating with the audience. You can be the best magician in the world but unless you can sell it to your audience then you might as well be performing to yourself. The job also helped to develop my confidence in performing magic. The reaction is what you strive for: that "WOW" factor and the faces of your audience as they try to develop a rational explanation for what they have just seen. The reaction is what helps to develop your confidence: the more you get it, the more passion you develop for the art.

The rewards are also not only the immediate ones. Countless magicians who I know all began with a Marvin's Magic set bought for them at Christmas and this started the road towards becoming a professional magician. Not only does Marvin's Magic inspire young people to perform magic but also some big names in magic started as

demonstrators for Marvin's Magic such as Tariq Knight and Actor, Director, Writer and Magician Andy Nyman.

At the start, the big downside to the Job was the targets set for sales. In a day you would be expected to sell a certain amount of sets depending on the time of year and how crowded the store would be. It seemed like a downside to begin with because commission, a percentage on top of the basic pay from the sales of the day, would be added if targets were hit. If targets were not hit, then you didn't make commission. However this increased the drive and work ethic which is incredibly important in, not only in magic, but everything you do in life, so it became a positive.

Marvin's for me personally was a huge platform in my life to becoming confident in performing, not only magic, but in general. I also developed a confidence in myself, talking to large audiences. For me, the trick is about 20% of the magic, but showmanship and handling of audience, really selling what you're performing, is 80% and that separates the good magicians from the great.

MEMBER PROFILE:

Samuel Hinch



Age: 12.

Current Home:
Enfield, London.

Joined The Young Magicians Club?
17 August 2012.

Hobbies apart from magic?
Music, Karate, Video Editing and going to Spurs.

Favourite magic book?
Mysterio's Encyclopedia of Magic and Conjuring because it's the first magic book I ever got.

Favourite magic DVD?
Dynamo: The Cutting Edge, the effects it teaches are epic.

Favourite Non-Magic Book? Heroes by Paul Dowsell because it's full of action and I like action.

Favourite Film?
Skyfall (same reason as above).

Favourite Magicians?
Dynamo, I can relate to his life story and his book.

What kind of Magic do you enjoy the most? Close up and Street (mainly Street).

What do you like most about Secrets? Tricks and Member Profiles.

Strongest non-magical performing influences?

Michael McIntyre and my family.

Strongest magical influences? Dynamo and my Dad because he taught me some effects from the very start.

What is your favourite magic on TV?

Dynamo: Magician Impossible.

Which magician would you most like to be and why?

I wouldn't want to be like anyone else because I want to develop my own style.

If you had your own TV chat show and could interview any three people - real or fictitious, dead or alive - who would they be?

Dynamo, Michael McIntyre and James Bond.

Top tip for getting into magic? Practise a lot and just believe that anything is possible.

Some people I would like to thank in magic for either their help or encouragement?

My friend, Tom, and everyone else who has anything to do with the YMC. You're all awesome!



*Marvin's Magic
It's Marvellous*



MARVIN'S MAGIC devises, designs, produces, markets and sells its own range of branded magic products which are available in some of the best stores all around the globe.

It is twenty-five years since October 1987 when Marvin's Magic was first launched at Hamleys of Regent Street. The brainchild of Marvin Berglas, the company has gone from strength to strength and is now available in seventy countries around the world and it would be fair to say that Marvin's Magic has inspired and encouraged literally millions of hobbyists and young magicians worldwide.



Marvin himself grew up in a famous magical family - his father is magic legend, the original 'International Man of Mystery', David Berglas who is also Past President of The Magic Circle.

The original concept of Marvin's Magic started when Marvin was in his twenties. He already had created two multi million pound businesses. One was an In-store demonstration company, the other dealing in schools supplies.. At the time he was marketing and selling a product still sold today -The Magic Drawing Board. It was his job to demonstrate and sell them in Hamleys, right by the front door.

Marvin had already earned the reputation as a good young salesman and entrepreneur. So when he saw the gap in the market for quality magic he earned the opportunity to pitch his idea and exploit it with retailers willing to invest in him. After a year of research and development Marvin's Magic was launched as a simple concept - quality magic props in well designed standardised silver boxes which were highly demonstrable.

As the business flourished, and the company

reputation grew, they were stocked in more and more outlets in the UK and then the US. Nowadays their products are available in stores, online, mail order and through TV Shopping. There have always been their prestigious in-store demonstrations too, running departments within Hamleys and Harrods in London, FAO Schwarz and Toys R Us in Times Square in New York; also in Australia, Dubai, Russia and India.

Explains Marvin: "During the development of the business the London demonstration counters in the stores remained a constant showcase, and visitor attraction, that required 'in-store' theatre and we recruited and trained some formidable demonstrators. We were a magnet for young magicians. There was a period when our past demonstration team read like a Who's Who of British magic including Marc Paul, Anthony Owen, Nicholas Einhorn, Andy Nyman, Danny Buckler, Lee Thompson, Jon Allen, Jonathan Goodwin, Pete Wardell, even Guy Hollingsworth, to name just a few. Add to that those who became actors, producers, comedians and businessmen - so many of our team have gone on to be hugely successful in their chosen field: actors Tom Hollander and Lloyd Owen (The Bodyguard); TV Presenter Stephen Mulhern, life coach Jonathan Jay who sold his successful empire for vast sums. "What is rewarding is that so many have kept in touch and readily acknowledge the start Marvin's Magic gave them. Where else could a young aspiring performer have a constant audience and, every day, put on dozens and dozens of shows? It has taught people skills, audience management and showmanship.



"You have to connect with your audience within the first few seconds despite many distractions and competition for attention. You then have to engage with the audience whilst demonstrating and holding them in one place. You also need to be sincere and believable and then, finally, your efforts and talents are rewarded with the sale - people actually buying the product is the 'applause equivalent'! Those who had 'got it', and worked consistently hard, usually went on to achieve their goals in their show business careers.



"These days we have a very talented and diverse team. Surprisingly, nowadays, our preference is to recruit and train actors to become the role of the magician and sales person rather than relying on magicians who, far too often, come with the added baggage of too many bad habits and pre-conceived ideas. There are always a few exceptions who prove us wrong - we never stop learning!"

The company training process is thorough and proven. They take the best of their knowledge and combine it with the extensive experience of their best demonstrators over the years. This training is their 'secret sauce' as they enjoy the reputation of having the best demonstrators in the business.

Marvin says: "We are always keen to meet up-and-coming talent and would be pleased to audition Young Magicians Club members. The only caveat is that it requires candidates who are energetic, good personalities and hard working. We take care of the training under the management of our Demonstration Manager, Tom Hudson (ex Coronation Street) and our training guru, the legendary Bruce Smith, who has been with us since the beginning and worked alongside all our magicians.

These days we have a talented backstage team handling sales, admin, finance and logistics. This leaves me to concentrate on the areas I am best at which include product development, looking after marketing and our brand and vision.

"I am still a working magician too! I perform regularly at high profile events in both the corporate and private sector. I utilise the same principles in performing as in my company. This has meant I'm in demand for some great VIP and celebrity events which I enjoy very much - particularly my twenty year association with Arsenal Football Club.

Magic is as diverse as music and it is great to see the mix of talented magic out there. I think the future is exciting and I look forward to the challenges required to continue to be at the forefront."

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



When Mandy asked me to write an article for "Where Are They Now" I thought where on earth do I start?

As I write this I am currently working at The Horseshoe Theatre, a part of the Blackpool Pleasure Beach, with my own show called "Michael Jordan's High Jinx Magic and Illusion". The show runs from May to November with anything from five to nine shows a week. This is our second year at the venue

and we have just been signed up for 2014!

This has been a dream for me. From a young age my family would visit Blackpool and go to the Pleasure Beach for the "MYSTIQUE" show - a magic, illusion and variety show in the very theatre I am working in now. It was a great show filled with magic, illusions, music, dance and comedy. That's when it all started, that's when I got the magic bug.

Spurred on by my grandma and grandad I started to learn Magic.

Now that I had a thirst for learning magic I wanted to meet other magicians and perform. I wrote to the President of the Huddersfield Circle of Magicians who was very polite in replying that the society didn't allow anyone under sixteen to join but suggested I contact Cynthia Neptune of the Northern Magic Circle Juniors.

by Michael Jordan M.M.C

Cynthia opened up a whole new world to me of magic clubs for young magicians such as Merlins Magic Academy, Northern Magic Circle Juniors and of course The Young Magicians Club. By attending these clubs I learned not only about magic, but also about performing, stage presence, structuring a show as well as meeting some of the legends of magic, making some great friends and lots of fantastic memories!

The great thing about these clubs was that every year they would all hold events, roadshows, conventions and competitions. This is when I really started my performing career, entering competitions and volunteering for shows gave me something to work towards and a chance to perform in front of a live audience. I started to put a small act together for J Day It wasn't a very good act and I didn't win any prizes but it was enough for Ali Bongo to pick me for a Young Magicians Club entertain the Magic Circle night and spend a little time coaching me on how to make the act better (I'm sure there is an embarrassing video of me performing in the YMC archives - complete with bow tie and squeaky voice).

My ultimate passion was illusions so I enlisted my sister Siobhan and, together, we created a stage act based on sibling rivalry.

We entered the act for J-Day and, to our delight, won the competition. Mandy Davis then arranged for us to perform for the SAM convention in Boston, USA. Over the years we improved the act, winning a number of competitions including the IBM British Ring Shield. I had also been developing other solo stage and close up acts, both

for competitions and for other performances.

In 2009 I entered the "Young Magician of the Year" with a solo act that I had developed for the Buxton Fringe Festival and performed in Charity shows. Working the act enabled me to perfect the tricks to the point of being able to perform them without thinking and concentrate on my patter.

Winning that award was a truly amazing experience and has helped me in so many ways

After leaving school I studied for a qualification in Media and Animation before turning professional at seventeen. Performing in Holiday parks around the UK for the first three years enabled me to learn about audience management, developing material and how to adapt the act. Some days we would be performing on large stages to hundreds of people and the next day on a small stage for two families. Working regularly enabled us to invest in costumes, illusions and all the equipment that you don't think about such as P A systems, lights and microphones.

In 2010 Siobhan decided that she no longer wanted to perform full time. Tamsyn Sear joined the act and has become my partner, both on and off stage, for the last two years.

John Archer recommended us to a production company called "That's Entertainment" who specialised in Summer shows and pantomimes. This introduced us to touring Theatres with a two hour show and appearing in annual Pantomimes. It has led to other work as specialist performers on TV programmes such as Shameless and Holyoaks; and being accepted onto the

TV programme Penn and Teller "Fool Us" which, in turn, led to us being invited to put on our own show at the venue, in Blackpool, where it all started.

This year we have been Blackpool's number one attraction on trip advisor all summer and are currently working on our show for 2014.

Being a professional entertainer is not an easy life but a very fulfilling one and has only been achieved with the support of lots of people along the way. It would be impossible for me to name them all but I feel there are two people that deserve a special mention and who are sadly no longer with us, Cynthia Neptune and Ali Bongo whose inspiration and dedication helped not just myself but hundreds of youngsters. People were made to feel special by them, regardless of their performing ability, which for me is the real magic.



REVIEWS

The Grid *By Richard Wiseman*

■ Reviewed by Darren Tossell



Easy

Gimmicked Deck and Instructional DVD £23.00 plus p&g from MurphysMagic.com

The routine is simple. You show a deck of cards that have large numbers printed on them and hand the spectator a packet from the deck. He or she shuffles, spreads the deck facedown, and freely selects any one of the cards, keeping the selection hidden from the magician. With the remainder of the deck, the magician counts out four packets of four cards, face up. Your spectator picks any one of the packets to see how closely the four cards' total matches their yet to be revealed selection. They add up the four cards which, for the sake of this review, make thirty. The spectator turns over the freely selected card and, yes - you've guessed it, they have selected the number thirty.

You go on to see what would have happened if they picked one of the other piles. Amazingly, each packet adds up to thirty. This is just the start, however, as you go into the standard magic square routine by creating a grid of cards and showing that all the corners, diagonals, horizontal and vertical rows add up to thirty. That, of course, is usually the show stopper. However, here comes the kicker: after going through the spectator's remaining cards, to show that they are all different, you tell them that you wrote a message on the backs of the cards that form the magic square. Turning over the grid, it reveals "I think you will select the number thirty!"

This is cunningly simple to do and, completely self-working, providing you can cut a deck of cards. There are no calculations to be done. In fact, it's so clever you'll find yourself playing with it over and over again making sure, no matter what number comes up, that it works; then smiling to yourself as your apparent mathematical genius is revealed. A slightly fiddly reset, which no doubt speeds up the more you perform the effect, is my only very slight complaint about a masterful piece of magic from the ingenious mind of Professor Richard Wiseman - highly recommended.



Reading Writing

by Ariel Frailich ■ Reviewed by Will Houstoun

Illustrated book. £35.00 plus p&g from www.isawthat.com

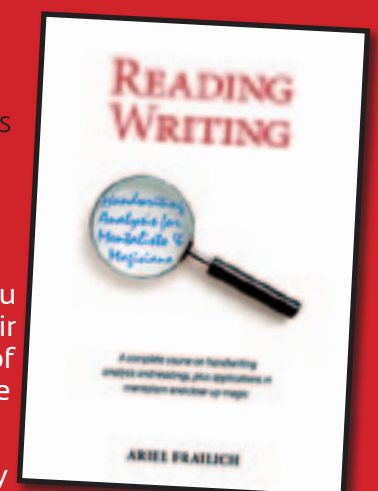
Reading Writing is, as the title suggests, all about reading writing: allowing you to make judgements about somebody's personality based on a sample of their handwriting. Frailich's introduction to the book gives a powerful demonstration of graphology's potential with a clever stunt in which you can correctly identify the author of a particular piece of text.

Reading Writing is split into three main sections. The first presents a simple, easy to learn, system that can be used to give an entertaining graphological reading. The second contains basic information on the way in which a reading can be given as well as different markets into which the service could be sold. Finally, there is a selection of mentalism and close-up effects, that offer the potential for the inclusion of a graphological element, are described.

Ariel Frailich's system for handwriting analysis is based on learning twelve variants that you can spot in someone's handwriting, as well as the character traits that they indicate. Each trait is very clearly explained and straight forward to learn. With the help of a few exercises, that are included in the book, the



Suitable for all levels



things that you might want to beg, borrow or steal (in a magical sense) - or put on your wish list!

basic system should be simple to memorise in a week - with a little work each day. Having covered the basic system Frailich goes on to give more detail on each of the traits; and also gives examples of which are most telling in a given situation, as well as suitable lines that could be used to describe them. This is a very clearly explained system that efficiently gives you everything you need to start giving readings quickly. Once the system has been learned and understood Frailich explains how readings can be given in a variety of settings from graphology parties to stage shows and even by mail. He also gives a timely reminder of a variety of "professional considerations" for a performer who is using graphology for entertainment, particularly with regard to the occasional client who will ask for information of a more serious nature than it is wise to give.

The section of the book that uses graphology for effects includes a dozen mentalism pieces and six magic tricks. The mentalism explained includes several variations on the Living or Dead test, a book test, a murder mystery themed around Cluedo and a couple of psychometry style pieces. It is pleasing to see that Frailich is careful in constructing the routines so as not to claim that graphology can achieve too much, The examples of combining graphology with magic feel a little more forced than the mentalism pieces but, if you are determined to combine traditional magic with graphology, they will give you a good starting point. The celebrated Lee Earle has commented that graphology "will be the hot premise for a lot of future mentalism because it bridges the gap between the believable and the impossible." If you agree with that idea then this will provide a thorough introduction to the area as well as number of ideas on how to incorporate it into your existing work.

Seeking the Bridge



by John B Born

■ Reviewed by Will Houstoun

Hardbound book b&w photographs. £35.00 plus p&p from johnborn.com

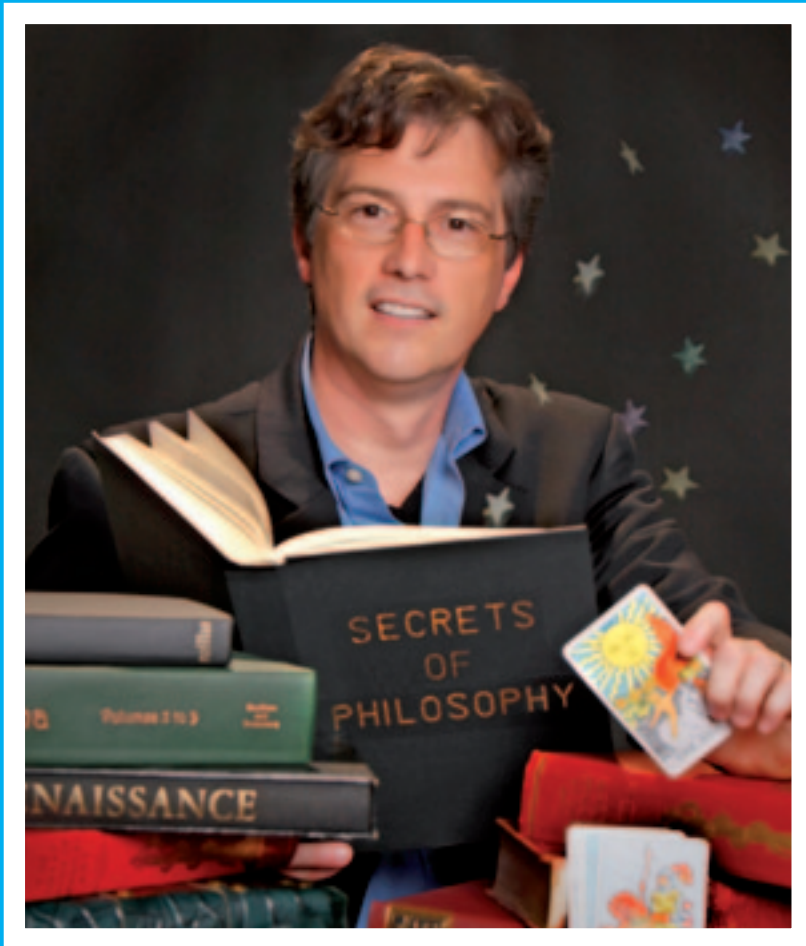
Seeking the Bridge contains thirty-one ideas, routines and techniques using playing cards of which just over half utilise a memorised deck. Any stack will do, however, so anyone who has already learnt the Aronson stack or Mnemonica, can breathe a sigh of relief knowing that all those hours will contribute towards this material as well.

Moving slightly away from the main thrust of the book, John Born includes two gambling related pieces that feature a reality that many cheating exposés (really magic tricks with the word "poker" added into the patter) lack. A few items in the second half of the book will require a little bit of time to be spent modifying or gaffing part, or all, of a deck. Queen's Prediction, for example, is a lovely routine in which writing on the card box is used for the classic: "Can I possibly know what you are thinking?" "No" prediction gag. The second part of the routine, however, provides a magical follow up to the gag as well as a kicker ending in which the writing on the box changes. A variation of the same basic idea, "My Cards", is an absolutely beautiful way to make a deck of cards, that you plan to give to your spectator as a souvenir, extra special.

Other items that caught my eye include a very clever technique in Delayed Crimp, a wonderful presentational angle for an Ace cutting sequence and some interesting routines such as Lucky Penny, Right on the Money and Twelfth-Method Match. The last item, in particular, brings back fond memories of being fooled rather badly a few years ago. Throughout the book ~ John Born has chosen to give very thorough explanations rather than simply outlining the methods for each effect. If you enjoy finding out about the thinking behind another magician's material then this will be appreciated. It is worth reiterating that a significant portion of the material requires a memorised deck and some of it will require you to truly know your stack inside-out. In addition, some of the material takes a moderately improvisational approach in which a trick could end in any one of several different ways depending on quite what happens at the beginning.

If you are a fan of memorised deck work, or just prefer your magic to feature more thoughtful substance than visual flash, then Seeking the Bridge will be worth an investment of time, thought and cold hard cash.





MUSINGS OF A MAGIC TEACHER

Dr. Larry Hass

Picture:
Larry Hass.

In my previous “musings,” I have shared ideas about how to create powerful, entertaining magic routines and deal with the common challenges we face as performers, such as nerves and making mistakes. My intention has been to help you become a very fine magician - the kind of magician who people will talk about and remember.

With this in mind, I am now in a position to discuss an important part of your being memorable, and that is to be original.

“Be original.” “Originality.” These are big, scary words. But I think the essence of the idea is fairly simple. Being “original” means getting more of you in your magic and less of someone else. The opposite of originality is imitating others.


Now, let me be clear: I don’t think imitating someone else is “bad” or evil. No, no: I agree with the great philosopher Aristotle who argued in his Poetics that imitation is natural to human beings, and it is an important part of how children learn to do certain

things, such as speak or behave. Indeed, we watch others and we learn how to act by copying them.



But Aristotle also stresses that imitating others is only the start of the learning process, not the end of it. Because, he implies, a more mature human being really comes to learn who they are by separating themselves from their teachers and models. This is what I call second-level learning - it is the level at which a person “comes into their own.”

Aristotle gives us, then, a very practical, down-to-earth way for magicians (and other artists) to



understand originality. Of course we imitate our heroes and teachers in magic. Of course we start out by learning their methods and routines, by using the exact words they have carefully crafted, by even repeating their jokes, expressions and gestures. By itself, this is not a problem; it is a natural part of the learning process.

But it becomes a problem when we take those carbon-copy imitations out into the world for others to see. Because then we are getting someone else's applause, not our own. And knowledgeable audience members will see right through us for the imitators that we are. And further, using someone else's ideas, words and jokes is never as honest and organic as the ones we have crafted. It is a bit like wearing someone else's clothes: they don't feel right to ourselves and don't look right to others!


So if we want to be more original in our magic, what are we to do?

Having taught about this topic for twenty-five years, I believe the very first thing is to make a personal commitment in your heart and mind to finding ways to be more of yourself in your magic. This internal commitment to originality is an inner aspiration to be less like a child or a novice and more like a mature practitioner of your art.

The second thing is to remember that originality is not an "all or nothing" thing. It is a more or less thing, and this means it is something you can strive to get more of every single day.

For one example, let's say you have been performing one of Dai Vernon's classic routines just exactly as it has been written up and published - such as his Cups and Balls. Remember, this is not a crime. Vernon's Cups and Balls is an astonishingly good routine created by a master; there is a good reason why it is among the most imitated routines and scripts in modern close-up magic.

But inspired by your inner commitment to originality perhaps you can do something that is more mature.



Perhaps you can examine the technical level of the routine to come up with a better method for one of the sleights or a better structure for the action. Or perhaps you can turn Vernon's presentation of "I am going to show you a classic of magic" into something that is better for you. Or perhaps you can re-write the script so the words and laughs are more true to you. Or perhaps, as Tommy Wonder did, you will set aside Vernon's routine altogether and come up with your own version of the Cups and Balls!

Now, I can't tell you what you will find on the other side of this creative process; it wouldn't be yours if I could! But I promise that if you stay internally committed to sharing your own work and words, your own point of view and behavioral idiom, the results will always be much more of you than someone else. This is how musicians do it; and actors, painters and writers, too. And it is how we become the kind of magician our audiences will remember.

Homework

1. It is great to learn the routines and scripts of others; this is part of the process of learning magic. However, is there one such routine in your repertoire that would lend itself to becoming more your own? Which one?
2. Set aside some time to "go creative" with that routine. What else might the presentation be about? What would be a better opening line for you? Is there a better way of handling a sleight or some prop than the common way?
3. Ask yourself honestly: who is the magician you are most tempted to unconsciously imitate when you perform? Dynamo? Derren Brown? Jeff McBride? How exactly does that imitation happen? Is it in your material, your sense of humor, your lines, or your "look" and gestures? Now, make a conscious decision to head in a different direction.

TRICK

A nice bit of mentalism

EFFECT:

A piece of card is displayed, the performer calling this his/her 'prediction'.

"On the reverse side I've written the name of a playing card," the performer says and asks a spectator to freely select a card from a deck. This is clipped under the Bulldog clip which is positioned at the top edge of the card.

When the 'prediction' card is reversed the face of the chosen card is on view. The prediction written on the card's surface matches - 100% correct!

APPARATUS:

A regular deck.

A specially prepared 'prediction' card. This in fact consists of two similar pieces of white card (medium thickness) which are glued together as shown in the accompanying photo. Dotted lines show the areas to be glued, leaving an open area inside. The top edge of this area is open. On one side of this card, using a bold marker pen, write the name of a playing card eg: Five of Diamonds. Position this half-way down the length of the card.



A Simple Prediction

by Ian Adair

A spring clip or Bulldog clip. This is attached to the top edge of the card (over the opening). Insert the playing card under the clip (on the 'prediction' side) so its face is showing.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

First display your 'prediction' card with the plain side facing the audience. State that you have written the name of a playing card on the reverse side.

Hand out the deck of cards and have it shuffled by a member of the audience. Retrieve the deck and fan the cards, faces downwards. Ask a spectator to freely select one of the cards but request that its identity shouldn't be revealed at this stage.

Pick up the card (clip and 'opening' towards the top), and hold it from its base. Casually remove the clip and keep a hold on it, as well as the loose card, whilst you slide the playing card (back towards audience) from the top of the 'prediction' card, downwards. In reality, the card is simply being slid inside the opening area of the hollow card. Immediately replace the spring clip. You can now release tension on the loose card, the clip once again securing it in position.

Recap what has been done and reverse the 'prediction' card. The audience see what appears to be the selected card with its name written beneath it.

Tick Trick

by Ian Adair

A cool trick to repeat for the same audience

EFFECT:

A deck of cards is fanned towards a spectator with its faces showing. At this stage the reverse side of the deck is not exposed.

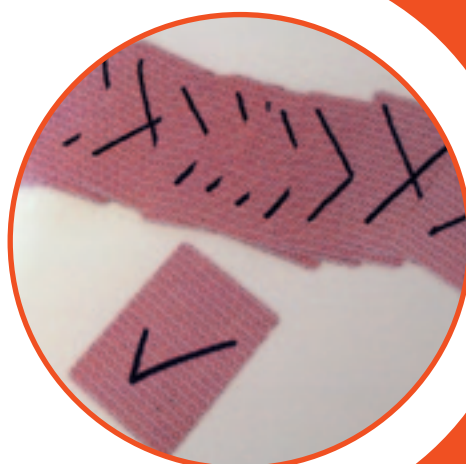
The spectator freely selects one of the cards. When the card is reversed it reveals a big tick on its back. "I knew you were going to select this card - that's why I marked a big tick on its reverse side" the performer says. At this stage some of the audience imagine the backs of all fifty two cards to be similarly marked - with a tick. When the deck is reversed, and ribbon-spread along the table surface, each and every one reveals a bold cross (X) marked on their backs!

APPARATUS:

A specially prepared deck:

No need to gaff your best Bicycle deck here. Inexpensive cards are available from the £1.00 shop.

A red backed deck is best used here. Prepare the deck by marking a big bold cross on the backs of fifty-one cards. The odd card is marked with a bold tick.



"Ah, the backs of the remaining cards – well..." reverse deck and spread cards along the table surface - make sure the tick card is not exposed. "Yes, they are also marked."

Watch out for the shock on the faces of your audience when they see that all the other cards display crosses on their backs!

TRICK

SET UP:

Place the odd card (with tick) onto the face of the deck.

WORKING AND PRESENTATION:

Fan the deck, faces towards spectators. Ask one to freely point to one of the cards which you remove and place onto the face of the deck. In reversing this card, to reveal its back design, a 'double-lift' move is executed (two cards reversed as one). This results in what appears to be the back of the chosen card which displays the bold tick. Reverse the procedure by executing another 'double-lift' so the deck is back to its original set-up.

Mention that you knew the spectator was going to select this card, stating the fact that you marked a tick on its back.



Puzzle Pizza

Add your own toppings by sending in your puzzles!

COMPETITION



Marvin's Magic has given us three sets of Freaky Body Illusions to give away to celebrate the company's 25th anniversary.

The question you need to answer is:

How much you would have to pay for this if you were to buy it yourself?

Email your answer to the editor, Mandy, at mandy@TheMagicCircle.co.uk or post your answer to the address in the first column on page three. Entries in by 31st October 2013.

Thank you Marvin's Magic!

Dennis Patten's Puzzle Portion



Magic Mike's 5 rabbits are looking for their daily treat.

With only five carrots, how can one be given to each bunny and yet still leave a carrot in the basket?



Dennis Patten's Puzzle Solution Secrets August '13



Solutions

AUGUST 2013

This puzzle is another that often creates a conceptual block. But, as you can see, the solution is quite simple!



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