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TopHat

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Much of MagicBunny is buzzing after the recent visit of one of our moderators, Michael Jay, to London. Well, Michael's now returned safely to the US, completely broke from two weeks of spending here in England. Mike's taken his time, travelling the UK, visiting London, Norfolk, Blackpool and other touristy areas. There's a good chance that you're sick to death of hearing about his all, but if you'll please hear me out now you'll see what the excitement is about.

During the time Mike was over, I took the opportunity to meet and spend time with him and many other Bunny members. I won't go into this but if you want to read about it, the post is on the general forum: "Report: Half Term in London with the Bunnies." My experiences here were incredible. Having never before met real magicians, the quality time I spent with them was so incredibly helpful to me as a magician. I learnt more from these guys in these 5 days about *performing* magic than I have from years of reading books and the Internet.

I'm mainly aiming this brief note at aspiring hobbyists. The reason for me to recap on these things is to encourage you to go out and meet magicians; joining a club is probably a good place to start. However, I encourage you to read Nissassa's (who I had the pleasure to meet in London) post first on safety when meeting people <http://www.magicbunny.co.uk/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?t=17508>

What I'm trying to say is this: the reason for so much excitement is that everyone who met Mike had the pleasure of spending time, sharing ideas and 'shooting the sh*t' with other magicians. This is essentially what it's all about.

All the best,
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Every issue of the TopHat contains original effects and articles written by readers and members of MagicBunny.co.uk. If you would like to submit a piece, please email TopHat@magicbunny.co.uk

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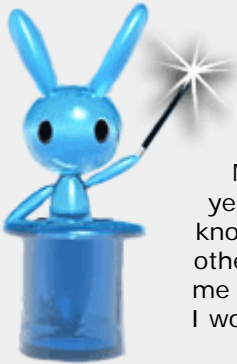
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The Latest From MagicBunny

Website News

American Bunny in Norfolk

By Nigel Shelton



The annual highlight of February (The Blackpool Conference) has, for many Magic Bunny members, been eclipsed by one other single event. This event is one that has aroused a great deal of excitement and interest by the vast majority of members on the boards; the first ever visit of Michael Jay to the UK.

Michael has been a staunch supporter of the boards and, since his arrival nearly three years ago, has amassed a huge amount of respect and goodwill due to his profound knowledge of magic and his unselfish desire to share what he has learnt, to use it to assist others in their own quests to become more proficient. In the past, it was a complement for me to be confused with Michael and often, when I simply posted under the name of "Admin," I would receive emails or private messages that assumed that I was Michael Jay.

Michael's visit has sent many threads humming with activity and I know that a large number of people have eagerly looked forward to his visit and meeting him face-to-face so that they could place a face and a personality with his name and I was no exception to this.

Many of you who have been following Michael's visit with interest and enthusiastically reading the feedback will know that there was a window in his diary that simply read, "indisposed" – it was these days that were set aside for a meeting between myself and Michael. I too had been keenly anticipating Michael's visit to the UK, we had often communicated by emails, private messages, MSN or telephone week-by-week or month-by-month over the past three years and a friendship had formed. Even still, the Internet is no substitute for a meeting in person and it's not until you have the opportunity of doing this that you can finally place a more full and rounded personality with the name of the person with whom you have been corresponding.

Mike was due to arrive at Norwich station early on Monday morning and so I had arranged to take a train from Somerleyton, a small village halt about 45 minutes away, in order to travel into the city to meet up with him. My intention was that the next couple of days should be a relaxing and peaceful time in order that Mike could have a break in what I would assume was a very busy period of numerous meets, performances and social engagements. The pace of life on the east coast is certainly more placid than that of the city and I was hoping that this interlude would give Mike an opportunity to refresh himself, as well as a time for us to get to know each other more fully.

I arrived in Norwich a half an hour earlier but that time passed so very quickly as I was anticipating Mike's arrival. Mike had enquired about the arrangements of this first meet; perhaps worrying that we should miss each other in the mass of a crowd on a busy station platform, but I had assured him that Norwich was so unlike that. I have often taken the train into London Liverpool Street and I am aware of the hustle of the capital and the difficulties of a meet under these circumstances but Norwich is so different to this. During the half an hour wait, I did see small crowds of people depart from the infrequent trains as they pulled in from the villages and towns of the local area but the station remained quite uncrowded and, as I stood on the concourse as Mike's London train pulled in, there was only myself and one other person standing on the approach of the platform waiting to meet someone – it would be very easy to locate Mike and collect him from Norwich. Again, Norwich and the east coast, I am pleased to say, is so unlike many other busy British cities and I hoped that this would be the case over the next few days as Mike relaxed in my area.

It was easy to see Mike approach along platform, I had seen many photos of him on the Internet and there was no doubt, when he looked up, that he was every bit as I imagined him, a friendly and caring individual. After the initial welcome and handshakes we agreed on a stroll around the city before taking the train back to Somerleyton and so we headed out off the station and across a busy crossroads to the peace and quiet of

The Latest From MagicBunny (cont.)

a riverside path that led up to the cathedral. You may well guess that the next half hour was crammed with talks as we ambled along the river frontage, past moored boats and fresh spring crocuses to turn past a local landmark, Pull's Ferry, up the walk to the Cathedral. It was indeed a very pleasant and congenial start to what was going to be a very enjoyable couple of days.

Our first stop was the cathedral and cathedral grounds of Norwich. We took a typical tourist route around the spectacular buildings to see some outstanding medieval works, the glorious east window, brilliant stained glass windows that dazzled in the morning daylight, elegant cloisters walks around the cathedral as well as a multitude of other treasures that can be found within the walls of this magnificent building. After this we strolled from the Norwich, absorbed in a constant banter that rarely paused, through the cathedral gateway and onto a maze of old medieval cobbled streets that make up the older quarter of the city. After getting a sense of the ancient character of this city we walked through the city centre and onto the great castle mound and into the Norman castle keep of Norwich. Here we continued to chat incessantly about all manner of things as we walked around numerous displays of stuffed animals, galleries of modern and historical art, displays of Boudicca and the Roman occupation of Britain but, most interesting of all to Mike, past cabinets filled with medieval suits of body armour and the some of weapons that were used at this time. It was then that I really begun to gain an understanding that Mike was no two-dimensional "magician" but a full individual who had a wide assortment of interests and passions that varied into many other areas; medieval warfare, an interest in the arts, other hobbies and interests as well as a profound and varied general knowledge that allowed him to speak eloquently and profoundly about subjects that I was more interested in - but yet he could interject and respond proficiently.

After our exit from Norwich castle, we headed for a local pub to eat for lunch. I had recalled from my past a small pub filled with character, tucked away behind the back streets of the city but it became evident as we walked in that the character of the place was far from both of our likings. The pub had been transformed into a yuppie wine bar and I was pleased that Mike shared my own discomfort about eating on bar stools alongside businessmen in suits. We both very quickly made an exit and headed off to the Bell Inn, another historic pub but with a more friendly and congenial atmosphere. We were lucky to find seats in a secluded bay and again, all through our lunch, we were gossiping incessantly about all manner of things, especially around the theme of magic.

The end of our meal coincided with the two-hourly departure of trains that stopped at my local halt and so we headed off to the city station and caught a rural train that headed off to Lowestoft on the east coast. Very soon we were out off the city and passing along miles of open countryside, across uncluttered views over wide stretches of marshland and along some of the many rivers that go to form the southern stretches of the Norfolk Boards. Within 45 minutes we had arrived at a small red brick station, situated at the edge of a minor village and it was there that I collected my car and drove Mike to my home on the coast at Hopton on Sea. Here we unpacked and had a brief afternoon tea, during which time Mike was able to sort through his packaging, take a bath and get himself prepared for the start of his break.

After this we made a short journey to the next town along the coast, Gorleston-on-Sea, where we met my parents and spent some time talking with them before talking an evening meal. I had primed my parents beforehand that I had wanted Mike to have the opportunity of trying as many local foods as possible and so it was here that we tried some Melton Mowbray pork pies, as well as a variety of pickles and cold meats. I had made a point of asking my parents to prepare a custard and fruit desert and was surprised when Mike explained, during the first course, that custard was quite universal. It was my impression that hot custard was a typical English dessert and I was unaware that it was so widely used across the globe. However, it became apparent that we had become confused by the different interpretations of similar words, Mike was expecting a jelly egg type custard pie and so I was pleased that he was able to sample a foodstuff that he would have not normally taken. It still amuses me that, although the UK and the USA have so very much in common, we still do remain two separate and distinct cultures and that sometimes, minor confusion can arise when we forget how much our ways of life may differ.

After leaving my parents' home, we returned to Hopton and walked to my local pub, The White Hart, to sample some of the local drinks and to enjoy a village pub atmosphere. Again, we became deeply engrossed

The Latest From MagicBunny (cont.)

in conversation and spent much of the time talking about magic and showing some effects. We returned to my home to continue the banter and very soon it became 2.00am the following morning. We had spent six hours without interruption, showing each other a range of effects and sharing some skills, sleights and routines. I am sure that many members will, by now, have already met Mike and will have seen him perform a handful of his many routines. I am sure that, if you have done so, you will not have been dismayed and will have been impressed by his superb patter skills, as well as the proficiency in what he does.

We both retired to our beds, after what had been a most enjoyable day and one in which both Mike and myself (I am sure) had thoroughly enjoyed in its simplicity and charm. Most importantly, I am sure that I can speak for both of us when I add that it was a sheer delight to simply spend time in the company of another person whose passions and interests overlap across the universal theme of magic.

(To be continued in next month's ezine)

Nigel Shelton

Cards For Lovers

Cards For Lovers

Coin Work

By Peter Marucci



EFFECT

A man and a woman both select a card and sign it, the woman on the front, the man on the back. When one of the cards is found in the deck, with the signature on it, it is turned over and the other signature is on the other side.

WORKING

You'll need a deck of cards and a felt-tip marking pen. You'll also need a couple, preferably two who have been enjoying the company of each other (you could use a couple who have been fighting all night - but that's another trick!).

Prattle on to the happy couple about the strong and deep emotional connection some people have with a significant other, as you take out the pen and the deck of cards.

Have the man select a card from the face-down deck and sign the back without looking at the face. The card is returned to the deck and the deck shuffled. Control the signed card to the bottom.

Turn to the woman and have her "freely" select a card, using the Hindu Shuffle force, so that she selects the bottom card. Turn the deck face up, to her selected card, and have her sign the face.

Shuffle the deck, rambling on about how a bond of love is able to overcome all odds and, no matter how the deck is shuffled - or how mixed up life may become - if that bond is strong enough, two people will always find each other.

With the deck face down, go through and find the man's signed card; place it face down on the table.

Turn the deck face up and look for the woman's signed card. It is, of course, not to be found. Look through the deck a couple of times to underscore the point that the woman's card is not there.

Again hammer home the point that, while they may have selected separate cards (okay, they didn't; but they don't know that!), the bond between them is so strong that it drew them together.

Turn over the man's signed card on the table to show the signed selection of the woman on the other side

SECOND THOUGHTS

This is a great use of those practice cards that you have drawers full of, since you destroy a card ever time. Simply replace the used card with any card from another deck (with the same back). It doesn't matter what the face is, since the couple only see the face of one card.

You could slap a sticker on the card, giving your name and other pertinent business information - although

Cards For Lovers (cont.)

some may consider this a bit tacky. In any case, leave the card with the couple as a souvenir. They will love you for it; you will have a warm feeling inside; everybody goes away happy. Who could ask for anything more?

Peter Marucci

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The Wizards of 2020 c.e.

The Wizards of 2020 c.e.

Part II

By P. Craig Browning



In my previous article I introduced you to some ideas concerning the *Jedi Mind Trick* and how one could actually apply certain of our known methods, to mimic said skill. I also touched upon the idea of what it means to be a "Magician" in days long past and, all going well, in the not so distant future. My perspectives stemming from a handful of "things" – thoughts that meander through this crazed mind of mine – as to what it means to be a "Magician" and actually live up to the title.

When I was about 12 I had the privilege of meeting and befriending the late Harry Blackstone, Jr. It was from this man I discovered the value behind education and the power of effective communications; his power of voice and diction being self-evident. Interestingly, he wasn't alone! Every one of the major players I've met in the whole of the entertainment industry were adept at these same skills. They were communicators first, and "entertainers" second. More important, there was that side of each we rarely see, unless we are welcomed into their lives. I refer to the humanity these individuals expressed daily, via their actions as well as their attitude.

For decades the image of the Magician was that of a true gentleman or lady; a person skilled in the art of social grace and etiquette. Individuals that were a part of "high society" and yet, humble enough to freely mingle and interact with those of common status. Granted, there were those few whose egos seemed to make this latter act of tolerance a bit more transparent, but at least they made the gesture of concern. The truth of the matter being that those with a sincere heart, seemed to maintain the greatest sense of endearment and longevity when it came to how the public perceived and remembered them.

Even with the performers of my youth, we can find the rebels that sought to not conform to this mold, as it were. Each generation bringing about an "edge" for change, that transforms both, the art as well as public perception. What hasn't changed however, is how we are seen by the masses and how, our attitude and ability to effectively communicate affects our career and professional standing. The youth of today's generation seem to be hell-bent on the ideas sewn into their minds by the hacks of early 21st century television. Individuals who do not present solid magic, but rather a series of tricks; so called "Performers" that feel it perfectly fine to exploit opportunity vs. taking their time to learn the craft. Their idea of "taste" being based solely upon what is found in their mouths vs. any sense of culture and decorum they think they've been exposed to.

Granted, the conditions of any given society are oft times revealed via the art of the day. That being the standard, our world is in for a woe of pain and degradation. Our youth seeming incapable of finding the good or beauty that exists in the world let alone the joys that are to be celebrated in the course of life itself. But, it is for their benefit that I chose to plant seeds of thought, such as those found within this particular compilation.

In the annals of esoteric tradition we are told that there existed two modes of magickle thought; High Magick and Low. Low Magick being akin to the herbal lore associated with grandma's home remedies, the study and understanding of nature, the weather, the change of the seasons and cycles of the year. It was not a

The Wizards of 2020 c.e. (cont.)

scientific perspective per se', but an "understanding" shared by the common person. It is from the auspices of Low Magick that we find the philosophies associated with the Shaman and Medicine Woman (Midwives) as well as patronage to the Gods & Goddesses of myth and lore.

High Magick, though it can prove rife with ritual, hosted a much more analytical perspective and the "quest" for knowledge – understanding as to how things happened and why. In all truth, it is from this more formal course of practice, that the auspices of modern-day physics, psychology, etc. have evolved. For this was the way of the Nobel class – those that had been schooled in the arts of language, math, rudimentary chemistry, etc.

Within the world of the theatrical performer we can likewise find the existence of High & Low Magic; the lesser, being those demonstrations akin to the court jester or travelling troubadour. The greater, being the course of study that empowers the mind and delivers enchantments that appeal to the deeper senses of one's audience.

In saying this I do not mean to negate the abilities or import of the visual artist. Many of those that perform such illusions do share commonalities with the higher forms of this practice. At the same time, I do not intend to overly elevate the perceptions of the mentalist. Not all individuals, who dabble with the higher dimensions of magic, can be labeled such. As with any "art" or even "science" there are more than a sufficient number of buffoon incapable of recognizing their anal cavity from a hole in the ground. But, I degress... let's get to the meat of things, shall we?

Aside from the fact that I believe the magician of the 21st century is going to have to be much more than the examples history has revealed to us. I have been compelled to pull these thoughts together so as to address a very disturbing trend that's proven itself evident of late, even within the auspices of our very own Magic Bunny forums. I speak of course about how we present ourselves both, professionally and in our personal lives.

Being a "Magician" regardless the field you chose to specialize in, involves much more than knowing the mechanics of an effect or even how to stage a routine. In fact, one side of our obligation has little to nothing to do with tricks in the least. Rather, it is our ability to be effective as human beings.

The majority of the magic tomes I've seen published over the years lend to us some of the same advice decade after decade, generation after generation.

- Mind Your Manners and Be Graceful in Public Venues
- Keep Yourself Properly Groomed, Pressed & Tailored
- Speak Proudly, with Confidence and Conviction. Be in Command of Your Vocabulary and Know the Techniques of both, Communication as well as Negotiation.
- Be an Example to Others! Revealing Yourself as a Healthy & Responsible Individual
- Never Stop Learning! Be cognizant of current affairs as well as the more trivial aspects of history, culture and art.
- Be Respectful of Others even when their beliefs or perspectives may differ from your own. Our differences allow us to learn and thus, empower us in life as well as our ability to work within all aspects of our craft.

I'm certain there are many other bits of practical wisdom we could include, but I'm certain each of you hosting more than a 4th grade education, get the gist.

One of the things I've always appreciated about Mentalism vs. Magic is that the methods employed by Mentalist can be applied in daily life as tools of personal advantage. In fact, I've used this point of reality upon more than one occasion to help some young up-start prove to their parents that they weren't just wasting time and money on a nifty hobby. Many of these youngsters, my own kids included, discovering that some of the memory techniques and other subtleties employed by the mentalist actually improve their grade-point averages while others, adults working in the real world, have seen serious professional gains as the result of their application of said tools. This isn't just my observation, you can ask Harry Loraine, Rex Sykes or any number of others that have watched those they've "empowered" via these techniques, they'll be glad to fill you in on the details.

The point is *Tricks aren't for kids!*

The Wizards of 2020 c.e. (cont.)

Though many of us discover how to do tricks as children, the world of magic exists for the responsible and mature individual. That is, if you are to grow into the position to appreciate its power and ultimately, your ability to use it in ways that go far beyond mere performance.

Being a "Magician" involves far more than learning the mechanics or base principles around an effect. Thanks to the money-grabbing mind-set now extant within our "culture" many of us have become blinded to this fact. We've chosen to focus on the dream – the goal of getting ahead, rather than the realities known of, but rarely spoken about, when it comes to this trade. The majority of those individuals we read about and even honor via some strange mode of homage, were rarely the financial success we envision. Many of these guys, especially the legends like Vernon, Senator Crandal, Al Flosso, were midway hustlers! Sadly, many of these "legends" were also active alcoholics and rarely known for fulfilling their obligations when it came to the mundane role of parent and family man. More unfortunate, is the fact that this syndrome seems to remain a common within our inner-sanctum.

Yes, there are millionaire magicians! More so, there is a plethora of the hard working guys and gals that barely break the \$30,000.00 a year mark. In fact, the greater majority of us rarely see even half that sum as an annual gross factor. The aspiring Illusionists within our ranks are akin to the rural farmer; his/her money being tied up in equipment that quickly depreciates in value as each season passes. Circumstances that bring to the fore a single question, *"Why do we do it?"*

The answer is relatively simple – love! Magic is our passion, the elixir that allows us to escape and not deal with the mundane. Just as it allows our audience to suspend their belief and step into a realm where the impossible is made real, so too we become affected. For this reason, more than any other, we become obliged to go further and become more than some guy in a poorly fitted costume, doing a series of gags. Within the entertainment community Magic as well as Mentalism are both classified as "filler" acts. Rarely are we the headliner and even more rare are we viewed by the public as being an aspect of the "legit" entertainment world. Said perceptions being changed, ONLY by our deliberate course of action; our application of those simple and seemingly out-moded rules of thumb mentioned above; concepts that allow young men to become true gentlemen, and young women, proper ladies.

Having manners and extending acts of appropriate respect to others, is not a weakness. It's a valuable strength! It does not detract from the character we present on stage, nor limit our ability to be funny, bizarre or dramatic. It will however enshroud us with the ability of seeming more "enchanted" in the eyes of those who meet and interact with us outside the performance arena. It is a single step towards creating the idea of our being a magickle entity – something that is much more than being a mere "magician" as they are viewed in today's world.

Some time ago one of the noted on-line forums had an interesting question posed, *"How big is the demand for magic performance?"*

The truth is difficult to believe at times, but magic really isn't on the international hit list of "must have" attractions. The majority of us are doomed to support our lust for the latest in gadgets, by performing local smokers, school shows, and the occasional fundraiser. We are viewed as children's performers first, not as a draw for the adult consumer. Factors that we rarely hear about, but which serve as obstacles we must overcome.

I'm certain that I've confused you to some degree, mixing the challenge or "fix" as it were, along side some rather "dark" truths surrounding this craft each of us seem to be endeared to. This contrast revealing, I hope, why it is so important for us to assume some responsibility as individuals and thus, choose to move forward in a progressive manner. Removing, via our example, those negatives discussed as well as those yet mentioned or weighed. But there is more to this line of thought, a "vision" if you would, pertaining to what magic will be like as the next generation takes the helm.

In the early 1980s guys like Kevin James, Franz Harary, Nicholas Night, and even myself, were seen as the "bad boys" of magic. We were breaking the rules, refusing to wear a tux, and oft times seen in Mohawk styled haircuts with brilliant "punk" colors, sporting the latest in Michael Jackson inspired clothing. The "bizarre" style of the material we presented back then, became the second stage of evolution for what we now associate with the antics of the 21st century mage. Of course, all those rebellious displays came with a price. Firstly, the amount of peroxide and other hair products employed for "the image" cost about as much a year as a single illusion. Secondly... well, let's just say that Franz and Kevin have a hard time understanding how I managed to hold onto a full head of hair over the years and they haven't... I guess that's just the price of success???

The Wizards of 2020 c.e. (cont.)

Actually, the real price paid stemmed from hardship. We were "different" and thus, controversial. We broke many of the "rules" and went against the establishment, forcing magic to take a new route of course. We fought an up-hill battle but, because we maintained certain professional standards, became the new definition as to what it meant to be a magician.

Today, the antics of David Blaine and the likes of those featured in other televised specials, are laying the foundation to what we will see upon the horizon a generation from now. Though I may seem the old curmudgeon trying to hold onto the ways of the past, my only real concern centers on our ability to retain the good of the past while allowing magic to progress and unfold as it will.

I firmly believe that we are seeing magic transmute, reverting more towards the image of intrigue and mystery it originally knew; escaping the more commercialized ideas sewn within it, during the post World War era. I also believe that we must change the way we present magic as well as ourselves, because of the advent of technology. For over 40 years the public has seen the clean and pristine, free of the esoteric feel, form of magic. They were robbed of the fantasy because we deliberately promoted what we did as being tricks and illusions vs. miracles and skill. But like everything, what was once old and discarded is new again! When we are able to present intrigues that captivate both, the eye and the mind, we allow our patrons freedom from the techno-filled world they exist within.

I realize this article has been rather long-winded. It is difficult to paint a picture that allows us to see for ourselves, what is at stake and why. It is even more difficult for us to question our self when it comes to creating that more rounded image that will be required by the magician of 2020. The image that is akin to those wise old Wizards of times long gone and barely remembered. A time when being a Wizard actually implied that one was a learned and multi-skilled individual, unique to the world.

Like always, it's just food for thought. I hope it shines a bit of light on things for you, so that our future and this craft, remains assured.

Catch you next issue!

By P. Craig Browning

My First Performance

My First Performance

Magic Experience

By Bennie Wardi

Editor's Note: Bennie approached me and asked if I would consider this article, previously posted on the forums for the ezine. Last month, we read about Bruce Graham's year of magic consisting of his performances, thoughts and ideas. I really enjoy reading about people's first or recent experiences performing in the real world so am pleased to present this here now.

The other night, I had a little show as my parents' card "gang" came to play in our place. 8 people were coming as well as my parents and me.

I asked my mother, about one week before, if I could make a little magic show...

...and she said 'yes'. So I started to plan my routine. I decided (with Jonathan B to help) on my seven minute routine which was:

- My own version of Here, Then There
- Three Monkey Business

My First Performance (cont.)

- Ambitious card routine:
 - Card reverse turn over when they put signature on card.
 - Normal ACR to top.
 - False shuffles and cuts to reveal
 - Put it on top and the top card comes in air to ACR
 - Marlo T*** with Erdnase color change
 - False shuffle and DL utility move
 - Pop up move.

One guest called to say that he was late, so I started my show...

My mom introduced me and I noticed that I was so excited that my legs were shaking (they saw it too I think)

Mom said, "As you see he is not excited at all!" Everybody laughed and I wasn't shaking that much anymore.

So I started with my own version of "Here, Then There" and when one spectator looked at the card in her hand after the shapeshifter change, everybody EXPLODED! I got great applause immediately after the first trick! I was still shaking but the shake was decreasing.

Then I performed the "Three Monkey Business" from Daryl's "Full Monte" video.

I asked them, "What do you think that last card is?" and they said, "The 2 of spades like in first place." So I showed the joker and again, big applause!

Shaking is now gone!

So onto the last effect, ACR. That went pretty average and the reaction wasn't as great as in the two first tricks but there *were* reactions!

So my main show went great! There was one new woman who didn't know the rules well so I was helping her in the game. When it was her turn to deal, she said "OK, it's better that Bennie shuffles and deals." I agreed and then another player cracked a joke: "Are you all sure you accept that her personal assistant WHO'S A MAGICIAN deals?"

Everybody laughed and I was pleased that I was called magician, so I dealt the cards and everybody was comfortable.

Then after the first game there was a break when my mum was making food and there were a couple of people sitting on the sofa. I saw my chance and showed Triumph to two men. The trick went extremely well and they just didn't say anything in a while. Then I heard, with very little voice, "Cool."

Well then the one man who was late was sitting on the sofa about 30mins after my Triumph. I decided to show him something. I think my confidence was too up, that I screwed up two times in a row for him (the tricks were Jokers Wild and Hitman.)

Again we started playing and when the man (who I had screwed up two tricks for) was dropped, I showed him 2 card monte which went fine. However, the reaction was very small. Then after one other woman was dropped I showed her the same trick, with better presentation. My presentation was that at the end of the trick I said "Heart, diamonds, heart, heart, diamonds, diamonds," and she said "Stop!" She was laughing, when she turned her hand over and saw two aces. Her reaction was great!

Then one other asked if I can do tricks with other objects than cards.

I said "Well yeah but I have practised with sponges only for a week and a half"

They said "Show us something" so I reluctantly agreed.

Sponges went okay, there were again a couple of reactions.

Again we ('we' because I was helping that new one) started playing.

My First Performance (cont.)

Then, when there were only 3-4 left I saw one couple sitting on the sofa (there was the one who I showed the 2 card monte with great reaction) and I went to perform them first 2 Card Heat then Triumph. Reaction was again great! Then I showed them the 360 degrees hand twist (that one that David Blaine does.) The women was physiotherapist... and she was almost screaming. The look on her face was just incredible.

So, as you can see I had great evening. This was my first public performance and I am glad it went so well!

Thanks for reading,

Bennie

Thoughts From Mid-West America

Thoughts From Mid-West America

The Coin Fold?!

By Michael Saint-Louis



Finally, finally... finally we get to coin magic. if you are like me (and my wife hopes you aren't) then you have only begrudgingly trudged through the damnable cesspool of card tricks that was the first one hundred and seventy six pages of Wilson's Complete Course. When the page finally turned to reveal the words MONEY MAGIC they were the most beautiful letters I had seen since REST STOP AHEAD after driving 65 miles through southern Missouri with my legs crossed! Cards! P'tah! Who needs them? And, for the record, I still can't do a ribbon spread to save my life!

Finally we come to money magic. Trembling, I turn the page to feast my eyes upon our first foray into this brave new world and come upon the Coin Fold! And I said the same thing you did: The Coin Fold? The Coin Fold sucks! But after how many months of freaking "Pick a card" even a sucky coin trick seemed like fun so I called over my three year old and proceeded to do the Coin Fold. She was a less enthusiastic audience than I wished for because I had interrupted her "Eye Power Training." See, she's three and her main ambition in life is to get into the Justice League as the third Black Canary. Now I realize that most of you would have to do a search on the Inter-web just to figure out who Black Canary is, but my three year old is down with the knowledge that there have been two incarnations of the Canary, one super-powered and one not, then second being the daughter of the first and trained by Wildcat and romantically linked (on and off) with the first Green Arrow currently working with Oracle and her Birds of Prey. Oh yeah, I said the first Green Arrow; she'll explain that to you too if you let her. Anyway, she was busy trying to burn a hole through the wall with her eyes or at least develop X-Ray vision and see through it when I called her over and she was not happy. I slowly and silently performed the Coin Fold in a late-70's early 80's Copperfieldesque fashion. After tearing the paper apart I reached into her curls and produced the coin triumphantly. I awaited her praise, for she is three and impressed by the magic which has otherwise long since lost its shine, and she stared at the coin for a moment and then finally said: "If I had eye powers I would melt your stupid coin."

Maybe the Coin Fold does just plain suck.

Luckily, it is just the warm up for an otherwise strong, strong section. Finger Palm, French Drop, the Pinch and the Classic Palm... those are tools you can use to make a living, son. I don't think I really need to re-hash any of them do I? Just one quick comment: don't worry if you can't do the Classic. Since I have broken my hands so many times (over forty between the two) I can't anymore either but it doesn't stop me. Still, don't give up on it until you are at least 30; I didn't!

Thoughts From Mid-West America (cont.)

The other gem in this first section is the Coin Through Handkerchief. Because Song (the three year old) loves to play with scarves I have done this about five million times with one discarded silk scarf of my mother-in-law's or another and it never, ever fails to impress. Twice tears have been shed because Daddy put a hole in her favorite scarf... which, of course, I haven't! This trick is probably two thousand years old and still plays big!

There is another clunker, though: the Four Coin Assembly. What! A classic, you say? Genius, you say? Pure magic? Perhaps... I just find the directions sadly lacking in this case. Although warnings are given to avoid giving up the trick by finger motion I think the real danger is in creasing the cards with your thumb as you 'pop' the coins up to the ready. I also take issue with the statement that this is best suited for a soft surface like a close-up pad. It is ONLY suited for a soft surface like a close-up pad! Still, patience and practice will allow the reader to perfect this if they choose.

All in all I am excited by these pages! I was about ready to lose interest in Wilson, so it comes at a good time. I just hope everyone out there reading this takes the time to really go through and not skip this 'easy stuff.' Foundations are always the most important things to learn and the Classic Palm, Finger Palm, French Drop and Pinch are about as basic and foundational as you can get! Until next time, I'll be practicing my eye powers....

By Michael Saint-Louis

From the Desk of Michael Jay

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An American Magician in London

By Michael Jay



Well, it's been a couple of months since I've had an article and, this month, if you're looking for a new trick, I'm afraid that there just isn't going to be one! My apologies and I promise to include a little something for your repertoire next month, but my time is short since I've arrived back in the states. In the months to come, I'm going to share some funny anecdotes and stories about my time in England. There will be no chronological order to these stories due to the fact that I visited pubs on a daily basis, however I do hope to give you the highlights of my time spent over the better part of a month in England.

I've been asked what my favorite part of my time spent in England was and I can only say, in a nut shell, meeting so many interesting people who treated me better than I could ever have asked for. The first people that I met was Gary Scott's parents, Ralph and Betty. Not only did they take me into their house with gracious hospitality, but they treated me as if I were a part of their family. I cannot begin to tell you just how good this made me feel, being a complete stranger to them. I was made to feel comfortable and right at home. Many of my mornings were spent talking with Ralph and listening to his stories about earlier times for him and the family. Ralph enjoyed a diverse training background in various jobs and has one particularly beautiful award for time spent at his company from which he retired. Betty was able to catch Gary and I at home a couple of times and cooked dinner for us. Excellent cuisine! For the first time in my life I got to taste Shepherd's Pie. Betty, like so many of the folks who fed me in England, wanted me to go home three stone heavier than I was when I arrived! My deepest appreciation goes to these two very wonderful people.

Next, I met Gary's brother, Lee. Lee is hooked on computer games and Yugi Oh! As it turns out, Lee is also a judge for Yugi Oh competitions and has taken awards home as a result of his work. Way to go, Lee! Also, to my surprise, Lee has a "Blade" puppet, my personal favorite of the various puppets in the "Puppet Master" series. One evening we spent watching "The Butterfly Effect" with Ashton Kuchner (Kuchner isn't a particular favorite of mine!) in Lee's room along with his friends Essa and Dave and, I have to admit, it was a really

From the Desk of Michael Jay (cont.)

good show! You see, this is what I went to England for - meeting folks and spending time with them. Thank you Lee for the hospitality and accepting me into your home, thank you so very much.

The fact of the matter is, I almost didn't make it to England, as planned. Several members of MB (who I won't name to protect their privacy) pooled their cash to ensure my journey to England. It is here that I'd like to thank them, from the depths of my heart. I am not a man of means, by any stretch of the imagination, however I tell you this, I am the richest man in the world. The only thing that could ever mean anything of value or worth in this lifetime is friends and family, both of which I am truly blessed. Gentlemen, you know who you are, thank you.

To continue...

One afternoon in particular, Gary promised to take me to Edgware. I had been visiting the shops at Burnt Oak on a daily basis and was quite impressed that anything could be shopped for within only a five minute walk from home. Gary assured me that Edgware was so much better. I'll give you three guesses where we went first. Got it? Well, just in case you missed it, we stopped at a pub (just to grease the gears, mind you). After a pint of Guinness (and a diet Coke for Gary) we headed off to the shops. One particular shop was high on our list - a used book store. Now, here is a nugget of wisdom, the kind of thing that you should be watching my articles for and something that is worth the time that you are putting in to read my ramblings: Visit used book stores anytime that you can and look through the books in search of old magic books. You'll build your library at a reasonable price and you'll find gems from days gone by that nobody else is doing presently, killer stuff. For the record, that is exactly how David Blaine rocketed to fame - by using old stuff that nobody else was using.

Both Gary and myself found some valuable books at terrifically reasonable prices. The one that Gary bought out from under me was a book that I didn't even realize was a magic book. I had thought the thing just happened to be sitting there because the cover was plain black and it was a nondescript, little book. As it turned out, it was an old Blackstone book. Go figure. So, Gary snatched that one up while I landed an old Gibson book and an infantile, for beginners book, among others. The most fascinating thing about this is that, upon reading the beginning of the Gibson book, I came upon a little factoid that we hail today as being one of the most important ideas in magic, as if it were a new idea. And, here's a contest for you...If you can tell me what this "theory" is of which I speak (e-mail or PM me), I will send you any one of the Ron Bauer "Think Like a Conjuror" books that you want, at your request. I will share this with you in the next article that I write, but, until then, you have a month with which to research this and attempt to guess what I'm on about (and, the prizes are real!). Also, you only get one chance, so, if you're wrong, don't send me 12 more PMs - One guess and one guess only.

And, it's here that I bring this month's article to a close. Sure, it's short, but next month I'll share "Whiskey Day" and "London Day" with you, disclose the answer to the contest and give you another nugget or two of the wisdom of the sages. Until then, you all take care and thank you for reading.

By Michael Jay

Thanks for reading folks, next month we'll be back with another edition. Please see <http://www.magicbunny.co.uk/tophat/> for back issues.

All the best,
Jon Snoops
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