

MICHAELCLOSE.COM

WHERE MAGIC AND TECHNOLOGY MEET



FRIEDRICH ROITZSCH
PAGE 6

CONTENTS

April/May 2023 • Issue 4 • Volume 6

FEATURES

- 4 UP FRONT
- 6 CONVERSATIONS WITH CLOSE
- 8 BOOK REVIEWS
- 12 DIAMONDS OF PERFORMANCE
- 14 MAGIC NEWS
- 17 THE MAGIC OF SCIENCE
- 19 MIND OVER MATTERS
- 22 COOL CLIPS
- 23 THE ART AND CRAFT OF CONJURING
- 27 TECHNICALLY SPEAKING



FREDRICH ROITZSCH

Michael talks to Fredrich about his life in magic and his new book.

6



CHRISTIAN BISCHOF

Christian joins our newsletter family. Read his column Diamonds of Performance.

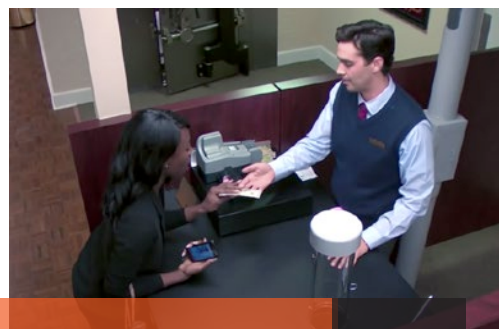
12



NEW BOOK REVIEWS

Instructions for Miracles by Friedrich Roitzsch and *Letters from Juan* Vols. 1 & 2

8



MICHAEL CARBONARO

Funny clip with a bank deposit prank.

22

TECHNICALLY SPEAKING 27

3D Printing - What you need to know



THE MAGIC CASTLE

Celebrating 60 years!

14



Mike Pisciotta

Cool clip of Mike performing at the Magic Castle in Hollywood

22

UPCOMING CONVENTIONS

MAGIC CONVENTIONS WORLDWIDE

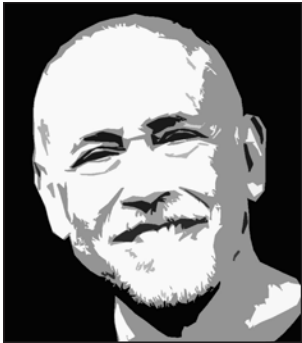
- [IBM Convention, Pittsburgh, PA, July 11-15](#)
- [SAM Convention, New Orleans, LA, July 23-25](#)
- [MAGIC Live - Las Vegas, August 6-9](#)
- [Kid-Abra Conference, Chatanooga, TN, Aug 16-18](#)
- [World Magic Convention, London, UK, Sept 23](#)
- [Daytona Magic Convention - Nov 3-5](#)
- [London Magic Convention, London, UK, Nov 5](#)



MAGIC OF SCIENCE

Just how reliable is the human memory?

17



Welcome to the April/May edition of the newsletter. Having lived in the Great White North for more than a decade, I've learned that most often May feels like a giant weather-related April Fool's Day joke. As the Canadians say, "It's called May because it may rain, it may be warm, or it may snow." I hope wherever you are you've made a smooth transition into spring.

Once again, our cover subject this month is someone you probably have not heard of. Friedrich Roitzsch is a full-time professional magician from Munich, Germany. He recently published his first book, *Instructions for Miracles*, which contains ten card routines from his performing repertoire. Friedrich is a close friend of German card expert Denis Behr, and there is a similarity to their approach to card magic. The effects are ingeniously crafted, using the most expedient method, whether it is a stack, a gaff, sleight of hand, or a combination of all three. In addition, just as Denis did with his *Handcrafted Card Magic* series, Friedrich wrote, laid out, and did all the illustrations for the book. You'll find my review of *Instructions for Miracles* on page 12.

I also interviewed Friedrich for this issue's Conversations with Close podcast. Friedrich and I have several things in common (including a musical background – he pursued a music degree as a trumpet player); in addition to learning about his personal story, Friedrich also provided insights into a few of the routines in his book. You'll find the interview on page 6.

I also reviewed the first two volumes of *Letters from Juan*, the new series of books from Juan Tamariz. As I mention in the review, publications from Juan are an event. The routines in the series are ones Juan has tightly held for his personal use and have only been shared with a few friends.

This seems to be a banner time for card magic publications. I recently received a copy of *Jean-Pierre Vallarino* by John Lovick, a huge book of Monsieur Vallarino's creations. I am working my way through it and will post a review in the next newsletter.

In *Penn & Teller: Fool Us* news, there has finally been an official announcement that the show has been renewed for a tenth season. There will be twenty (!) episodes with a new host: Brooke Burke. We are deep, deep, deep in the pre-production process. If you've submitted a video and haven't heard back from the producers yet, don't despair. We have a lot of videos to go through.

I forgot to mention in the last newsletter that Lee Asher has wrapped up his Patent Files column. I'd like to thank Lee for making this interesting information available to our readers.

We welcome a new columnist this month: Christian Bischoff, who was the cover subject of our last newsletter. When I read his book, *Diamonds of Performance*, I knew his combination of theory and practical performance information is exactly what we try to provide in this newsletter. I'm looking forward to his contributions.

Our other regular columnists, Mick Ayres, Michael Breggar, and Bruce Kalver are also here. You'll find news about the sixtieth anniversary of The Magic Castle, a video clip about Castle bar magician extraordinaire Mike Pisciotta, a report about a mishap during David Blaine's Vegas show, and a fascinating story about how fallible human memory actually is. All this and more in this edition of the newsletter.

Stay safe and well. We'll see you next time. ♦



MAGIC MERCH

AVAILABLE NOW!



SHOP FOR FATHER'S DAY AT MICHAELCLOSE.COM

THE UNBELIEVABLY USEFUL COMEDY PROP

WHEN YOU ABSOLUTELY, POSITIVELY NEED TO PUT A RUBBER THING ON THE END OF A STICK.

A POWERFUL MAGIC TOOL DISGUISED AS A GAG!

BY MICHAEL CLOSE

The Unbelievably Useful Comedy Prop

This has proven to be useful in both my close-up and stand-up performances. It is not only a laugh-getting device, it also functions as an applause cue, a running gag, and an extremely subtle way to unload a "dirty" hand without obviously going to a pocket or using a device such as a Topit.

\$20.00 USD + Shipping (Ships from Canada)

Package includes:

- Three (3) little hands
- Some suggestions on how to use it in your performances. (Pencil or dowel not included.)

» **BUY NOW**

CONVERSATIONS WITH CLOSE



Friedrich Roitzsch is a full-time professional magician based in Munich, Germany. He is also the author of the excellent new book, *Instructions for Miracles*, which has received high praise from people like Pit Hartling and Denis Behr; you'll find my review in this month's newsletter.

Friedrich got interested in magic by reading books from the public library. He made contact with local magicians, who provided more advanced reading material and who offered valuable advice. Friedrich joined the prestigious Magic Circle of Germany, and was a prizewinner in contests held by that organization.

For nine years Friedrich performed close-up magic at the Hotel Kempinski at the Munich airport. During this time, Friedrich studied as a music major (trumpet) at college. Upon graduation, he decided his real passion was for magic, and he has pursued that career ever since.

During our interview, Friedrich shared his background, his journey into the realm of magic, and the influential magicians who guided him and shaped his career. It is with great pleasure that I present Friedrich Roitzsch, a rising star in the field of card magic. I encourage you to listen to the interview; he has some great stories and you'll gain insight into the routines in *Instructions for Miracles*.

You can listen to the interview [here](#). ♦

THE PM CARD MARK SYSTEM BY PETE MCCABE

An easy to learn card marking system and twenty-eight routines designed to baffle even those familiar with the concept of a marked deck. The routines include either a full script or patter suggestions for turning the routine into a full-blown performance piece. Includes additional material by Michael Close.

AVAILABLE NOW - CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS

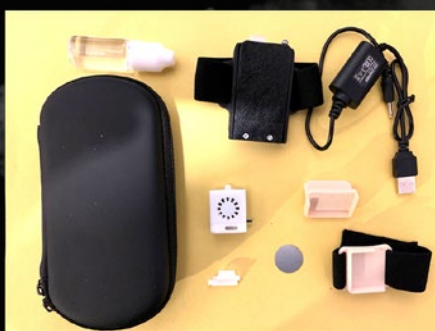


**Instant
Download
\$24.95**

**MAKE YOUR OWN
MARKED DECK**

MAGIC FOR PROS FROM BRUCE KALVER

TSG - THE SMOKE GIMMICK



The Smoke Gimmick (TSG) is the smallest and easiest smoke producing gimmick you will ever use. ("1 x 1" ½)

The 3-D printed device can be held in the hand, or attached to one of the accessory clips to produce smoke wherever you need it!

The battery is rechargeable. TSG is remote controlled.

Some things you can do with the TSG include:

- A wisp of smoke when a coin or ball vanishes.
- A billow of smoke comes out of top hat or prop
- A borrowed smart phone begins to smoke when rubbed
- Smoke appears inside a glass or under a scarf.

As you see in the photo, we include lots of accessories so you can use it anywhere you wish to produce smoke.

Two drops of "juice" gives you over a minute of smoke. The liquid supplied is available at e-cig stores everywhere. It is safe and you can travel with it. (travel case included.) Nothing complicated to set up. Press a button - get smoke. Detailed instructions along with a video guide is included.

Demo video at www.brucekalver.com. Available in VERY LIMITED quantities. Used by professionals.

\$ 130.00 (plus postage)

MAGICAL LITOPHANES



The word "lithophane" derives from Greek "litho", which is from "lithos" which means stone or rock, and "phainein" meaning "to cause to appear." Originally, lithophanes were made from carved porcelain but with modern 3d printing, the world of lithophanes are more affordable. Our unique pieces are 3D printed in plastic and take 5-7 hours to create.

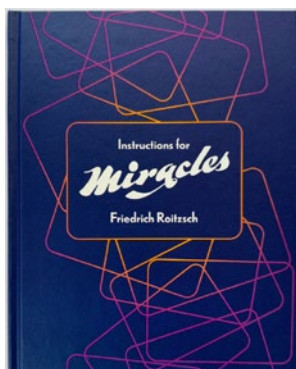
With a simple LED tealight and stand, (supplied) the photo comes to life in an almost "holographic" appearance. We have also created a night light version which adds a little spookiness to your hallways. The night light version comes with an LED nightlight plug and adapter.

The Master Mystery Lithophane shows Houdini with the first robot in cinema, Q the Automaton Robot. Approximate size is 3.5 x 4.5 inches.

The Bosch Conjurer Lithophane shows the famous Bosch painting of a street performer presenting the cups and balls while robbers are stealing from the crowd. The graphic is approximately 3.5 x 5 inches. Lithophanes are \$25 each. Visit our website to learn more.

Top Hat Productions, PO Box 10421, Cranston, RI 02910 USA
www.BruceKalver.com | info@tophatprod.com

PRODUCT REVIEWS



Instructions for Miracles

by Freidrich Roitzsch

Available from: <https://miraclesforyou.de/#order>

Price: €42.00 (Approx. \$45.00 USD)

REVIEW BY MICHAEL CLOSE

I learned of Friedrich Roitzsch and his new book, *Instructions for Miracles*, from an enthusiastic endorsement from Pit Hartling on Facebook. Recommendations from Pit are not to be taken lightly, so I reached out to Pit for Friedrich's contact information. Friedrich graciously sent me a copy of his book to review. I concur with Pit's assessment; *Instructions for Miracles* contains ten excellent, thoroughly thought-out performance pieces with playing cards.

You may ask, "Who is this Friedrich Roitzsch guy, and why doesn't his last name have more vowels?" Pit answers the first part of that question in his Foreword to the book:

"One of the first things that strikes you when you see Friedrich perform is his soft and natural touch. There are no 'tells,' no signaling of moves. Everything in his handling just flows naturally and effortlessly... But just because he has the chops doesn't mean that he will always use them: Friedrich also understands the benefits of intelligent construction. Besides well-applied sleight of hand, within these pages you will find mathematical principles, stacks, duplicates, gimmicks, and subtleties – whatever best suits the needs of the effect... It is one of Friedrich's great talents to identify strong, solid effects and then put in the important work to streamline, combine, enhance and create the best version and handling."

The book begins with Switch, a transposition between two red Aces placed in a spectator's sleeve and two indifferent cards placed on the table. The routine includes a demonstration of the MacMillan switch, a notoriously difficult one-handed switch. However, this part of the trick isn't crucial; you can do it slowly and openly. In the final notes to this routine, Friedrich makes a point with which I heartily concur: "I like very much to make a spectator the hero. In addition to the great comedy this creates, it communicates an attitude of having fun together instead of just showing off." Even if you don't do this routine, take this bit of professional advice to heart.

Luminous Readers is a funny routine in which the magician demonstrates the effectiveness of a pair of special glasses (actually just a pair of sunglasses). A faro shuffle is part of the method, but it need not be perfect. Robin Hood is a handling for Paul Harris's Arrow Splits Arrow. In this effect, a selected card is found by boomeranging another card, which not only lands in the deck next to the chosen card, it actually splits it. In Friedrich's handling, the selected card is signed, producing a memorable souvenir.

The Fastest Card Trick in the World is a two-phase routine in which signed Kings and Aces transpose twice. The second time, the Kings are placed in four different pockets and still change places with the Aces. This is one of the more technically challenging routines in the book; it requires some palming skills. In Power Matcha, a spectator succeeds three times in finding the mates of freely selected cards. For the finale the entire deck ends up in matching pairs. This one requires the ability to do a perfect faro shuffle.

Nine-card Monte Revisited is based on a Jose Carroll routine. It is basically a Wild Card routine cloaked in a Monte presentation. You will have to have someone make the special double-faced cards necessary for this one. Far Out is a platform, stack-independent, memorized deck routine, in which the magician is able to identify the cards selected by three onstage spectators while he stands in the audience. All of the cards the third spectator holds are also identified. There is no sleight of hand in this routine, but there are some mental gymnastics that will take some time to get comfortable with.

Out of this Card box is a handling of Out of this World with this wrinkle: it starts from a freely shuffled deck of cards. This combines ideas from Juan Tamariz and Karl Fulves. Magic Squared is based on Richard Wiseman's routine, The Grid (watch the Wiseman routine here: <https://tinyurl.com/yc8k652f>), combined with ideas from Karl Hein. Friedrich's routine allows for the free choice of a number. You'll need to make up a number deck (from blank-faced cards) and construct a simple gaff.

The final effect, the eponymous Instructions for a Miracle, is a reputation maker. The spectator is given a small, plastic-comb-bound booklet containing the instructions for a trick. She chooses a card and signs it on the back. The card vanishes from the deck and ends up bound into the instruction booklet, which is then given to her as a souvenir. You'll have to spend some time and money making up the props, and the trick must be performed seated (or standing behind a table), but I believe the effect on the spectators is certainly worth it.

Instructions for Miracles is a terrific first effort from someone whose creations I'm sure we'll be seeing more of. These routines are geared for the intermediate-level card magician and will require practice. The good news is that, because of this, you'll have professional-caliber repertoire that few others are performing. Recommended.



Letters from Juan Vol. 1 and Vol. 2

by Juan Tamariz

Available from: Penguin Magic and other dealers

Price: \$25.00 USD per volume

REVIEW BY MICHAEL CLOSE

Without a doubt, since the passing of Dai Vernon, the single most influential magician in the world is Juan Tamariz. Many of today's most popular and successful magicians cite Juan as their mentor.

Any new publication from Juan is an event. The new series from Penguin Magic, *Letters from Juan*, is particularly special because it contains routines Juan has kept exclusively for his own use. I was excited to learn of project, and I was happy to assist in the editing and proofing of the later volumes.

Each volume opens with a letter from Tamariz to the reader. These are heartfelt expressions of Juan's love of magic and his affection for his friends, colleagues, and readers. To give you a sense of these, in the first volume, Juan talks of a meeting with Dai Vernon at the Magic Castle. Vernon

product reviews cont'd

showed Juan three sleights, and then swore him to secrecy. He writes, “Sure enough, I didn’t tell anyone...but neither could I make use of these ideas or apply them in my tricks because it was impossible for me not to share any kind of magic secrets with my close friends and – needless to say – with my mentors.”

These secrets were eventually published in the *Vernon Chronicles* and *Five by Five Scotland*. Juan then writes, “That’s what I want to do with my own secrets by sharing them with you, and other friends, by including them in these letters of love and magic. They are the secrets of the tricks and routines that I have been developing throughout these fifty years, on moonlit nights (after singing to the whispers of my friends, the muses) and which I have been nurturing, year after year, since their birth as magic plants and trees that I have been grafting and modifying, in a quest for improving the taste, the scent, and the appetizing presence of their already ripe fruit.”

So, both Vernon and Tamariz kept secrets; is there a difference? I’ve always felt the Vernon approach to secrets turned them into symbols of status and power: “I know this thing (sleight, subtlety, or trick) and you don’t; I’m better than you.” Juan has a different reason. He writes, “Aside from performing these tricks and routines for lay audiences, I have used them for attempting to make you guys feel, and share together, the wonderful and stunning effect of the impossible (even for extremely knowledgeable magicians) as well as the scent of the fascinating and the magical – a genre that Maestro Ascanio accurately called ‘magic even for magicians,’ and which I have cultivated with love and passion.” So for Juan, keeping these secrets allowed him to give magicians a gift – the gift of experiencing magic the way you did when you first became interested in it. As your conjuring knowledge grows, the opportunities to feel astonishment are few and far between. Juan has given me that astonished sensation many times, and I’m grateful for it.

Volume 1 contains four effects. In the first, *The Shovel*, the Ace of Spades finds a freely selected card lost in the deck. I am aware of some negative feedback from a few reviewers about this effect; the opinion being that it is not particularly overwhelming. I want to take a moment to discuss this, and in the process offer some suggestions about how to study Tamariz’s work.

The technical requirements for *The Shovel* are: a card control, a double lift, the Mexican Turnover, and a force. During the trick it is necessary to force one of seven freely (?) selected cards. The moment I read this I thought, “Hey, this is the perfect trick to gain confidence with the classic force.” Tamariz says this in the Notes for this routine: “The fact that you only need to force one card out of the seven that were selected at the beginning allows you to force that card using subtle and risky methods that make it evident and clear that the selection is completely free.” This gives us more insight into why Tamariz values this trick. If the spectators are *convinced* the seven cards they select are free choices, the ending is impossible.

Card control is the next important aspect. Tamariz does not suggest a specific control (perhaps he uses his *Perpendicular Control*); but whatever control you use, the spectators must be *convinced* the selected card is lost. The double lift and the Mexican Turnover are moves Tamariz has previously written about (the *Tamariz Turnover* and *Study of the Mexican Turnover*). Tamariz’s touches for these moves make them more convincing than the original handlings.

My point is this: If you read the description of this effect and think, “Oh, it’s just a double lift and a Mexican Turnover,” you are missing the big picture. You need to ask the question, “Why does

Tamariz think so highly of this effect that he's kept it to himself all these years?" Pondering this question may lead you to some important insights.

[Note: The Perpendicular Control, the Tamariz Turnover, and the Study of the Mexican Turnover can all be found in Juan's book, *Sonata*. See below for more info on this book.]

The other three routines in this volume are: Color Separation Finale (an almost sleight-free routine for the Tamariz stack in which the cards magically separate into red and black); The Rainbow Knife (a stand-up color-changing knife routine with some remarkably visual changes), and Pure Olive Oil and Water (a finale for any eight-card routine in which a set of four alternated red/black cards visually changes to all red). This routine will take a while to get under your fingers, but it's worth it. It looks amazing.

Volume 2 contains five effects: Decrypting (in which the cards decode the spectator's name and birthday), Suicide Poker (a poker deal that begins with a shuffled deck), A Suit to Order (several spectators manage to freely (?) select the Ace through King of Spades in order), A Progressive Color Change (a Jack of Hearts changed to an Eight of Spades in three, separate visual steps – the gaffed cards for this are provided), and Impromptu Double Flying (based on Flying through Thin Air from *Mnemonic*, but without using a stacked deck). There are some technical challenges in these routines. The Progressive Color Change and Impromptu Double Flying are the least demanding; I would start with those.

Anyone who is a fan of Juan Tamariz does not need my recommendation before investing in these books. As with any artist who creates his or her own repertoire, Tamariz has infused these routines with his personality and performance style. The biggest challenge will be adapting them so they fit you.

If you do card magic, the entire *Letters from Juan* series is a must-buy.

[Note: *Sonata*, which had been out of print for many years, has recently been republished in a new edition. The illustrations are larger, the text is bigger, and errors have been corrected. It is available for \$100 from penguin.com.] ♦

**MASTERING
FALSE SHUFFLES & CUTS**

TAKE YOUR CARD MAGIC TO THE NEXT LEVEL

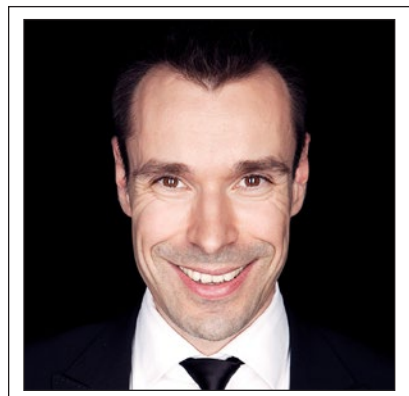
Learn how to perform convincing-looking false shuffles and cuts that will enhance any routine in your repertoire.

\$24.99 Instant Download

[BUY NOW](#)

[DOWNLOAD](#)

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR MAGIC THROUGH PRACTICAL THEORY



The Diamonds of Performance will help you analyze your act and find inspiring ways to improve it. So, if you think your act doesn't need to be improved, I congratulate you and you can skip this column...

However, if you feel, like me, that we magicians need to grow constantly, then I can show you some tools that have propelled my own magic to an entirely new level. You will see how to make your tricks stronger for your audience – any tricks, including the ones you already do. You will discover stagecraft techniques that will make you a charismatic performer. People will like you more and think you are competent at what you do. And you will learn what you can do when you come to an event and the performing situation is a disaster.

This column is based on my new book, *Diamonds of Performance*. It has taken me twelve years to write and it has just been released. Michael Close did a wonderful review of it in the March 2023 newsletter.

You probably haven't heard much of me in the magic world. That's because I've been busy as a full-time professional magician specializing in high-end corporate shows in Switzerland. This is not only my job, it's my passion. One of my specialties is thematically connecting the magic and the topic of the event. For example, I like to integrate my client's marketing messages in my act. A couple of years ago, I won a FISM prize in mental magic. I strongly believe you can perform artistically excellent magic and at the same time enjoy a successful career as a magician.

My original education, however, was rather middle-class. I studied business administration, obtained a Ph.D., and for several years I taught strategic management classes at the University of Bern. As an academic, I analyzed successful business strategies. This academic education has shaped the way I think. When it comes to magic, I also like to combine my theoretical knowledge with practical experience. In my opinion, you become successful in magic when you find a good balance between theory and practice. Mind you, theory alone will not make you a good magician. I can think of several prominent theorists whose show I am unable to watch for more than two minutes. They haven't spent enough time in front of an audience. They don't elicit that feeling of "wow." On the other hand, I can think of many working professionals whose show I can't watch either because it has never occurred to them that magic can be thought about deeply. They are mindlessly drifting and it makes me cringe. So, we need both, theory and practice.

Some of it is easy. Just try this after your next performance:

Take a spectator aside and ask him to summarize one of your tricks in one sentence. Let him describe what happened as briefly as possible. Do not interrupt him and listen closely. Repeat this with one or two more spectators. I guarantee you will gain tremendous insight from this simple technique. By the way, it is called "Carlyle's Water-cooler Test." Most magicians have heard of it, but very few have actually used it. Be among those smart ones who do.

Carlyle's test for the Ambitious Card effect: "The card rose to the top in my own hands."

The Diamonds of Performance are my personal approach to making magic theory practical. The term is based on strategic management in business administration, or more precisely, it is derived from Michael Porter's famous "Diamond Model." He is one of the most renowned scholars in this field. Think of him as the Dai Vernon of strategic management. In the *Diamonds of Performance*, I draw on my academic background and apply the economist's way of thinking to magic. My goal here is to devise a practical model to better understand magic, to refine my taste, and to improve my own shows as much as possible. As my reader, I welcome you to ponder these issues along with me. To put it simply: if you see a bad magic act, you will know why it's bad. If you see a great magic act, you will know what exactly you can learn from it. And if you see a recording of your own magic act...you will quickly know if you are good or bad. From either position, you can always improve.

What is good and what is bad magic? In my judgment, it is best to align ourselves with the audience and select our material primarily based on the effect, regardless of practical or technical considerations. It's the effect that counts. Okay, but what are the criteria for a good effect? In the past I thought this meant to aim for a most impossible, incredible, inscrutable effect, for which the spectators had no clue whatsoever regarding the method. If it fools them badly, then it's a good effect. But as I grew more experienced in magic, I realized that the impossibility factor on its own is not enough for a successful trick. Something was missing.

I started to explore beautiful visuals, poses, and choreographies in a trick. I listened to recordings of my act and began complementing my patter with music and sound effects. I thought about how I could refer back to a joke to create dramatic call-backs. I experimented with pauses, different lengths of time during which I stopped and let my words linger, to create a suspenseful moment. And I worked on establishing a thematic relevance of my tricks. This meant referring to topics such as health, wealth, and relationships and thereby making my magic meaningful for people's lives.



So, here is your practical/theoretical homework: If you are good at fooling people with a trick, and I bet you are, tell me this:

Besides just fooling people, where is the suspense, where is the beauty, and where is the connection to people's lives that your trick has to offer?

Next time, I will give you a more structured model to think about this. I'll share with you exactly how I analyze my own tricks these days. Moreover, we will transcend our tricks and talk about ourselves, the performers of magic. It's an exciting journey ahead. But remember to sit back and ponder the beauty and the relevance of your magic. And don't forget to ask your spectators to summarize your trick. ♦

Diamonds of Performance is available at www.christianbischof.ch/shop

MAGIC NEWS

MAGIC CASTLE IS CELEBRATING ITS 60TH ANNIVERSARY

The world-renowned Magic Castle is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year and recently Milt Larsen — who founded the club with his late brother, Bill Jr., and his late sister-in-law, Irene — celebrated his 92nd birthday at the iconic club here in Hollywood.

The Larsen family is royalty in the magic community. Remarkably, there has been a Larsen family member performing on stage continuously since the mid '20s, with the fourth generation now entertaining.

The parents of the club's founders (Milt & Bill Jr.), Geri and William Larsen, Sr.—a noted Los Angeles attorney, who became disillusioned with law and left practice to pursue magic—both performed as professional magicians and are revered as pioneers in the art. Geri was the first female magician to appear on TV, as a children's entertainer known as The Magic Lady, on KTLA in the late '40s. Read the full article [here](#).



Bill Larsen Jr. and Irene Larsen
(Academy of Magical Arts)

DAVID BLAINE DISLOCATES SHOULDER ON STAGE IN VEGAS SHOW AFTER JUMPING FROM NINE-STORY SCAFFOLDING

David Blaine had to have his shoulder relocated by audience members at his Las Vegas show after one of the stunts went wrong on opening night.

On Friday (10 March), the magician kicked off his new show In Spades at the Resorts World Theatre in Vegas. One stunt in the show sees Blaine jump from tall scaffolding, which stands at nine storeys, into a pile of cardboard boxes on stage.

However, during the first show, the 49-year-old fell badly and dislocated his shoulder upon landing.

Members of the crew rushed to Blaine's side to help him, but ended up asking for help from any doctors in the audience who could pop his shoulder back into place.

Five medical professionals made themselves known and worked to fix his shoulder on stage, relocating it so that Blaine could continue with the show. Watch the video and read more [here](#).

LEGENDARY MAGICIAN TELLER EXPLAINS HOW HE HELPED DESIGN MRS. DAVIS' MAGIC TRICKS

THE QUIETER HALF OF PENN & TELLER TALKED TO POLYGON ABOUT HIS ROLE AS THE PEACOCK SHOW'S MAGIC CONSULTANT

By Zosha Millman May 5, 2023

How do you escape from a vat of acid without getting wounded? You can't, at least according to Teller. The famous magician, one half of the comedy magic duo Penn & Teller, was brought in to be the magic consultant on the Peacock show Mrs. Davis, and had to explain that: yeah, probably not.

"They had thought that maybe there was a way to drop somebody actually into a vat of acid and have that person go away without any injury," Teller says. "As one who has done the bullet catch, I can tell you those life and death things are not things you mess with."

As magic consultant on the show, Teller was asked to read the scripts for anything that was related to magic — that means correcting terminology, and making sure stage performances looked and felt right. It was Teller who pushed the show to do real sleight of hand, even when it was Young Simone revealing a card to the audience. "People who write about magic write as if magic is just special effects," he says, bemoaning the impossible things he's seen magic in TV and movies do. Read the article [here](#).

HOCUS FOCUS: UNDERGRADS STUDY STAGE MAGIC TO LEARN ABOUT THE MIND, GAPS IN PERCEPTION

University of Toronto News

Good magicians never reveal their tricks, but Dirk Bernhardt-Walther does.

The associate professor of psychology in the University of Toronto's Faculty of Arts & Science teaches students about the fallibility of human perception and the mind in his popular first-year foundations course the Psychology of Magic, which focuses on disappearing acts and other magic tricks.

Magicians exploit human fallibility to wow audiences, Bernhardt-Walther explains – and gaps in people's attention spans and perceptual abilities offer magicians plenty of opportunities to dupe unsuspecting audiences. Humans' limited contrast perception, for example, enables magicians to hide dark objects against a black background, creating the illusion that they have been conjured from thin air.

"Magicians also plant false memories. They'll tell you what you just saw, and you'll believe it whether it's true or not," Bernhardt-Walther says. "Or they'll 'force' a card on you – one you think you've chosen of your own free will."

Magicians can fool even the brightest minds into believing their tricks are real.

"A high working memory capacity may help you to focus better on what the magician is doing,

magic news cont'd

but you're also more likely to miss something that comes up unexpectedly," Bernhardt-Walther says.

"Academics are the easiest to fool," he adds, with a wry smile, "because they concentrate very hard. That makes it easier for the magician to do something on the side that they don't see."

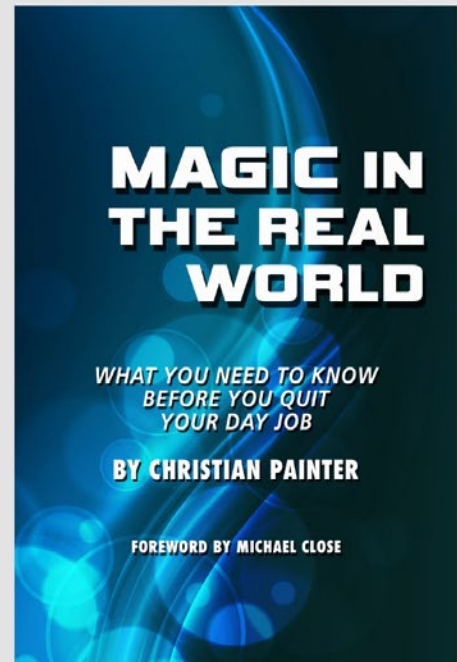
As for kids, they are often hard to impress with magic because one of the key requirements is a "strong belief in what's possible and what's not," he says. Read the article [here](#).

MAGIC IN THE REAL WORLD EBOOK by Christian Painter

If you're a magic enthusiast, and you'd like to turn your hobby into your job, this new ebook by Christian Painter, should be your next purchase.

This may well be the most practical ebook for the aspiring professional magician ever published. This ebook will save you time and money, and will increase your odds for success.

MichaelClose.com
Where Magic Meets Technology



\$24.99 USD
Instant Download

Canada's Magic

All about Canadian magicians
and magic events in Canada

@CanadasMagic
CanadasMagic.com

BROWSER'S DEN OF MAGIC

CANADA'S OLDEST MAGIC SHOP
WWW.BROWERSDEN.COM



*When you're in Toronto
stop in to see Jeff*

3220 DUFFERIN STREET, UNIT #19
TORONTO, ONT. M6A 2T3
1-888-469-3616
416-783-7022

THE MAGIC OF SCIENCE

Why do we include science articles in our magic newsletter? Because we believe that learning about the latest scientific discoveries can be a great source of inspiration for your magic performances. By exploring topics like perception, psychology, and physics, you might just come up with your next mind-blowing trick.

HUMAN MEMORY MAY BE UNRELIABLE AFTER JUST A FEW SECONDS, SCIENTISTS FIND



From squabbling over who booked a disaster holiday to differing recollections of a glorious wedding, events from deep in the past can end up being misremembered. But now researchers say even recent memories may contain errors.

Scientists exploring our ability to recall shapes say people can make mistakes after just a few seconds – a phenomenon the team have called short-term memory illusions.

“Even at the shortest term, our memory might not be fully reliable,” said Dr Marte Otten, the first author of the research from the University of Amsterdam. “Particularly when we have strong expectations about how the world should be, when our memory starts fading a little bit – even after one and a half seconds, two seconds, three seconds – then we start filling in based on our expectations.”

Otten and colleagues note previous research has shown that when people are presented with a rotated or mirror-image letter, they often report seeing the letter in its correct orientation.

While this had previously been put down to participants mis-seeing the shape, Otten and colleagues had doubts.

“We thought that they are more likely to be a memory effect. So you saw it correctly, but as soon as you commit it to memory stuff starts going wrong,” said Otten.

To investigate further, the researchers carried out four experiments.

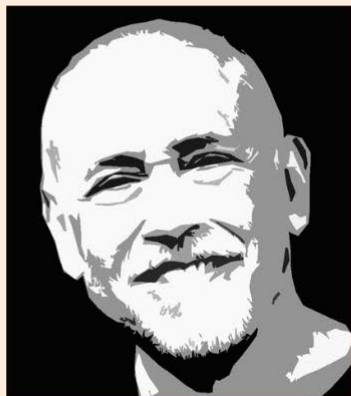
In the first, participants were screened to ensure they were able to complete basic visual memory tasks before being presented with a circle of six or eight letters, one or two of which were mirror-image forms.

After a matter of seconds, participants were shown a second circle of letters which they were instructed to ignore – this acted as a distraction. They were then asked to select, from a series of options, a target shape that had been at particular location in the first circle, and rate their confidence in this choice.

The results from 23 participants who frequently reported high confidence in their answers revealed the most common mistake was selecting the mirrored form of the target shape. However, this occurred more often when the target shape itself was a mirrored letter. Indeed, participants stated they had seen a real letter in 37% of cases when they had been shown a mirrored letter, compared with 11% of cases for the reverse scenario.

The team say the bias suggests the mistakes were driven by participants’ knowledge of the alphabet and hence their expectations, rather than just similarities in the appearance of the shapes.

Read the full article at The Guardian [here](#).



WWW.MICHAELCLOSE.COM

TARGETED TRAINING WITH MICHAEL CLOSE

Affordable, accessible training focused on a single topic and discussed in depth. These are not theoretical discussions; you'll learn tricks and moves and ways to incorporate the information into real-world performances. You can watch these training lessons as many times as you like.

TOPICS:

- DEMYSTIFYING THE MEMORIZED DECK
- MEMDECK THE NEXT STEP
- THE TRUTH ABOUT LYING
- PALMING WITH CONFIDENCE
- HOW TO DESIGN A THREE-TRICK SET

[CLICK FOR MORE DETAILS](#)

MIND OVER MATTERS BY MICHAEL BREGGAR

Michael Breggar has authored five books (focusing on card magic and mentalism) and is a columnist for The Linking Ring ("Auto-Magic"). You can find his books at www.mjmmagic.com



THE NOT-A-LOTTERY-NUMBER LOTTERY NUMBER PREDICTION

Alan Shaxon's multiple-prediction effect, Confabulation, was first marketed by Ken Brooke in 1970. Shaxon had been performing this effect since the early 1960s, though its lineage can be traced back to Abbott's Future Foretold by Prince Karmi and written up in *The Sphinx* (Vol. 17 No. 11, January 1919). Thanks to Denis Behr's www.conjuringcredits.com for the reference. There were dozens of versions and iterations before the Shaxon version and afterward.

One unique idea that seems to have cropped up around the time Shaxon began performing his routine was the multiple predictions of numbers selected by the audience; specifically lottery ticket numbers. Denis Behr's other incredible research tool, www.conjuringarchive.com, puts Tony Corinda's The Lottery Routine in the 1958 time frame. The methods have been remarkably varied, and the jaw-dropping-ness (thank you, and R.I.P. Harry Lorayne) of the routines has been equally varied. This is because the mentalist never really predicts the lottery. Rather, it is a prediction of four to six numbers dressed up to resemble a lottery drawing, or even just a printed lottery ticket.

My lottery routine makes no such presumption as "predicting the winning lottery numbers." In fact, the presentation makes fun of those who claim this feat. However, the routine is lottery themed and structured to floor spectators.

I BOUGHT A LOTTERY TICKET WHEN I WENT OUT TO LUNCH

You begin, *"I have occasionally been asked, if I could actually predict the future, why am I doing this silly performing stuff and not picking lottery numbers and then booking private jets to private tropical islands? Well, I never made such claims to begin with – my psychic superpowers are too unreliable."* By now, you have removed an envelope from your pocket, backpack, or briefcase. From the envelope you remove a stack of lottery selection blanks and a black marking pen. The blanks (there are about twenty of them) and the Sharpie are held in a nice bundle by a rubber band or two. You also toss your wallet on the table. *"Marilyn,"* you say, addressing an audience volunteer, *"Let's check your psychic capabilities. Let's give something a try."*

You hand the marker to Marilyn and ask her to uncap the pen and sign and date the uppermost lottery blank near the top of the sheet. *"You'll now select six lottery numbers. The choices need to be totally random, so I am going to turn the ticket blanks face-down, like this."* You turn the rubber-banded packet face-down. *"You'll take the marking pen and bring it upwards to make marks on the card. You won't be able to see the numbers you select but try to be neat as you poke upwards six times. I'll put my hands here to cover all but one set of numbers to make sure you only mark one game set."*

At some point, you'll comment, *"Ow! That was my finger!"* and continue until Marilyn has made six marks on the ticket. When finished, you pull the marked ticket out from the bundle and turn it face down as you place it on the table. You place the remaining banded ticket bundle back in the

envelope and take back the Sharpie. You now sign your name on the back of the ticket. *“Just in case you win, maybe you’ll remember me and give me a cut!”* The pen is recapped and slipped into the envelope. The envelope goes back into your pocket/backpack/briefcase.

You take a quick look at the numbers randomly poked-at on the front of the ticket. *“Well, you marked six numbers and a finger. These numbers look nice and random and diverse, don’t you think?”* Regardless of the answer you continue, *“As I mentioned earlier, I can’t really predict lottery winners. This is because the winning numbers are picked by a machine – a machine full of ping pong balls. I am much, much better at predicting actions from people. Even actions they aren’t aware of doing when they are doing them! For example, these are your random lottery number predictions, and here is what I predicted you predicted.”*

You open your wallet and remove an “official” lottery ticket. You read the numbers out loud and ask Marilyn to check the numbers she randomly marked on the signed blank ticket. They are identical!

SOMETHING DIFFERENT FOR “LUNCH”

The overall method is related to the “out to lunch” principle and goes waaaay back. Again, with the help of the Denis Behr database, early usage seems to have been found in the seventeenth century! Tom Sellars and Edwin Bagshawe modernized the approach in the 1930s, and Clare Cummings and Bob Ellis marketed what we now recognize as Out to Lunch (their title) in 1946. Similar to making spirit writing appear using a flap with a pair of slates, a cover card is used to hide the goods here.



To prepare, first, stop at your nearby lottery sales vendor and buy a six-digit lottery ticket (like Power Ball or Mega Millions). Use the lottery’s random number generator instead of filling out a form with six numbers yourself. Ask for the ticket to be for a future drawing (a date near when you expect to be performing the effect). Before leaving the vendor, grab twenty to thirty blank lottery forms. Next, take a piece of cardboard (like from the back of a legal pad tablet) and cut it to the same size as one of the lottery selection blanks. Take two blanks and sandwich the cardboard, gluing the three pieces together. This provides a bit of a brace that keeps the rubber bands from collapsing the packet of blanks.

The typical lottery blank form allows for number selections across multiple games (usually five or six). The ticket shown here has room for five game selections. Take three of these blank tickets and cut them horizontally at the thick line separating “boards” C and B (see the above photo). Apply a small dab of glue to these pages to hold them together. Finally, take another blank selection form and with the Sharpie pen you’ll be using for the performance “sloppily” mark the numbers that match the ticket you purchased on Game Card C. This sheet will end up being the one the participant believes she has marked up blindly.

Now, place this marked selection sheet on top of the rest of the unmarked tickets. This packet goes on top of the tickets with the sandwiched cardboard. The packet of three half-cards are now placed on top of all. Align the bold border at the top of the cut (between boards C and B) with the

mind over matters cont'd

same spot on the marked “target” ticket. This “flap” covers the marked Game C on the target card. Finally, encircle the whole package with a thick rubber band or two. Move the rubber band(s) so it covers the seam between the half sheets and the full sheets.

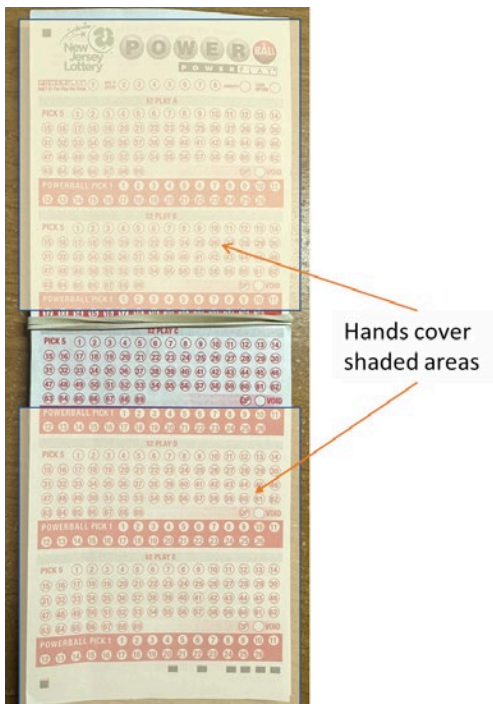
The set-up noted here is easy and should remind you of the typical setup of the half-cards in the standard Out to Lunch gaff. As mentioned, the cardboard sandwich on the bottom of the packet prevents the necessary rubber bands from squeezing and collapsing the entire package. Three half sheets are used on top because it is the top half sheet that gets marked by the participant and Sharpie ink bleeds through the thin paper used for most lottery selection sheets.

Put the Sharpie under the rubber band and stick that package into an envelope that you will put in your pocket/backpack/briefcase until it is performance time. The actual lottery ticket is folded in half and placed in your wallet.

“LUNCH” TIME

Follow the presentation above. Your handling of the props should be casual. Let your helper write her name on the top selection ticket. After she does, place both hands on the selection ticket covering all the game boards except board C. Board C, of course, belongs to the half-sheet flap. Now, keeping your hands in place, roll your wrists forward turning the entire packet face-down.

Your helper is instructed to poke the marker upwards, marking the lottery card in six spots (that’s why your target ticket was marked sloppily). The moment she finishes, roll your wrists back towards yourself flipping the packet face-up again but continue turning the packet so the top faces you and the back faces the audience. In a single, fluid move, hold the right side of the packet (including the half-sheets) with your right thumb (fingers on the back side facing the audience), and with your left hand, pull the top ticket out and away from the rubber-banded package.



Immediately take the removed, marked (target) ticket and turn it face-down onto the table. Grab the Sharpie and sign your name on the back of the ticket. Then cap the pen, slip it under the rubber bands on the bottom of the ticket packet, and put the whole shebang back into the envelope. Be careful not to flash the top of the ticket packet with the marked half-sheet. Place the envelope back in your pocket/backpack/briefcase away from the maddening crowd. Experienced “lunchers” will be comfortable with this maneuver because it is what’s used in the standard OTL routine.

I always leave the official ticket with my helper as a token of thanks. I am not aware of anyone who won millions of dollars from these “thank you” tickets, though folks have contacted me to say they won a few bucks here or there.

After all these years, no one has ever offered to share any winnings with me. ♦

THE CARBONARO EFFECT - INSTANT CASH



THE SECRETS OF THE MAGIC

Down the staircase in the Hat and Hare pub is one of the Magic Castle's best secrets. Find Mike Pisciotta at the Castle Thursdays through Sundays, 6pm to 10pm.



Mike Pisciotta

THE ART AND CRAFT OF CONJURING BY MICK AYRES

Mick is a trickster, tunesmith, and tale-swapper for the Walt Disney Company. Feel free to reach him at mick@mickayreswares.com or via Facebook.



“A talent for drama is not a talent for writing, but is the ability to articulate human relationships.” – Gore Vidal, author

There is a noticeable trend in the conjuring world. More and more, we are attaching the title of Storyteller next to the word Magician under our names. On the surface, there is nothing wrong with that, as long as the magician can back it up. However, magicians are notorious for taking the path of least resistance when it comes to the disciplines of theatrical stagecraft. Good magic does not blend well with weak storytelling.

My performance contract specifically required professionalism as a magician, storyteller, and musician. Most shows are a blend of all three elements, but sometimes only one art form is featured. There is no freedom to just dabble in these crafts or the contract will not be renewed. The only thing I love more than telling a good story is hearing good one, so, when a magician/storyteller fails to deliver on the latter title, my disappointment is palpable.

Conjurers who include stories with their magic (which is a good, good thing to do) must give the scripting, rehearsal, and delivery of the tale equal attention. A magician telling an unrehearsed story is like a singer who is off-key; the guests are tolerating the show, not enjoying it. Neither performer has come to the stage fully prepared.

The art of storytelling is a three-legged stool with an important seat; one leg is technique, one is passion, the third is content. The seat itself is humanity. Remove any “leg” and the whole thing loses its purpose. The ability to tell a story well is as important as the passion one puts into the telling, which is as important as having something to say. A story of excellent content told with passion will fall flat without technique and...well, you get the idea. Once you have the stability of these three legs in place, then sit and speak with the understanding that humanity’s best stories articulate our relationships. Stories create emotion, reveal nostalgia, heighten empathy, cause fear, teach love, and spark laughter. In my experience, to tell a story well you must honestly care about your guests. A performer who is indifferent to an audience on any level or who just sees the guests as a means to an end (money in the bank, vanity, bragging rights at the next club meeting) has been handicapped before leaving the starting gate. Love your guests; if it wasn’t for them you would be punching a clock.

At its core, a magic show is a series of unexpected, baffling feats. However, well-chosen stories can thread these moments into a relevant experience that exponentially increase the guests’ astonishment far beyond what the tricks alone can do. The magician and performance artist Chris Hannibal does this by sharing the Brothers Grimm 1806 folktale “The Shoemaker and the Elves” early in his act. The story is about a poor, elderly shoemaker who is unexpectedly helped by elves, who come in the night and cobble together shoes for him to sell. In return, the shoemaker’s wife sews together clothes for the elves to wear. It is a charming story about serving and giving to others. As the tale is told, Hannibal creates an origami sculpture of an elven boot, which is appropriately given away as a gift. Even though Hannibal did not perform an effect, he has won

the audience over. Truly, it is a different kind of magic. This theme continues as Hannibal accents each trick with childhood memories about his grandfather's generosity. The act has morphed into more than just a series of tricks; it is theater in every sense of the word. Through the inclusion of storytelling, the appearance of a guest's card becomes surprise accented by charm, and Ramsey's well-known Coin & Cylinder routine becomes so nostalgic Hannibal's guests can almost taste it. When those silver dollars jump, so does the audience.

Likewise, with the addition of storytelling, the Emmy-award-winning magician Max Howard makes a presentation of the classic Siberian Chain Escape into an emotional tale about the topic of slavery during the Civil War. Instead of being mere witnesses to a trick, the audience is pulled back in time to experience frustration and anger at social injustices endured by so many before us. The moment those thick, rusted chains slip from Max Howard's wrists and are slammed to the stage, the guests leap to their feet in applause every time. Drama, tension, and conflict...oh, my!

In another example, my character B'lou reminisces about learning to fish with his Uncle Otis. They play a guessing game using a cork bobber and the top of an old thermos bottle; whoever loses has to cook the fish. Yes, B'lou ends up in the kitchen a lot but Otis has to untangle a few large balls of knotted fishing line. Thus the tale becomes a humorous excuse for a Chop Cup performance.

Literary scholars tell us the definition of a story is loose; it can be a broad, sweeping epic or a quick anecdote. The good news for magicians is that the substance of a good tale has nothing to do with its length; rather, it is about quality and relevance. In the examples mentioned earlier, the theme of a beloved folktale winds its way throughout Hannibal's show. Max Howard's feat demonstrates a specific historical event. My onstage character weaves the humor of a tall tale around yet another classic effect. Each of these examples came about through serious study, practice, scripting, rehearsal, and multiple performances. Still, getting started may be easier than you think.

The addition of competent storytelling to your act is something that can be approached comfortably. Sit down at your computer and search the Internet for *Aesop's Fables* or *Grimm's Fairy Tales*. Either collection is a fine place to start, because these stories are often brief, yet are still wrapped with strong lessons about relationships in one form or another. In other words, the messages are relevant to nearly everybody.

Not every story connected to your magic needs to have a moral or ethical lesson. I get several minutes of humor and fun by sharing about how the first trick I ever performed went horribly wrong, yet still worked out as a near-miracle. It is a lot of entertainment for just running my mouth and doing a French Drop with a coin. Another example would be the card effect Chang and Eng, which was previously published in this newsletter. Through the backstory, the original Siamese twins' inescapable connection is used to highlight the emotional bonds that exist between a man and woman who are meant as soul mates.

Magic and stories have been used to connect humans since the dawn of time. The first magician was the man who brought fire into the cave; the first storyteller was that same man as he told everybody how he pulled it off.

Keep passing the torch.

the art and craft of conjuring cont'd

THE MERCY BUCKET

The idea of pulling money out of thin air has enjoyed eons-old appeal, especially for us here in the conjuring industry. It is a fantasy harbored by anyone who has ever been hungry, sat in the dark, or is in the process of paying taxes.

If you can finger palm a half-dollar and slide it into view, you can perform this simple presentation of the Miser's Dream. The container that receives the coins is a pint-sized tin bucket that is actually a small flower pot found in the garden section of any home-supply store. Half-dollars make plenty of noise when they hit the thin, metal bottom.

You need a ten-dollar bill and eight half-dollars. The ten-dollar bill goes into your left pocket. Put six of the coins in your right trouser pocket. The remaining two coins are finger palmed in your left hand. The empty bucket sits on the table. You are ready to perform.

Say, *"There is not one soul in this room who hasn't received help from a stranger at some point. From the doctor who delivered you into this world to the person who arranged these chairs, we've all been on the receiving end of kindness."*

"On a hot night in the 1930s, an elderly woman was brought into court for stealing from a local grocer. She did not deny the charges. Her husband had abandoned the family; her daughter was sick; and the grandchildren were starving. She had no money and no jobs were available; nothing at all." Pick up the bucket, show it empty and replace it on the table.

"Desperate, she stole a loaf of bread to feed her family. The judge listened to her story, but he had no choice. She was pronounced guilty and sentenced to pay ten dollars or spend ten days in jail – an impossible situation."

"The judge then took out ten dollars and paid her fine." Remove the bill from your pocket, fold it in half, and put it in the pail so it leans against the inside wall.

"Then he declared a fine of fifty-cents upon every person there for living in a city that forced someone to steal in order to feed her children." Stand in front of a guest and say with authority, *"All rise!"* If he stands up, great; but if he looks confused, calmly say, *"It's courtroom humor, sir. Please stand up. Raise your right hand and repeat after me: 'That didn't hurt a bit.'"* As he speaks, your left hand reaches under his right armpit and comes back with one of the coins at your fingertips. Say, *"Thank you for the contribution."*

Take this coin with your right hand to show it to the guests on your right. Your left hand picks up the bucket and grips it so the extra coin now lies against the inside wall and is hidden under your fingers. The bucket is held just above your waist. Without looking at the bucket, your right hand pretends to drop the coin inside. However, this coin is finger palmed as your left fingers allow the extra coin to drop loudly against the bottom of the bucket. The action and sound blend to create the illusion. Allow your right hand to fall limp to your side. Step to the left and allow those guests a peek in the bucket to see a folded bill and a coin rattling around.

Approach a lady and ask her to open her purse. Reach inside with your right hand (touch nothing) and bring the coin out at your fingertips. Again, the coin is finger palmed as you pretend to put the coin in the pail. However, this time, your right fingers strike the lip of the bucket to make the coin in the pail jump. It sounds like you just dropped another coin in. Remember not to look.

Repeat this dodge as you move to five more adults and children collecting coins from a drinking cup, an ear, a collar, a shoe, and a wallet while saying, *“Some grumbled and some grinned, but everyone chipped in. Gypsies, tramps, thieves, lawyers, bankers...”* After you mention “banker,” drop the coin into the bucket for real. Stop and look in the bucket and then look back at the guest. Say, *“Really? No one uses Susan B’s anymore.”* Your right hand reaches into the bucket and mimes removing a coin and putting it into your pocket. While there, scoop all the coins into finger-palm position. For misdirection, rattle the bucket as your hand comes out of the pocket. Pour the coins from the pail into your right hand. The guests see several coins laid out on your palm. Examine the coins and say, *“Just making sure; those Sacagaweas aren’t any better.”* As you dump the coins back into the bucket, hold one back in finger-palm position.

Visit three more guests and remove coins from odd places as you say, *“Drunks, police officers, and one grocer all coughed up four bits. Some were clever; but the bailiff was smarter than he looked.”* Reach up, gently grip the last guest’s nose, and allow the coin to drop openly into the bucket.

Conclude by saying, *“It was all presented as a gift to the surprised lady.”* Pour all the money and the bill into one hand. Say, *“Yes, she was desperate and guilty, but the mercy and compassion of complete strangers gave her hope and a smile. I’m serious about that, folks. Sometime the strangest of us have more to give than we realize.”* Slide the money noisily back into the bucket and bow from the waist.

As you move from guest to guest, the presentation becomes fluid to you and unpredictable to the audience. If you pause and ponder where the next coin may be hiding, this moment adds tension as the audience tries to anticipate you. All the while, the story and the magic have evoked sympathy, humor, and warmth to create pure theatre. ♦

The Mercy Bucket, copyright 2012 by Mick Ayres.

MAGIC LESSONS

Want to save on your magic education? Start with four or more lessons and take advantage of our Buy More, Save More offer.

WITH MICHAEL CLOSE

“Without a doubt the best investment i have ever made when it comes to my magic.”
—Sebastian B.

Click for more information

TECHNICALLY SPEAKING BY BRUCE KALVER

Bruce Kalver is a professional magician and tech guru. Bruce is a past president of the S.A.M. and a frequent performer at The Magic Castle in Hollywood.



Lately, I've received a lot of emails asking me for advice on 3D printing. Although I've mentioned some of these things in the past, I thought I would put it all together in one column as a reference guide. A 3D printer should be in every magician's arsenal of equipment; you can print special gimmicks, stands, and magic tricks. Here are my recommendations to get you started.

THE MACHINE

A great beginner's 3D printer is the **Creality Ender 3D Pro**. It has some great features, such as pausing the print to change colors; if the electricity goes out, it will continue where it left off when the power comes on. It is the perfect size for most workshops and is relatively quiet.



When you buy the printer, it comes in pieces that you build, similar to putting Ikea furniture together. At first I thought this was odd, but in truth, you gain knowledge of the machine. There will be times where you will have to replace parts or undo something to unclog it, so it is valuable to learn how it all goes together. The printer comes with all the tools that you need to put it together.

The support from both the company and the Facebook group is very good; they answer questions quickly and happily. The printer is available from [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) and other venues. If you have a Microcenter near you, occasionally they have coupons on their website for this printer and they end up being \$100 – \$150. Normally they sell for \$200 – \$250.

AM I PRINTING PLASTIC?

When you 3D print something, you use PLA filament, which looks like plastic but is not plastic. It is a biodegradable material made from corn starch, sugar cane, and sugar beet. There are lots of companies that make PLA. You never seem to have enough colors because you are always buying new ones. Every color is available, including various skin colors (great for gimmicks) and even clear. I recommend the brands **Hatbox** and **Sunlu**, although there are many choices. The price ranges from \$12 – \$22 per spool, which lasts a long time.

WHAT ELSE DO I NEED?

There are three extra accessories I find very useful; I think you will, too. The first is a camera. Invest \$29 in a small **WYZE** camera. This camera will allow you to check in once in a while to make sure the printer is operating properly and not creating cobwebs of filament. I will start a print and



then go to work. I also invested in a WiFi switch. Checking the camera, if I see that the print is not working out, I use the switch to turn off the printer and stop the fiasco. That switch is a **Wemo Smart Switch** for \$25.



The third thing I recommend is a rubber-mallet hammer. Although most printed objects come off the plate with a push from a metal scrapper tool, sometimes it just sticks too much and needs to be persuaded with this rubber hammer. All of these things are available on www.amazon.com.



THE HARD PART

Levelling the printing plate will be a challenge. There are lots of videos online to show you how to do this. You essentially use a piece of paper to determine how much space to leave between the printing plate and the extruder. The first layer has to stick to the plate; if the extruder is too far away, it won't. My tip is not to use regular paper but rather thermal receipt paper. Use your latest receipt from Target or the grocery store to do the measurements. Yes, it is that precise.

STICK IT

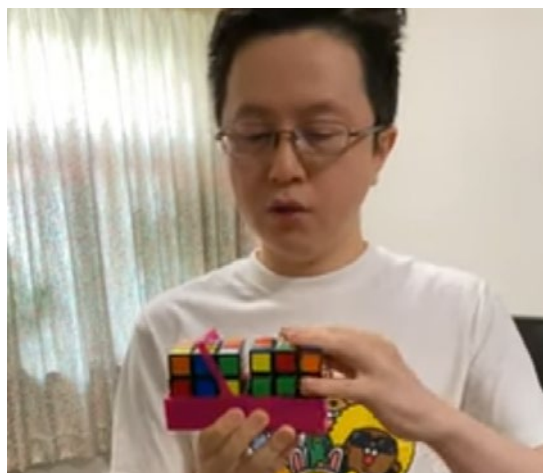
Another tip to get that first layer to stick to the plate is to use a purple glue stick. Coat the plate in a horizontal direction and let it dry for a few minutes. Then coat the plate vertically and let that dry. Then fire up your printer and give it a try. After you print, put the plate in the sink and wash the glue off with warm water. I have had much success using the glue stick method.

SIZE THE MOMENT

Calvin Sze is a creative gimmick maker in Hong Kong. Here are a few of his free magic gimmicks to get you started.

Rubi Switch: A gimmick to wear that allows you to switch one Rubik's Cube for another.

<https://pinshape.com/items/110902-3D-printed-rubiswitch-plus>



technically speaking cont'd



Folding Card Holder: If you do the Mercury Fold of a playing card, here's a way to switch it.

<https://pinshape.com/items/113266-3D-printed-fc-holders>

Paper Sleeve for Cards: Protect your card decks with a cardboard sleeve. This template makes creasing and putting them together easier.

<https://pinshape.com/items/110154-3D-printed-avatar-paper-guard-scoring-tool-for-playing-cards>

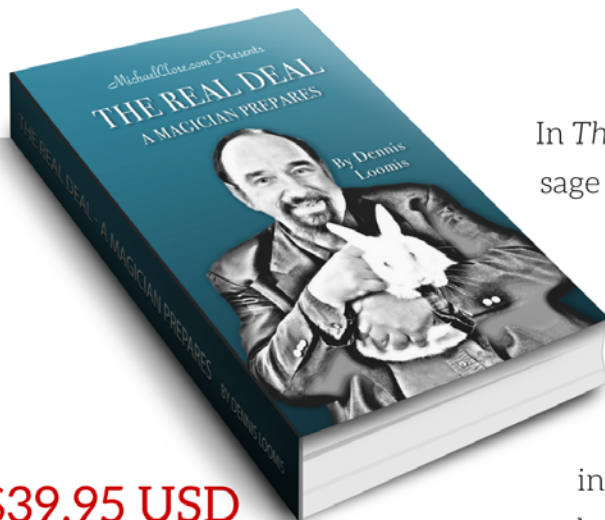
Svengali Pad Cutter: Want to make a Svengali pad? This template helps you cut them with precision.

<https://pinshape.com/items/105852-3D-printed-scorpian-svengali-cutting-pad>



To get you excited about things you can print, be sure to visit www.thingiverse.com and www.printables.com. ♦

THE REAL DEAL – A MAGICIAN PREPARES



\$39.95 USD
(Instant Download)

Go to: MICHAELCLOSE.COM
and download your copy today!

By Dennis Loomis
Foreword by Gene Anderson

In *The Real Deal - A Magician Prepares* you'll find sage advice, handy tips, timesaving suggestions, full-blown routines for stage and stand-up, routines for children (for both school assembly and party venues), memorized deck information, and great stories and reminiscences. The final chapter includes several of Dennis's articles about his long-time friend Doug Henning, In it, Dennis explains the evolution of one of the iconic illusions of the twentieth century – an illusion he helped popularize.