



Volume 5, Issue 2

9 February 2016

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Words from the Secretary

Craig Colombel

February 2016 – accolombel@zipcon.com

A lot of new things are happening with the club. If you have not been to a meeting lately come and see the changes. Also plans are being made for the club to put on the 3 of Hearts. Now is your chance to put on a magic convention. If you are performing or have performed let me know and I will put it into the newsletter. Also if you have some thoughts you will like to see in print send it to me. Send the articles to accolombel@zipcon.com.

Also it is that time of year again Time to pay your dues. The cost is \$25 (for a single membership) or \$35 (for a family membership). Help support your club. You can send your membership dues to:

Craig Colombel
509 So 165th St
Burien, WA 98148
Make the check out to NWRF

Ring of Smoke Report

No report this month because of the Super Bowl

Ben and Marty

President's Message

Ralph Huntzinger

My muse has left the building, the desk and the magic room are being rearranged instead of writing. February's theme of "Water, water all around ..." reflects the immense lassitude and boredom accumulated prior to crocus poking their heads out of the soggy earth. February's aspect theme is "Vanishes". March's theme concerns "wider imaginings" with the aspect being "color changes".

Last month's meeting was filled with performances and more will poke up hesitantly. I've heard from many members that "flight-time" is what they need (besides a gentle kick in the pants); an understanding environment for testing the wings is one of the values of NWRF. Here's the gentle push. The Cook's Challenge "contestants" committed to show how far they have reached in a month, I'm pushing my boundaries and stumbling through a developing routine each month, and a couple of "officers" could show off; that leaves room for you to test what you have been working on -- meeting and chatting about magic only goes so far. Liquid effects, vanishes, or anything else you have to share is fair game. The opening and closing performance, will come out of my repertoire. Hopefully we run out of time or someone else has a "polished and thought out" closer prepared instead. Jeff Dial, our Librarian, gave us an ongoing Librarian's Challenge to read every word in a book each month, your reports on that experience will be insightful; be prepared to report (even if it is very lame, "I could not find time to glance at a book this past month"). Several members muttered they need to clean out their "junk drawers", that is an opportunity to stand up and share a cherished piece of apparatus, demonstrate how you remember an effect you can't discard, or bring a box so we can repurpose "the stuff" as Cook Challenges or inspirations for someone who wants to "use the treasure". Participation and sharing is our goal closely behind flight-time performances. I'd love to hear what you retained and are contemplating from the Swiss lecture -- my thoughts on the personality are elsewhere in this newsletter.

What else is on the agenda besides very quick updates from the "officers":

- 1) Our Librarian has pointed out that we need to reflect, discuss, and decide what to do about the storage challenge involved with "old VHS tapes"; I don't want to take performance time to toss that around but would like it thought about, discussed at March's meeting, and a decision reached. Jeff and family has made a long time commitment to storing and managing NWRF's Library, the VHS housekeeping issue brings to mind that the fundamental approach to our valuable learning resource needs exploring. Anyone willing to be on a team to massage the issue of how a "learning and teaching" club recommit to provide what we all claim is the foundation of learning magic, please talk to me -- another exploration that needs working time and not a rapid decision.
- 2) Evan Shuster and I will be at the Portland Magic Jam and one of our assignment for the club is to continue discussions locking in the area clubs to producing the 2018 "3 of Clubs" Convention. I've heard commitments and comments from several members, please let us know more so we can reflect the club's wishes in Portland.
- 3) Brian Melicher, our Treasurer, is out of town on family business so the 2015 financial committee report is delayed. We need new three month teams for the Cook's Challenge and Monthly Themes so I'll be recruiting members for those; "Events for performing (walk around)" team also needs members and I'll be strong-arming short-term participants so we can develop and schedule flight-time at local community and charity events.

A Reverse Sucker Effect – Andrew Olmstead – Lets welcome a new writer Andrew Olmstead, I am looking forward to more from him. Thanks Andrew

Effect: After the magician attempts to bring a selected card to the top of the deck and fails in humorous ways, they blame the spectator. After asking the spectator how far down they think the card is, the spectator counts down to that number and is surprised to find the card face up in that position. Logically, the magician apologizes for second guessing the spectator's abilities.

Credits: Burt Allerton's "Surprise Spelling", Dani DaOriz' "Three Opportunities"

Script/Method:

This trick is best close-up and does not need a table. Start with any four of a kind on top of the deck and force one of them. I use a cull for the force. Upon the card's return, control it to the bottom. I use a cull again. If you have technical questions, ask me at a meeting. Avoid having the card returned too far down in the deck. You want it around position 20. Ask the spectator is how far down in the deck they think the card was placed. When they say it's somewhere in the middle, ask them for a specific number instead. Let's presume they say 19.

Tell them that you'll bring the 19th card to the top of the deck. Insert magical gesture here (maybe something other than a snap). Say, "Just tell me yes or no, did I get it right?" Turn the top card face up, which is the first of three cards matching the selected card's value.

When they tell you that's not their card, respond, "Don't tell me what your card is... Just tell me, am I close?" They'll say you are, which brings a joke. "Crap, so close. This must be card 20." Take this time to reverse the bottom card, which is the selection. As you hand them the first card, insist you overshot and will try again. I like this situation. They think they are ahead of you because you don't understand what they meant. Even if you are a bad actor like me, the situation is at least a little funny.

After the next magical gesture, pick up the top card so only you can see it. If it is a club, ask if they picked a club card (use the appropriate suit). When they say they didn't, act frustrated and hand them the card, insisting you overshot again and you'll get it this time. The effect is received somewhat differently at this point. When the second card has the same value, they will skip forward and anticipate that they've been had. Now they think they are ahead of you because they believe they know the ending. They believe you're going turn over two more cards of the same value, with the final one being their selection.

Now do a double turnover, showing a card of another value. If it's a six, ask, "Was it... the six?" Turn it back over, mumble that you forgot the magic gesture, perform said gesture, then turn up the third card. Look frustrated and spread the cards between your hand as they react. Sight-count down to their named number, then cull the face up selection from the bottom to the middle. In our example, count 19 including the face up card on top, inserting the selection in the 20th position.

Take the top face up card and the two they have and hand them the deck. Accuse them of giving you the wrong position and verify they said 19. Have them count the cards face down and they'll be surprised that their card is there and face up. Apologize profusely for questioning their skills of estimation and say you'll have to practice before performing any more stupid card tricks.

Continue on next page

Notes on Effect: I have essentially used the ending of the Allerton trick to justify and logically punctuate the DaOrtiz trick. There's a lot going on here but people seem to follow it well enough. I believe most good tricks are simple and can be easily described by the spectator. In that sense, the Allerton and DaOrtiz tricks I credit are much better. However, this longer trick has more ways for me to interact with people, which I like.

Notes on Method: I use more sleights so that no set up is necessary and the card can be freely selected. Alternatively, there are ways to make things easier, like the final relocation of the selection. Ask me in the meeting if you're interested.

Why I Have This Trick:

For most events in a play or movie, the characters and the audience process them at the same time. In the central development of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, the characters get into a duel. When people are stabbed, the audience sees it and processes the event along with the characters on stage.

For some events, the characters' process them before the audience. I'm not going to talk about this situation in this essay. Instead, let's consider times when the audience learns things before the character does.

Back to Romeo and Juliet. At the end of the play (spoiler alert, folks), Juliet takes a sleeping potion. Romeo mistakenly thinks Juliet died, so he commits suicide. Stereotypically, this event is often overacted and drawn out, but for good reason. The audience is intelligent. During the slow death, their minds race forward to the end of the play, like someone trying to guess the end to your pick-a-card trick. Soon they realize that Juliet will wake up and find Romeo dead. This creates powerful tension until she finally sees dead Romeo, allowing the audience to instantly connect with her. As a kicker to the magic trick, she also commits suicide.

I speculate that the feeling created in the audience member is not "I understand how they feel". I think it is closer to "I have felt this emotion before". In this way, the scriptwriter can create legitimate empathy.

As a musician and modest songwriter, I love Stephen Sondheim, who is commonly recognized as the greatest living composer and lyricist in musical theater. I'll skip writing a glowing biography and give you the quote that was the impetus for this silly trick. It comes from an interview first printed in the May/June 2007 issue of The Journal of The Dramatists Guild (partial transcript – http://www.ascap.com/playback/2007/summer/features/stephen_sondheim.aspx). Sondheim is talking about a character who knows less about themselves than the audience does.

Every time one can write a self-deluded song, you are way ahead of the game, way ahead. Self-delusion is the basis of nearly all the great scenes in all the great plays, from Oedipus to Hamlet. When the audience starts to know something the character doesn't, they get excited – and who wouldn't? We get it, why doesn't he get it, but when he finally does get it, it's so much more devastating than when we got it. I don't like to make generalizations, but so much first-rate drama throughout the centuries is about characters who don't know as much about themselves as the audience does. It gives the actor so much to play. An actor can only be grateful to have a song in which he says, "Everything is white," while he's sitting on a blue set. That's one thing I learned about subtext. "What do we get that the actor doesn't? What can the actor play that isn't in the surface text?"

Hope you like the trick and I'd appreciate feedback. I'll try to make further articles shorter. Fin.

Review by Payne

The Plot Thickens

By Oliver Meech

\$17.54

<http://www.olivermeech.co.uk/>

Softbound 8 1/2" X 11 1/2" 81 pages

Reviewed by Payne

It used to be that publishing and distributing a magic book was a difficult and expensive proposition. But as we all know, this is no longer the case. Now anyone with a digital camera, an internet connection and what they think is a never before thought of effect can, and seemingly does, put out their own magic book or DVD. I know I have. We now live in a world which sees more magic related material being released in a single month than was previously published in an entire year just a few years.

Generally, this is a bad thing as we've become inundated with a plethora of bad to blah publications chucked full of substandard material that previously wouldn't have even made it into the trick section of a magic magazine. But there are exceptions to this sad state of affairs. Every so often something rises up out of this sea of mediocrity and allows us all to have hope for the future of both magic and its publications.

Oliver Meech has penned such a piece of magical jetsam with his first book *The Plot Thickens*. A curious little tome that is definitely worth a look, especially at the unheard of and somewhat odd price of \$17.54.

The reader will find contained between its purple softbound covers a diverse array of twenty-two tricks – many of them novel and most of them quite doable. My favorites are the "Cardboard Birthday Cake" where the flame on a birthday candle drawn with a Sharpie on the back of a selected card is blown out by the spectator – thus granting their wish. "Free Money in Every Pack" which has a previously marked dollar appearing wrapped around a candy bar that the bill was used to buy out of a vending machine, and finally "Telling Your Ace from Your Elbow" where the identity of a spectator's previously selected card is revealed via a curious squiggle on your elbow. Some more daring individuals might even consider getting this effect permanently added to their repertoire by having the design added to their already overly tattooed appendage.

But this book contains more than just card and coin tricks. There are several mental feats, an experiment in pyrokinetics and a weird little effect where a photograph showing a badly framed shot where the top of a person's head has been cropped off is fixed simply by tapping it on a table. I thought this might make a good card revelation myself and am anxious to try it out in front of a live audience.

Most of the tricks are suitable for walk around situations as only a few of them require advance setups or cumbersome resets. Many of them are great for those awkward "show me a trick" situations we all find ourselves in from time to time as they have a great impromptu feel to them as they use everyday objects like coins and business cards. Some of them, like the candy bar trick, would play very well in that classic 9 to 5 work environment many part time pro's still find themselves in.

I heartily recommend this book as it is a fun, offbeat and worthwhile read and I look forward to any future texts penned by Mr. Meech.

A review of the Jamy Ian Swiss Lecture by Ralph Huntzinger

A View of a Swiss Lecture from the Back of the Room

Just my personal viewpoint: You missed an important experience in one's magical journey if you missed Jamy Ian Swiss' lecture. I've filled the trash with paper-balls clarifying my reaction(s), this is the latest one. I'm opinionated and enjoy some close-up but have never felt compelled to burden others, I understand there are people who think it is "THE art". "ART" is not to only satisfy one's taste but sometimes raises feelings, emotions, and forces one to re-examine their core beliefs. Swiss has always done that for me. "Shattering Illusions" is in NWRP's Library (not my shelf), I attended opinionated of his writing, and I wanted a more personal view of his thoughts. Afterwards I told him, "Well, I didn't change my mind. You are in a class that includes Pat Page." He took it as it was meant, a compliment. I loved Pat Page because he was eccentric, foreign, knowledgeable, technically subtle, outspoken, egotistical, self-centered, intimate with legends, and loved narrative. The class encloses philosophy explained, clarity stressed, perfection stressed, theory related to practice, and grating self-grandizing from someone who deserves that praise from someone other than himself. I smiled and chuckled while Swiss pontificated on aspects I believe are essential to our art and clenched my teeth because his approach grated my sensibilities. Smothered in his exposition was great theatrical advice focused to close-up performance; I fantasized ice carvers endlessly exalting inane topics – they cared deeply, who else cares, what remains. I stored away massive opinions but jotted only two thoughts which will give me years of contemplating: "[showing] skill is not magic -- it also leads people to technique not effect" and "[people often use personas] as a mask to hide behind (because they really are) ... give of yourself, expose yourself." The time spent retrieving pearls was worth the irritation.

COOK'S CHALLENGE JANUARY 2015

Cook's Challenge – January

At every club meeting this year, the Cook's Challenge committee will hand out three mystery envelopes to volunteers who are up for a challenge. These envelopes could contain almost anything to suggest an effect. Your challenge will be to choose an envelope and create a magical presentation based on the envelope's contents. These performances do not have to be exactly what is suggested and do not have to be perfectly polished performances. Just give it a try, have fun with it, and possibly inspire other club members to create magic of their own.

At our January meeting, Tom Payne showed us a stack of various Seattle postcards. After mixing the cards, he turned the stack over and showed us that the backs were all blank, except one. That one had a big X drawn on it. Tom mixed that card back into the stack without showing us its face and then turned the stack face up. He challenged a club member to select a postcard that did not have an X on it. (Sounds easy, right?) A card was selected and, as Tom had predicted, the spectator selected the only marked postcard. Again the remaining cards were shown to be blank on the backs.

At last December's club meeting, Tom received one of the three Cook's Challenge envelopes. In that envelope was a booklet by Melbourne Christopher called "One Man Mental Magic". The effect described above, "Postcard Prophecy" is from that booklet. Tom read the effects in the booklet, selected this effect, collected the necessary props and prepped them for his performance, which was well received. And, at the end of the challenge, Tom kept the booklet to add to his Magic library.

Our second volunteer was Andrew Olmstead. Andrew's envelope contained a C/S coin set and a copy of Max Howard's Copper/Silver coin routine. Andrew used elements of Max's routine, and other sources to put together a coin routine with several transpositions of a copper and a silver coin. Again, his performance was well received and Andrew kept the coin set for his collection.

Evan Shuster was our third recipient of a Cook's Challenge envelope. He received instructions and props needed for an MC comedy bit called "The Magic Manor" by Sid Lorraine. It was originally an MC gag about a husband and wife out shopping for a house that fell within their price range. Evan's version was more of a sleuth/murder mystery effect based on the board game 'Clue'. Evan introduced a picture of the Magic manor (from the challenge envelope) and three sets of cards he had created. One set had the names of suspects written on them. The second set contained the names of rooms inside the Mansion, and the third set of cards had weapons listed. Audience members selected one of each of these elements and, of course their choices matched the prediction on the back of the Magic Manor illustration. Evan also included Sid Lorraine's comedy gag ending in his routine.

Three more Cook's Challenges were handed out at the January meeting. We'll have those three performances in February, and so on, and so on, throughout the year. We'd love to see you perform one – possibly something new for you outside of your comfort zone. Volunteer at the next meeting!

The Return of the Portland Magic Jam!

February 19 – 21, 2016

Started in 2009 by cruise ship magician Greg Moreland, the PMJ is a semi-annual 3-day convention that brings together magicians from Oregon and Washington (and beyond) for a great weekend of learning and camaraderie. It's open to all levels of magic enthusiasts, from complete beginners to seasoned pros.

In past years it has been host to a terrific line-up of talent, including David Regal, Aaron Fisher, Steve Dobson, Daryl, Whit Hayden, Wayne Houchin, Doc Eason, Gregory Wilson, John Armstrong, Daniel Garcia, and Simon Lovell.

This year's line-up features Michael Ammar, Chad Long, and Nate Kranzo.

The schedule offers lectures by each of the headliners, Friday and Saturday evening shows, a close-up show, a panel discussion featuring all of the headliners, and a dealer room. There is also a session room which is open all night long (for the hardcore among you), and a Parlor contest on Sunday that is open to the first 12 contest registrants.

One of the best things about the location (The Portlander Inn) is that you never have to leave the hotel (unless you really want to). They have a full-service restaurant, a quick-service deli, a convenience store, a full bar (often with live music), an arcade, a laundromat, and even a movie theatre... all on site!

The Portland Magic Jam attracts a smaller, more intimate crowd of attendees than many of the larger, national conventions (usually around 75 – 100 people) so you really do have a chance to mingle with the stars, session with friends, breathe, and not feel like you're packed in a sardine can. I've attended every Jam, and enjoyed every one of them.

For more information, and to register, you can visit the website at:

<http://www.portlandmagicjam.com/home.html>

January 2016 MEETING

January – All I got for Xmas was...

Jan 14 2016

In the start of the new year and new president Ralph wants to try a new tradition for the meetings. Each meeting will start with a performance running about 5-8 mins. Ralph lead it off with by performing a routine as Zinger the Magick. A medieval routine with Zinger using two large rings said he was going to show us a trick then show how it was done. Risking bodily harm from those who protects a magician's secrets. :). He performed a two ring linking ring routine then added a rope and proceeded to link and unlinked the rope from the rings.

In the business section, a former member of the club and a member of the old Seattle Ring visited the club. A warm welcome for Order of Merlin member George Mack. He brought along his son-in-law Drew who has an interest in magic and wants to join the club. Welcome to both.

Next were the three members who took up the Cook's Challenge from the previous meeting. First up was Tom Payne showed us a stack of various Seattle postcards. After mixing the cards, he turned the stack over and showed us that the backs were all blank, except one. That one had a big X drawn on it. Tom mixed that card back into the stack without showing us its face and then turned the stack face up. He challenged a club member to select a postcard that did not have an X on it. (Sounds easy, right?) A card was selected and, as Tom had predicted, the spectator selected the only marked postcard. Again the remaining cards were shown to be blank on the backs. This was from the challenge booklet by Melbourne Christopher called "One Man Mental Magic", the effect was "Postcard Prophecy". Next was Andrew Olmstead. Andrew's envelope contained a C/S coin set and a copy of Max Howard's Copper/Silver coin routine. Andrew used elements of Max's routine, and other sources to put together a coin routine with several transpositions of a copper and a silver coin. The third volunteer was Evan Shuster. He received instructions and props needed for an MC comedy bit called "The Magic Manor" by Sid Lorraine. It was originally an MC gag about a husband and wife out shopping for a house that fell within their price range. Evan's version was more of a sleuth/murder mystery effect based on the board game 'Clue'. Evan included Sid Lorraine's comedy gag ending in his routine. For a complete write-up on the challenges see the article later in this newsletter.

Brian Melicher informed the club of two sources of where to find information on magic. Denis Behr -Conjuring Archives and Conjuring Arts-Ask Alexander. He then performed a routine using tarot cards and color stones. He had the cards dealt face down and then a different color stone was placed on the back of each card. The cards/stones were then eliminated by the spectator until only one card/stone pair was left. The card was turned over and the card and color stone matched the prediction.

Evan Shuster demonstrated a Tenyo trick that was a box and a ball. The box was rubber band shut, the ball placed on top and covered with a cloth. When he pressed down on the ball it penetrated the cover of the box and went inside the box.

Rich Waters performed two card routines, the first having a spectator pick a card then the card is found sandwich between two other cards. The second trick, 3 cards are dealt face up and one is chosen by the spectator without the magician knowing which one is picked. The cards are then placed face down and mixed by the spectator and the magician is able to determine which card is the one the spectator picked.

Continue on next page...

George Mack performed an impromptu? Gypsy Thread routine. He then brought out a deck of cards had two cards chosen and made a silver dollar appear between the two cards. He showed there was nothing between the cards and made another silver dollar appear. He then took one cards tore it in half and made a silver dollar appear between the two halves. His third trick, he had a card chosen a happy face sticker placed on the card and replace in the deck. While holding the deck between his hands he had the card remove and vanished the deck. After he held a brief workshop on the handling of the gypsy thread.

Members showed what they received for Christmas to the rest of the club and did talked magic.

Remember, to visit the club's website, <http://www.nwringoffire.com> and also visit the clubs Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Northwest-Ring-of-Fire/4296167377105973>

Richmond Beach Library
19601 21st. Ave. NW.
Shoreline, WA 98177

We have the room from 6:30 PM, and the meeting runs from 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM.

Calendar of Events

NWRF – 2016 Meeting Themes

Jan -- "All I got for Xmax was ..." Related to holidays, actual magic gift from holiday, "wished I'd received", previous year's magic gift, etc.

Feb -- "Water, water everywhere and not a drop to drink" Coleridge's poem directs us to liquid including dreary outdoor weather. Containers (bottles, glasses, bowls), liquid color changing, vanish & appear, etc.

Mar -- "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt in our philosophy" Act I, scene 5 from Shakespeare's Hamlet suggest anything and everything except what is expected.

2016's "Aspect Themes":

Jan --- **Production and Multiplication** (quantity production)

Feb --- **Vanish** (most common in magic)

Mar --- **Color Change** (suitable for any object)

April --- **Transposition or Substitution** (object travels or changes places)

May --- **Transformation** (object changes to another object)

June --- **Penetration** (solid through solid, including Ties, Releases, and Escapes)

July --- **Restoration** (mending a mutilated object)

Aug --- **Diminishing** (object diminishes in size or shape)

Sept --- **Growing** (object becomes bigger, longer or larger)

Oct --- **Deterioration** (often in comedy and pseudo-psychic effects)

Nov --- **Mental Magic** (Divination, ESP, Mind reading, Telepathy, etc.)

Dec --- **Levitation** (rising, floating, flying or suspended objects)

Make sure to check the website for upcoming events and lectures.

[HTTP://WWW.NWRINGOFFIRE.COM/INDEX.HTML](http://www.nwringoffire.com/index.html)

FACEBOOK : [HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/PAGES/NORTHWEST-RING-OF-FIRE/429616737105973](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Northwest-Ring-of-Fire/429616737105973)

A Review on the Illusion Factory by Tom Paine

The Illusion Factory show on January 9 featured several magicians doing table-side magic. Leland Hirschman, Mike Battistoni, and Erik Runquist and the stage performers made the rounds and Steve Dobson was the featured close-up magician.

Tim Flynn acted as MC for the evening performing the 3 Card Cutout prediction before introducing the first act; John "The Magic Guy" Villareal. John performed a funny routine with a threaded deck and moved on to predict an audience members card. When he revealed the card she had chosen, she said "No" and the card also said NO. He then did the 4 sided card trick and "showed them how it was done" ending with the card full of spots. After a rope routine, John asked the audience for \$100 but settled for \$20, turned the bill inside out (corners in center) and restored it. He performed a Monte with giant cards that ended up blank, then the rings and closed with a chop cup.

After intermission, Tim Flynn performed a rising card routine and introduced Rick Anderson. Rick began with the Six Card Trick, segued into coin tricks and napkin tricks and read the minds of 3 audience members for card choices, failing on the third. He moved on to rope tricks and a book test. He borrowed \$100 bill from the audience and 'accidentally' burned it, but found the 3rd card from the previous trick and, eventually restored the bill, too. From The Cat in the Hat Magic Book, he performed Green Eggs and Spam for his closer, but did an encore pulling a rabbit from a hat to end the evening.

The next Illusion Factory on Feb. 13th will be doing a magical transformation of its own. It will be known from now on as "That's Impossible Presents". You'll still see great close-up magic featuring Steve Dobson, two different stage performers each month and Tim Flynn acting as MC. It will still be held the 2nd Saturday of every month at Delancey's on Third in Renton, but the places to find out about it are changing.

That's Impossible Presents

Delancey's On Third

810 S 3rd St., Renton, WA 98057

NEW phone for info and reservations: 206.900.6354

NEW Facebook page: Thats Impossible Presents

- (no apostrophe but spaces between words) FB ID 516764008505609

NEW website: <http://www.thatsimpossiblepresents.com>

One for the card guys...Who is Peter Pellikaan???

Aces/Wild

Magic download (video) by Peter Pellikaan (\$10.00)

<https://www.vanishingincmagic.com/magic-downloads/card-magic-downloads/aces-wild/>

Okay... maybe it's just me... but I really LOVE watching Peter Pellikaan! I have most of his full DVDs, and all of this material (plus a whole lot more) is on them, so I won't be buying this particular sampler, but I think that this is a good starting point if you see something you like. His work is fairly simple (in terms of counts, cuts, moves, etc) so it is not out of reach for ANY of you, and if you enjoy DIY build-a-trick type of material, you will get a kick out of the methods. For ten bucks you get a pretty good sampling of material here. If you like it, you can find additional "samplers" at Vanishing Inc. If you REALLY fall in love with it, then I would recommend seeking out, and buying the full DVDs. My two cents... Evan

Magic Shops in the Area

Below is a list of the Magic shops in the Area. None have paid for this listing and if anybody knows of others let me know and I will list them.

Seattle's Market Magic Shop

Pikes Place Market
1501 Pike Place #427
Seattle, WA 98101

www.marketmagicshop.com

(A store that many know about. In existence for 30 years)

Terjung's Studio of Gifts

4547 Calif. Ave SW
Seattle, WA 98116

(This is a gift store with a counter in the back where they sell magic)

Lakewood Costumes

5932 Lake Grove ST SW
Lakewood, WA 98499

<http://www.clownshop.com>

(Mainly Costumes and Clown items, they have a counter where they sell magic)

Dave's Killer Magic Shop

1707 Main Street
Vancouver, WA 98665
360-448-9022

Brian Cook's

WWW.MAGICCRAFTER.COM

South Seattle Magic and Novelty

9460 Rainier Ave S
Seattle, WA 98118
206-321-1291

FunkyFun Magic Shop

Capital Mall
625 Black Lake Blvd
Olympia, WA, 98502
<http://Funkyfunmagic.com>
Funkyfunmagic@gmail.com

Magical happenings

Magic Monday! Magic Monday is an hour of magic, conjuring, & prestidigitation which stars magicians from the Northwest region on the second Monday of each month. Location: Ravenna Third Place Books in the Ravenna neighborhood of Seattle. 6504 20th Ave. NE, Seattle, WA. Time: 7-8pm Magic Monday is not only a great place to see local magicians doing what they do best; it is also a great place for YOU to perform. It happens the second Monday of each month. If you want to hone your magic skills, get in touch with Mark Paulson, the producer of this venue (**mark2061@yahoo.com**). It is a wonderful chance to perform for an appreciative audience. It's been standing room only all year.

February 8, 2015

Mark Paulson

Otto Miller

Ruben Barron

Michael Jacobs

Master Payne

March 14, 2015

Mark Paulson

Philemon Vanderbeck

Josh Cizek

Master Payne

April 11, 2015

Mark Paulson

Craig Friedman

Jeff Dial

Master Payne

If you wish to perform contact Mark at:

mark2061@yahoo.com or on Facebook at

<http://www.facebook.com/thirdplacebooksmagicmonday?ref=ts>

Illusion Factory (Seattle's Best Magicians)

Delancey's on 3rd 810 S 3rd St Renton, WA

1st Saturdays of the month. Doors open at 7:45pm

Food, Drinks Close-up Magic 8-9 pm

Emcee Tim Flynn

Stage Show 9pm. \$10/\$15

Call Seattle Juggling and Magic shop

206-859-8363

See the write up on the Illusion Factory on the page above

This Month a new writer Evan Reynolds who will be sharing his thoughts on Putting on a Monthly Stage Show. Thanks Evan.

How to create and run your own theater show by Evan Reynolds

I've been putting on a public monthly show for several years now. We thought it might be interesting to write a column about what goes into putting on a public show, and what you need to do to make such a show work! It's a variety show, though we're bringing Jeff McBride in to perform for the March show.

I've been performing magic for about fifteen years now. My dad performed in the 1950s and used to show me tricks when I was a kid. I saw a magician as an adult and remembered how much I loved it, and got back into it. I started performing at restaurants but people kept asking me if I did birthday parties and eventually I figured why not. So I did a show for a cub scout blue and gold. My advice is don't start there, I'm still emotionally scarred from the experience. But I kept doing it, and then eventually I thought I should try to do something no one else was doing. And I just happened to have a suit of Stormtrooper armor and an R2 unit, so I started doing Star Wars shows. It got me a nice niche market and created a market of its own - people hired me who weren't looking for magicians, but their kids really did love Star Wars. I built up to about five shows a week. But when I moved to Seattle, I decided to scale back but figured if I was going to do fewer shows, I'd try to make at least some of them bigger shows.

So I started doing magic in theater shows around Seattle. I've always done best when I found a niche. Niches are great, if you can find one that works for you (like that Star Wars show) then suddenly you're in your own market. Before I formed this variety show I was doing corporate events and theater shows all over Seattle and kept working with really GREAT performers. I wanted my kids to see these guys, but I couldn't. I can't exactly bring my kids along to a corporate event, and all the theater shows were 21 and over since the theater served alcohol. And I thought I can't be the only parent who wants to bring their kid to a show than pay a babysitter money just to exclude my kids from something I'd have loved to share with them! And — there was my niche. There's lots of shows in town. But having that niche sets mine apart - if you're in my target market, then I have VERY little competition. I decided to make it a family variety show, one that wasn't a kid show but that welcomed kids with parents. And when I checked I saw tons of shows catered to adults, lots catered to kids - but there's very few shows directed at families, with variety performers in a setting that welcomes kids.

So that was the idea ... now I had to turn it into an actual show.

The first problem is just finding a venue! At the time I just kept calling places. I eventually found the Jewelbox Theater on 2nd, about a mile from the Pike Place Market. It's a fantastic venue, they loved the family idea, and they were willing to bring in kids. That was key - I've found a lot of theaters that I was interested in, but they wanted audiences that would buy alcohol. So that ruled them out for me.

Since then I've found several awesome resources to find venues. Space finder is the nicest:

<https://www.spacefinderseattle.org/>

You can filter by price, by amenities, by size, it's fantastic. And of course you can also just look to see where similar shows are performing and call that venue up. I also searched for "theaters" in google maps, and that just shows you all sorts of interesting things. In general, small venues of 50 to 60 seats are quite affordable. Going to a larger venue of about 150 seats gets much harder, but is doable. Going larger than 150 seats gets pricy. So we started small at the Jewelbox that can seat 60, and when we outgrew that we moved to the Phinney Center that can seat 150. (I'll get in to theater costs and other things that go into a show budget later!)

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When we started it was just me. I did all the work and couldn't have afforded a staff anyway. But it was a SMALL audience - I think the first show sold five tickets (thanks, Lance, you were 20% of my gate!) There were two problems. First, I priced tickets too high (\$10 for kids and \$15 for adults.) I figured later for a family of four, that's \$50 - and that's actually a lot. I knocked them down to \$5 and \$10 and sales went up. And secondly, no one knew me or my show. So no one came. I was doing the show on the cheap, it was a trial run, so my budget would be OK. And I didn't want an empty room. So I papered the house - which means I gave away tickets. I did this for two reasons - first, I didn't want an empty house, and secondly I wanted word of mouth to spread. And it worked. The second show sold 32 tickets, and the third show sold 60.

Next month I'll take a break from telling you about what building a show is like and tell you what it's like to bring Jeff McBride to town. I'm still in that process, though he's booked for a March 12th show, with a lecture and workshop following!

Article from Evan Shuster. He is in charge of producing the club's lectures. Below is a review on the upcoming lecture on February 27th

Kainoa Harbottle Lecture

Saturday, February 27th at 2:00 PM

Shawn O'Donnell's (lower level)

122 128th St. SE

Everett, WA

NW Ring of Fire Members: \$25

General Admission: \$30.00



This month we have a review from Evan Shuster and after that an article from Kainoa Harbottle. Enjoy!!

Kainoa Harbottle

Kainoa Harbottle was born and raised in Honolulu, HI and began performing magic after spending a good deal of his youth doing local drama. By high school, he was performing semi-professionally, including weekly tablehopping at Curtis Kam's showroom in Waikiki, as well as in restaurants and for private shows for both the business sector and the tourist industry.

After attending college in Los Angeles where he was a Junior Member at the Magic Castle, Kainoa headed east, earning a Ph.D. in English from the University of Delaware. His research is on Victorian performance magic, and the connections between the works of Professor Hoffmann and John Nevil Maskelyne, with the popular literature and periodicals of the period.

As an educator, Kainoa spent a decade teaching English literature, and Theatre History and Production, at the university level. There he developed a course where students analyzed magic from fantasy fiction and popular culture--and even the performances of guest magicians, like Larry Haas, Kostya Kimlat, Marc DeSouza, and Garrett Thomas. Recently, he has taught at Punahou School in Honolulu, HI, helping to develop a magic curriculum for grades 6-8 where performing is used to develop poise and public speaking skills.

For the magic community, Kainoa has written extensively on coin manipulation as well as how to apply practical theatrical techniques to increase the quality of the audience's experience. We are very pleased to welcome him to Seattle as he kicks off the start of another terrific season of The Can-Am Conjuring Lecture Series.

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Article from Kainoa originally published in Genii Magazine July 2015

What I Should Have Said at the Beginning

By Kainoa Harbottle

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It has taken me a number of years—a time filled with frustration, paranoia, and shame—to realize why I share magic ideas with other people in the first place. It certainly is not because I value my opinion over a lot of other magicians (many of my friends are much better magicians than I will ever be), nor is it because I like to listen to myself ramble (I'd prefer to listen to myself yodel). I share my ideas in the hopes that someone out there reads them. Having listened to friends who live and die by the magic industry, I know there is no one venue where their ideas are guaranteed to be heard by everyone. While every magic publication (including this one) wishes it was the one-stop shop for all of magic, such a location does not exist. This is why my pals complain to me about the difficulty of advertising in this business. But that's another story for another time. Despite the proliferation of magic sources (which is both a curse and a blessing to many), my hope of someone reading what I share stems from the concept that someday, when I run into that person, I would then have an interesting conversation about coin magic—a conversation even more interesting because it has already started. In other words, I write what I do so that when I see you, we can spend less time talking about generalities and just get into the particulars. I was reminded of the import of one of these pre-conversation topics while teaching magic to children this summer. Discussing any magic with kids always reminds you about the relationship between prop and hand size. I'll warn you now that if you were looking for the newest, sexiest move in coin magic, that will be in my next article, I promise. Instead, let's deal with a topic I've preached about on a number of occasions and will discuss wherever I can: choosing the coins you use. I am now imagining you, the reader, having one of three responses:

- 1) You mean I have a choice?
- 2) Trick question: you should only use one type of coin. Always.
- 3) Kainoa, I can tell you're going to oversimplify an extremely complicated issue that would require an entire book to explain.

Okay, the fourth potential reaction could have been "there's such a thing as coin magic? Wait, let me check my books because I know Marlo did some coin tricks, too!" Those of you who had the fourth response can stop reading now. Go sit in the corner and flourish—and I not using the kind denotation of that word. In an attempt to mollify the other three responses, I will simply share the choices I have made about coins in no particular order of importance. Please take it with a few grains of salt, since we all need more of that in our diets.

Size Does Matter:

My choices have always been driven by my smaller hands and my huge "windows" (or the gaps between my fingers, for those of you who don't usually palm things). While I'm proud of being part Hawai'ian, I am more Japanese than I am Polynesian. Not only does this mean I'll be beautiful for many more years than other people of my generation, it also means I have a shorter build than most. Consequently, I have smaller hands with thinner fingers. Insert your own joke here, but remember, I'll still be beautiful when you look like a wrinkly turtle. Yes, I'm forty years old. Look at the picture above, then look back at the sentence. Look at the picture again, then keep reading. Because of my hand size, I have to use half dollars to accomplish most of my manipulation goals. My real point is that you should choose the coins that are the best size for your hands. I've seen small people using dollars when their hands could barely hold them. I've seen giant people using half dollars because they thought they should. However, choosing the size that's "best" for your hands is fraught with consequences.

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I make this size decision based on what I consider my “base palm”: the palm that I tend to use the most because it also provides me with the most versatility. My base palm is a Ramsay-style finger palm. So I measure my ideal coin’s diameter as the distance between my second and third finger. This is why I tend to use the Barber half dollars I do. Now, if I use an English half-crown (which I do enjoy bringing out from time to time), it is just a *little* too big for that second and third finger distance. This means I have to compensate for my windows more often than not, which is the last thing I want to be thinking about when performing. By the way, if you’re plagued with windows the way I am, all you have to do is something that Allen Okawa taught me: cup your hands. It seems obvious, but finding just the right positioning of the fingers that closes the windows and also makes your hand look natural when displaying things takes a bit of practice. So, if I’m forced to use these Barber half dollars, it does affect the tricks I’m going to perform. While I would love to perform “Three Fly” with dollar-sized coins as the idea of visibility was part of its original construction (previous readers know how much I love that effect), I can’t use props that size. Well, I can, but then I don’t have the same freedom I would have technique-wise when I use half dollars, which is something I tend to cherish. However, some people, based on the size of their hands or their willingness to modify their techniques, might have the freedom to use whatever coins they would like depending on the given effect. It certainly makes sense that if you have the ability to make a choice based on effect rather than the size of your hands that, if you were on a platform, you might want to use dollars to do “Three Fly”; however, if you were working a close-up show and performing “Cap and Pence” you would probably use quarters. Those of you who are genetically predisposition to experience this sort of freedom will enjoy one of my later categories. Instead, let me move on to

Pragmatic Purity

Yes, I have a lot of issues. In terms of magic, they originated from hanging out with Curtis Kam. He and I have shared a concern for years (though we don’t any longer) that is best described as a pragmatic purity when it comes to our coins. It’s based on the potential of how much material can be performed with the minimum amount of props. As a teenager, I was put to the test with this idea during a seafaring gig. As the boat Curtis and I were booked to perform on pulled away from the dock, I realized that I had nothing but six coins on me. The situation was quite frightening: trapped while performing three hours of close-up magic with Curtis Kam as the “other magician” and the potential for audience barfing (hopefully only caused by the sea). I have to say it was really a fun time. But it was fun because I had an extensive repertoire with just the six coins in my pocket. Okay, I also had a jumbo coin, but that’s neither here nor there. My point is that I typically work with one set of coins because regardless of the situation (from a gaggle of children to a boatload of drunks) I know how much I can get out of those particular props. And by “get out of those particular props,” I mean I know what my sleight of hand can accomplish. If I can get a variety of effects out of the same set of coins without changing them out despite the size or shape of the venue, I give myself a pragmatic pat on the back. I’ll admit that this isn’t the strongest argument; however, it is something that, once considered, can serve you well.

Pay the Price:

I love talking to magicians who are obviously card guys and showing them my set of Barber half dollars with a shell gaff made by Todd Lassen. I love telling them how much I paid for it in the 90s. They are horrified by the price of coin sets currently on the market. Then I ask them “how much do you spend on decks of cards every year?” Then, they look ashamed and walk away. Deep down, I hope they are off looking for a better Wi-Fi connection to buy a good prop online.

I have an hour-long act with the same set of coins I have owned for almost three decades. I have additional material beyond the structured act. These coins are my longest relationship. The women in my life have always been slightly horrified. My point is this: invest in your magic in a meaningful way. If you know what coins fit your hands and style the best, and can afford it, get a good shell set because if you treat those coins nicely, they will be with you for the rest of your life. Just start with a shell and work towards your other gaff interests from there. Most of the other gaffs are not necessary unless you want to be a YouTube star. This could explain the amount of gaffs I own.

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Affect or Effect:

Are you choosing your coins because Eric Jones performs with the same type? Maybe you saw Jay Noblezada using a certain half dollar, and you *so* wanted to be him? Maybe you heard Geoff Latta preferred Peace dollars, or maybe you've always liked the shininess of David Roth's Kennedy halves?

I am often amazed that the trends in props are so predictable, but I also know I shouldn't be: people are drawn to what they are exposed to. Consumers base their decisions on the limited examples that are put before them.

Besides the people who tend to plug particular types of coinage (and they all have their own reasons), it's interesting to think about how few attempts there have been at revolutionizing coin magic by constructing new coins for the industry. Somewhere between Norm Nielson palming coins and Ellusionist Artifact coins, you would think we could have solved the fairly obvious performative problem associated with coins: modern coin magic tends to resist current pocket change (unless you're from Canada, where they have some *beautiful* coin magic with their current currency) and prefers period coins usually only recognized by numismatics. This is not to disparage those who do use today's currency for the variety of effects that such coins can achieve (yet another discussion for a later date—the variety, not the disparaging); I am merely reflecting on where the literature of the late 20th century has trended, largely based on when it was written.

Oh, and I have a Ph.D. in Victorian literature and the performance of magic in the period. What's your excuse for using old coins?

To go back to an idea that I hinted at before, I think that sizing your coins should probably be dependent on the purpose of your effect; however, the variety of coins you can choose when selecting a size has genetic influences. But the specific effect should probably be an even more significant consideration: it should have more to do with the audience than you. If I am doing walkaround in a restaurant, I have to make a choice: do I do something with larger coins that more tables can therefore see (killing multiple birds with one stone and maybe getting an invitation to perform at a nearby table), or do I perform something with smaller coins that I know will fit in a seven-year-old's hand (the effect of which creates a big response that can also lead to an invitation to perform at other tables). This is true with the amount of coins used in specific effects: let's just say that making a stack of three dollars with a cork hat appear under a cylinder follows the rule of three for all the wrong reasons. It does not assist in making a group of already flat objects easier to see, especially if you can't pick them up off the table to show them to people. Would one more dollar on that stack help? Maybe a few more? I probably shouldn't speak about this effect, as I prefer to make my coins appear in hats rather than in cylinders (and I'm a firm believer that there are three types of people in the world: Cylinder Guys, Hat Guys, and Guys who read Marlo).

I could probably go on and on about parameters for choosing coins, and I know that I'm certainly constrained by decisions I've made for a number of years. The particular circumstances I have faced have constantly changed these decisions, and I know that it's better to be flexible than to be rigid especially when it comes to my props (and not other things). I just wanted to make sure the next time I see you, we're both making the right decisions for the reasons that best suit the sort of magic we want to present to the world.