

Highlights

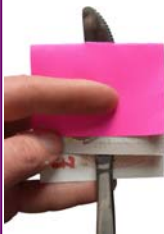
www.markleveridge.co.uk



“This month I have launched my new revised and redesigned product website! I have had the same website layout for several years and so I thought it was high time to give it a significant wash and brush up. What I hadn’t quite realised was how big the site had become and therefore what a HUGE amount of work it would be to update it! It has taken me several months to get it all done, but I’m very pleased with it. Go and have a look - I hope you like it.” Mark

Feature Trick Of The Month

Ultimate Ripped



Sometimes it’s funny how tricks develop. Some start off being done in a particular way, and after many performances, they remain exactly the same. Others seem to go through a process of evolution, and end up quite different from how they started. **Ultimate Ripped** is one of those.

I have had a number of different versions of the idea of tearing or ripping a bank note and then restoring it, but I do feel that this version has more to offer than any of the others. You borrow a bank note to perform the trick with, the money is marked with the spectator’s initials, the note is only folded once and can be viewed up very close as the knife goes into the folds. Yet instantly the knife breaks right through the note and is then ripped off to one side making an audible tearing sound!

Yet immediately the Post It note can be removed and the bank note unfolded to reveal it is totally restored. The trick can immediately be repeated so it’s great for table work. **Price: £15.00**

Here are last month’s top 5 selling products



Wild Dice - £20



Excalibur - £15



Utility Switch
Envelope - £5



Ring & String
Deluxe - £15

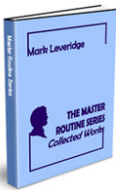


Key-Volution -
£35

The Walkabout Colour Coins Routine - £25.00



If you want to make your coin magic more visible, using my Colour Coins is the perfect way. The thin brass disks are a joy to use and come in bright colours to make them show up well under any lighting conditions. With this set you receive four of the coins, a small leather purse and a DVD which details a strong up-in-the-hands routine for strolling work and a second visual effect for use where you can work on a table. Some sleight of hand is required for the strolling routine, but there is no re-set and the three phase sequence is surprising and magical with some of the effect happening in a spectator's own hand.



The Master Routine Series - Collected Works - £25.00

I'm really proud of the 12 Master Routines as I feel they represent very well the best of 20 years of my output in

longer routines for close up and stand up. Some of my best loved effects are included in this 125 page A4 size hard backed book, including the original four phase Ring And String Routine, the Commercial Sponge Ball Routine, Spot The Difference, Wild Dice and The Ring Competition to name but a few.

As well as detailed handling instructions which are broken down into numbered sections for ease of learning, the book also includes nearly 300 great line drawings by magical artist Jay Fortune which helps to make everything clear. This is a terrific book for anyone who wants to learn some top feature routines and who is prepared to put in a little practice with them.

Perfect Crime - £45.00



You really can't beat magic performed with beautiful gleaming brass props, and **Perfect Crime** is a great example of fine workmanship being married to some neat routing. The effect is simple - two small brass boxes are shown, each having a screw on lid. The lid and base of one box is coloured shimmering green, the other silver.

A spectator drops her ring into the silver box and the lid is screwed on. Then she drops a small coin belonging to the performer into the green box.

With the two boxes set on two spectators' hands, the magician causes the ring and the coin to magically change places so that when the spectators unscrew the lids they find the coin in the silver box and the ring in the green one. Everything can be left to be examined. Great stuff!

Heart On Your Sleeve - £10.00



Here is a neat dressing for a card revelation which turns an ordinary card trick into an engaging and entertaining interlude. A spectator freely selects any of the suit of hearts and writes the number of her chosen card on a Heart badge. She is then shown the cards one at a time and asked if this is

her card, and every time she has to say 'no'. Despite her best attempts to lie convincingly when she gets to her chosen card, the magician claims she wears her heart on her sleeve and therefore cannot totally conceal her emotions, and because of this he successfully reveals her chosen card. No re-set, no gimmicks, simple to do.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 34 September 10



Since Magicseen started over 5 years ago, we have published a wide range of features on major topics of magic, and in the September 2010 issue we offer the latest in this line of informative articles with our piece on Dove Magic. If you have ever wondered what is required to use doves in your act, then the advice given by top dove workers Lance Burton, Scott Penrose, Brian Sefton and Tony Clark will go a long way to getting you off on the right foot. They cover all the basics to make sure that you start in the correct way and avoid the worst pitfalls.

One of the main characteristics of Magicseen which I think sets it apart from its competitors is our penchant for having a bit of a laugh and not to take ourselves too seriously. In one of our very first issues we ran a fun feature called Grumpy Old Magicians and in this we had a good old whinge about a whole range of magic related irritations. Well, five years on, we are at it again, as the Grumpy Old Magician returns with another collection of grumps which you will almost certainly recognise if you have reached the venerable age which qualifies you to be a GOM too!



Now here's a novelty. Everyone has heard of a ship in a bottle and if you have ever seen one in the flesh, you'll know that it is an amazing sight. Well Phil Evans has created a magical version of this idea by placing an entire deck of cards (amongst other things) inside a bottle and we chat with him about it all. We did hope that he might tell us HOW he got the deck in there, but unfortunately he was rather secretive about the whole process, so we had to make do with simply finding out why he does it rather than getting to discover the methods.

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Vol. 19 No. 1 September 2010

Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

I have mentioned before, I believe, that for several years now I have been working an 'advance pay' system for my shows. Basically this means that I require my bookers to pay me in full at least 7 days in advance of their event.

There are two advantages to this; firstly it saves me having to chase down the man with the cheque on the night of the booking and thus possibly waste time when all I want to do at the end of a long evening is to go home; secondly, a cheque has time to clear before I am due to perform which prevents anyone supplying me with a rubber cheque after I have done the show.

If 7 days before a booking I have not received my payment, I still have time to contact the booker and remind them that the money is due and they then still have time to get it to me before the date of the event.

So, it protects me from becoming a victim of the occasional fraudster who knows that once the performance has taken place, as the entertainer you have no lever at all (other than legal action) to recover unpaid monies. I have never had any booker query or complain about this arrangement and it has worked very well for me. After all, many other suppliers such as caterers, venues, marquee companies etc may well require all or a large part of their fees up front, so I see no problem with the magician asking for the same.

But of course, no system is entirely perfect, as was proved to me twice in quick succession last month. The first occasion was a

wedding which I was doing locally. I turned up and because I was a bit early I decided to sit in the car for a few minutes until it got a bit nearer my start time. To idle away the minutes, I got out the reference card that I always fill out with all the details for each show and suddenly noticed that next to the fee there was not the word 'PAID'.

This was a big surprise because I always write that on the card as soon as the money is received. I can't account for why I hadn't noticed, as usually I check a week in advance of bookings in case I need to chase the money, but for some reason on this occasion I had failed to do so.

No real surprise then when I went into the venue and the bride told me that she had cancelled me by email a couple of weeks previously (no, she hadn't, of course, but I couldn't prove otherwise). If I'd remembered to call 7 days ahead as normal I would have saved myself the embarrassment of turning up!

The second occasion was a Summer Night event which was taking place at a local golf club. I'd done two similar events for them in the past so didn't envisage any problems. As soon as I pulled into the car park and saw about 3 cars there I knew things weren't right.

Turns out they'd cancelled the event two weeks previously and had forgotten to tell me. Thanks! The only good thing was that because I take payment in advance I got the full fee AND a night off!

Highlights

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"I've just got back from a holiday with my wife in the south of France and I feel very refreshed after a bit of R&R and ready to move on again. Being self employed it is sometimes hard to stop - the fact is there's no one to take up the reigns while you are away - but even though it always seems a bit manic just before setting off, and even though it takes a few days to get totally back on top after returning, it really is worth it as it helps to keep the energy levels up." Mark

Feature Trick Of The Month

The Mini Leveridge Envelope

When I was about 16 years of age I can remember sitting in my bedroom at my desk with a pile of envelopes, a pair of scissors and some glue, trying to put together a special envelope which would produce, vanish or switch whatever would fit inside it. It took several attempts before I got it right, but when I did I felt really excited as I was sure I had devised something which would be both fooling and incredibly useful.



Little did I imagine that nearly 40 years later I would still be using that envelope idea and that it would have been an integral part of so many tricks. The latest version of the Leveridge Envelope is this small playing card sized one which is perfect for use with either Bicycle cards or business cards. Easy to use, it remains amazingly deceptive as it can be seen to be empty one moment and a split second later it can be completely full!

You receive a pack of three of these special envelopes made in heavy black paper with handling instructions and brief suggestions for use. **Price: £10.00**

Here are last month's top 5 selling products



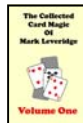
Wild Dice - £20



2010 CD
Illustrated
Catalogue - **FREE**



Forever
Flapping Plus -
£15



Coll. Card
Magic of ML -
£15



1-2-3 Jumbo
Cards Across -
£20



Credit Score - £5.00

One of the best ways to get spectators truly involved in your performance is to borrow something from one of them. In this routine you borrow a spectator's credit card, which guarantees at least one person will stay to the end of the trick! The card is slipped into an envelope which is sealed and the flap initialled. Using his powers of being 'scary' (!) the spectator manages to frighten his card so that it vanishes from his envelope, leaving a plastic card behind which simply tells him to 'Never Trust A Magician', and his actual card appears in an empty envelope previously placed in the performer's wallet.



The Present - £20.00

I've had so much fun and success with this routine over the years that

I can't recommend it highly enough for anyone who entertains at children's birthday parties.

The basic idea is that you give the birthday child the chance to make a small present appear for themselves by magic, but first the child has to choose what present to conjure up.

The supplied set of colour printed and laminated cards show a number of possibilities but only one of them is actually a present. Magically the child eliminates the pictures in a random manner until only one remains, and luckily that one turns out to be the picture of the present itself! There's loads of business and audience participation in this and it's easy to do.

The Ultimate Lightning Ring Box - £18.00



If you perform a ring and string routine, it may well be that the trick simply stops rather than coming to a surprising ending. Well that need not be the case if you invest in this wonderful little prop.

It consists of a circular cardboard ring box which has a layer of cotton wool completely covering the base inside. It has a push on lid and the box can be openly displayed from all angles and it will look totally normal.

However, it has been ingeniously gimmicked so that at any moment you can instantly load a borrowed ring or a signed coin onto the inside of the sealed box. This is despite the fact that the box itself can be left out in full view at all times and does not need to be put away in order to have the object loaded inside. This will provide a startling and strong finish to your routine.



1-2-3 Jumbo Cards Across - £20.00

This is a terrific version of the classic Cards Across effect done with 6 Jumbo cards and two window envelopes. The envelopes are examined and three cards are genuinely placed into each. One at a time cards magically transfer from one envelope to the other until all six are together in one envelope and the other one is empty. No sleights or special counts with the cards are required, and the effect comes with some fun presentation which makes it suitable for use with either a children's audience or for adults. This is a classic example of 'packs flat, plays big' magic that you can always carry with you in the bottom of your case or magic box.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 34 September 10



In the previous issue of Magicseen we did an article highlighting the (at the time) upcoming internet magic convention called The Essential Magic Conference. Being as this was the first time such an idea had been tried in the magic world, there was a huge amount of interest to see just how such a 3 day video conferencing event would pan out, and so in this issue we tell you what happened and what we felt about it all. The project was organised by Luis de Matos, David Britland and Marco Tempest and on the whole it was a resounding success - read more in this issue.

Every now and again we like to run a competition in Magicseen and usually this entails a question or two about someone being featured in the current issue. However, in issue 34 we really went mad by offering a Mega Quiz in which we posed one question about each of our first 30 issues! There are three prizes to be won - a 2 year sub/sub extension, a 1 year sub/sub extension, and a copy of the new David Copperfield book 'A Magic Life'. The prizes will be allocated depending on who gets the most answers correct, and a draw will be made in the event of a tie.



If you go to the Blackpool Convention you will know that there are well over 100 dealers attending, and those are just the ones who have been allocated a space and does not include the 30 or so they apparently have on a waiting list. So, there are lots of dealers out there these days for you to get to know, and to help you learn about some of them we run an occasional section in the magazine called The Dealer's Booth. In this issue we chat to Dave Forrest about his Full52.com and get plenty of information about him in order to get you up to speed with what he can offer you.

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Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

Until relatively recently, the only way to get information about a magic product you wanted to purchase was either by attending a convention and seeing it demmed, or by reading an advert in a magazine.

When considering a mail order purchase, reading an advert written by the dealer can be problematical. Some tricks are difficult to describe succinctly in the space afforded by the advert size, and so even if the seller wants to describe in a fair manner the way the trick looks, it may well be that the reader is misled into believing that the effect will do something that in fact it won't.

This means that the customer, perhaps adding 2 and 2 and coming up with 5, thinks he is purchasing the miracle to end all miracles, and therefore when he receives his order, and comes to realise the true extent of his 'miracle' purchase, he may well feel disappointed, or even a little cheated.

The art of writing a good advert is a skill in itself, I think. You need to tell the reader what he can expect from the effect but at the same time, without revealing exactly how the trick is done, you should look to be fair with the description so that obvious misunderstandings are avoided. After all, a description that is creative with the truth may sell to a purchaser on the first occasion, but if he thinks you've deliberately misled him, you are unlikely to be trusted again.

In more recent times the web has taken over hugely from other forms of advertising, but the same principles of being fair to the customer still should apply to the descriptions

of effects posted on the site. However, with the inclusion now of video, surely now all ambiguity over what a trick will and will not do must surely disappear, mustn't it? Because, now the would-be purchaser can watch the dem again and again, until he is satisfied that he understands what he is getting. Misunderstandings are now a thing of the past as the video can't lie—or can it?

I have always made a point of making my online dems simply a visual record of the performance of the product in question. You basically see me performing the trick, sometimes with an audience, sometimes just with one or two helpers, or occasionally simply to camera. I think I can't be fairer to the customer than that.

However, I've noticed that a lot of the online dems being posted by some other trick producers are not playing fair with the viewer. Rather than see some plain performance footage, you get presented with a high production video with lots of short segments, distracting graphics, and a mish mash of audience reaction shots. It makes for an exciting video, but does it actually show you what the trick does? Often it doesn't. In fact on occasions, you are left wondering exactly what the trick was!

I think that some tricks are actually either not that good or the method is one that a well informed viewer might well rumble quite quickly, and so in order to encourage the sale, the video is made to entertain and excite but not to inform. Personally, I don't think that's fair, as it's no better than writing a misleading text advert.

Highlights

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“In the last few months I have attended a couple of seminars on Social Media in which the value to a business of being connected via Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn has been extolled. Note I say the value to a **business**, and not just as a way to stay in contact with others. Well, despite it all, I still find it hard to accept the true correlation between time spent on Social Media and the benefit extracted. It seems a mighty long way round to spread business info, quite frankly!” Mark

Feature Trick Of The Month

Hide And Seek



I don't include a huge number of card routines on a regular basis in my commercial work, so if I am looking for one to include in my repertoire, it needs to be practical, entertaining, magical, need no reset and ideally be a routine which can be worked under almost any conditions.

Hide And Seek is exactly that type of trick. It uses a regular deck in a routine that can be best described as a sort of Ambitious Card in reverse! By this I mean that instead of a chosen card constantly jumping to the top, a selection placed on the top keeps hiding itself away in the deck's centre! And the ending is a real surprise when the chosen card's back colour changes from blue to red.

A small amount of basic card handling is required, all of which is thoroughly explained in the written instructions which come along with one extra Bicycle card that you will need. Use your own blue backed Bicycle deck. The trick has no get ready or reset and has been a big success in my own shows. **Price: £8.00**

Here are last month's top 5 selling products



Excalibur - **£15**



Collected Card
Magic of ML Vol.1
- **£15**



Mini Leverage
Envelope - **£10**



Promo Card
Sticker Packs -
£6



Ring And
String Deluxe -
£15



The Magic Party Floor Spots - £30.00

This set of 6 hard wearing, colourful rubber circular mats are an ideal tool for all children's entertainers. They can be used in a games part of your show (there are three games using them described in the accompanying instructions), but they can also be invaluable in a magic show. For instance, if you have youngsters up to help you, how often do you find yourself having to re-position where they are standing as they tend to wander around while you are performing? Well, place these on the floor calling them 'magic spots' and the little ones will remain standing on them in order 'to make the magic work'!



Key-Volution £35.00

When you first come up with a trick, you have no real way of knowing whether it will be a long term success, a short term blockbuster, or a dismal failure!

Key-Volution was first marketed in 1983 and it has consistently been one of my best selling products ever since! The idea of a blank key cutting it's own edge was unique when I first came up with it, and the nicely made gimmick and straightforward handling, not to mention the great reaction it gets from lay people, has made it one of the best ideas I have ever had.

Of course, the idea has been copied around the world since then, which is a real pain, but I am proud of the idea, and happy to still be able to offer you the original, and in my opinion, still the best version.

Spot The Difference £15.00



This is one of the few Master Routines which is still available separately and complete with all the props.

Master Routine No.5 is a highly entertaining stand up effect in which you borrow some money from a spectator and then engage three other audience members in a 'Find The Lady' style contest in which each of them gets a chance to win the borrowed bank note.

What makes this different from other similar routines is that the supplied presentation actually makes sense and engages the audience directly, plus it incorporates one bit of business that always makes the whole audience laugh! The routine also has a great surprise finish.

*The
Strolling
Magician*



Mark Leveridge

The Strolling Magician - £25.00

There are many opportunities these days for close up performers to work for money, but making a good job of it can often prove more difficult than some might expect. Being able to present close up magic in almost any venue and sometimes under very trying conditions requires the magician to really know what he is doing, and this 120 page A4 size book contains detailed advice to ensure that you go into the job with your eyes open and with yourself well prepared. The advice is supplemented with 18 routines suitable for this type of work too.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 35 November 10



In Magicseen we like to produce 'how to' style articles about all different aspects of magic in order to give our readers, both novice and experienced, ideas and advice that they can use. And to help us do this, we enlist the wisdom of experts in the appropriate field. In Issue 35 we have published the first of a two part article on how to perform in restaurants. Restaurant magic needs a special approach and Matthew Dowden, Jayne Corrigan, Harry Robson, David Willmott, Iain Moran and Shaun McCree tell you how they cope in this most demanding of performance situations.

Jon Allen is a very successful magician. As winner of many magic competitions, including the IBM in both the UK and the US as well as the Magic Circle's competition, Jon has a keen eye for what works and what is effective. And he's not afraid to give you his opinion! This makes our interview with him very entertaining and illuminating. Jon is not just a magician's magician either, as he has a huge amount of commercial experience too and he has performed for clients all over the world. It's great when we can get the benefit of talking to a real pro performer.



Because we are a bi-monthly magazine, we don't tend to feature a lot of event reports because due to publishing deadlines, it can be difficult to time it so that a report is still relevant and reasonably up to date. However, sometimes it does work, and in this issue we offer a couple of event reports. One is of a lecture by Michael Ammar which formed part of his UK lecture tour. Reporter Paul Preager saw Michael's presentation at the Bristol Society of Magic early on in the tour and he gives us the benefit of his reflections on a lecture that was a little different from the norm.

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Vol. 19 No. 3 November 2010

Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

I have mentioned before about the way that these days we have become increasingly a do-it-yourself society where as customers we are expected to fill our own car with petrol, select our own groceries, print our own boarding pass for flights and even swipe the barcodes in self-service checkouts etc. At one time *service* was something provided by the seller, not just the supplies.

Part of this trend also extends to our concept of the value of an expert. 'Make your own will', 'buy this software and design your own brochure/website', 'plan and book your own holiday online' - these and other countless examples show how expertise in a given field is being undermined by the 'customer can do it all' attitude.

And the same applies to magic too. I can remember a moment, must have been over ten years ago, when Haven Holidays decided that rather than book proper magicians to come in and entertain the children, they would expect members of the regular children's staff to learn a few tricks and make do instead. OK, some of them may well have learned how to do it properly and ended up doing a reasonable job, but I very much doubt that they would have as much natural instinct or knowledge as the experienced kid show worker.

Even within magic itself we are at times guilty of the same attitude. There are children's entertainers who suddenly think they can work close up commercially when the opportunity for a lucrative booking comes in, there are people who lose their regular job and think they can instantly become a

kids party magician by spending a load of money with Practical Magic. But really, does this work? Personally I don't think it always does.

Expertise is not something which anyone can come by easily. By definition it takes time, knowledge and usually experience born from being there and doing it. You won't learn it on YouTube, nor can you instantly buy it from a magic store on the internet, you have to put in the time and the dedication and the practice.

Interestingly, when you listen or learn from an expert, they often say things which, on reflection, maybe you already knew or which are essentially simple common sense. But it takes the skill of someone who really understands their subject to refine their knowledge and then define which elements are important, to identify which to use and which will work.

When I watch a magic lecture I really like those presenters who clearly know what they are talking about. It's not just whether they can perform and then explain a load of tricks, it's whether they have an understanding of why a particular method works and where it can be best employed. People who are genuine experts come to know what is good, and what is best to be avoided.

Older people are often dismissed as being out of touch, but true experts such as Pat Page and Ali Bongo have left a huge hole with their demise, because their knowledge and expertise cannot be easily replaced.

Highlights

www.markleveridge.co.uk



“This month I am announcing the impending launch (on January 1st) of a brand new service for Mark Leveridge Magic customers. For years I have offered membership to my E-Club which entitles members to a free email newsletter with access to a fun and informative monthly E-Video newsletter. Well, in January I will be offering a hugely expanded and augmented version of this called E-Club Pro with fantastic member benefits. Check out my website now for details.” Mark

Feature Trick Of The Month

The Horizontal Card Rise



Years ago I had a neat idea for a card rise method. It was unlike anything I'd come across before and I was pretty excited about it. However, although it worked OK, it had some significant angle problems and so it never saw the light of day as a marketed product.

Some time later I came back to the idea and realised that the method could be made angle proof by some crafty handling, and so The Horizontal Card Rise was born.

Two cards are chosen and shuffled back into the deck. The magician finds the first card with a single cut of the deck, and then causes the second selection to mysteriously push itself out of the deck's centre! No forces required, the deck can be freely spread, fanned and shuffled. There are no threads, magnets or bulky card gimmicks. The trick needs no re-set and so is fine for walkabout or table hopping work. **Price: £20.00**

Here are last month's top 5 selling products



Key-Volution -
£35



2010 CD Illus-
trated Catalogue -
FREE



Impossible! -
£10



Promo Card
Sticker Packs -
£6



The Shiner - £7

Vacation Destination - £15.00



This is a fun close up mental item which has as its theme, holiday travel. 5 envelopes each bear the name of a different airline, and inside each envelope there is a card bearing one of five different holiday destinations. A spectator genuinely freely selects any envelope. No one could know which destination is inside. Now, using the other airline names, destinations are eliminated in a totally fair and random manner until only one remains. And when the card is removed from the originally selected envelope, the destination matches! Subtle method, straightforward handling and no re-set required.



The Silk Release Wand £65.00

Based on the classic Uncanny Hanks of George Blake, this version uses an impressive looking square section wand around which four 18" silks are seen to be tied. At any time and in any order required, the magician can make the silks fall from the wand.

This comes with a fabulous routine for children's shows called The World's Easiest Magic Trick, and makes an excellent, funny feature effect for any kids show. Comes with the wand, silks and full instructions.



Risky Business £15.00

Featuring my ubiquitous Leveridge Envelope, on this occasion made in letter envelope size, this Just Chance routine is slick and ends on a surprise.

Three blue envelopes are shown, two being empty, one having a £20 inside. The envelopes are mixed and a spectator is invited to try and spot the envelope containing the money. The first time he is allowed the pick one out of the three, the second time two out of the three, and yet the money is always found in one of the other envelopes.

Placing one empty envelope aside the spectator now gets a 50/50 chance to get the money—but it turns out both the envelopes are empty, and the money has jumped into the envelope placed to one side. Comes with three Leveridge Envelopes and the routine.



Obliteration - £25.00

Magic with borrowed coins is always good and this effect creates an amazing piece of magic using a £2 lent by a spectator. By getting a second spectator to tap the borrowed coin with a miniature magic wand, the performer reveals that first the head side and then the tail side of the coin have disappeared! This in itself is quite a talking point and the lay people love to examine the coin in its 'blank' state. Fortunately for the spectator whose coin it is, the magician is able to magically make the head and tail reappear before handing it back. Comes with two special coins, a wooden wand and instructions.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 35 November 10



Apart from wishing to entertain our readers, we see the role of Magicseen also as being a source of information, instruction and advice and so we like to have articles which help towards that end. In Issue 35 we have the first of two extracts from a new book by mentalist Paul Stockman in which he gives a lot of practical advice about how to present a successful stage or mentalism show. Paul has a lot of experience in this field, and is generous with the tips and points that he makes. I'm sure our readers will enjoy this quick look into Paul's professional world.

Every year the Edinburgh Fringe attracts a number of magic acts and this year was no exception. There were some familiar faces and one or two newcomers, and all did their best to succeed at what is arguably one of the UK's most prestigious performance events. We managed to collect together reports from various journals and websites on all of the main magic players, including the acts of Barry and Stuart, Paul Zenon, Ali Cook and Morgan and West amongst others. So if you didn't make it, you'll be able to read all about what you missed!



In Holland they have a very popular show called The Next Uri Geller in which contestants do battle in a sort of X-Factor way to win. Andrew Melia was victorious recently and we chatted to him about what happened and how it all went. In fact, strangely, he sort of entered twice! The first time he came on as himself but was voted off. Then later, he returned as a different 'character' and managed to get through to the final and win! The ultimate example of having your cake and eating it, I suppose. Anyway it makes for an interesting story.

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Vol. 19 No. 4 December 2010

Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

Collaboration with a fellow trusted magician can be a wonderful way to get inspired and to take your magic to another level. When you are working on an act or maybe even on just a single trick, it is all too easy to take it as far as your own imagination or knowledge will allow and to then think that that is as far as it can go.

However, show that trick or act to a knowledgeable magical friend, and he may immediately see alternatives and improvements that would probably never have occurred to you even if you thought about it for ever!

The fact is, we all assimilate magical knowledge in different ways and to different degrees. What I read or see will almost certainly be measurably different to what my fellow magicians are being exposed to, and so every single one of us who is immersed in magic will bring to the table a range of different possibilities.

You can tell the importance of collaboration by the fact that all top line acts employ or have access to experts who are encouraged to provide their input. David Copperfield could not have survived as long as he has without his team around him to provide stimulus and ideas for new illusions. Paul Daniels relied heavily on his team of people such as Ali Bongo, Graham Reed and Patrick Page to come up with good variations on effects for his long running TV show.

But it's not just top line acts who can benefit from having a team around them. We all can. For years I have personally relied on the input of a small circle of friends whose

opinions I trust and value and whose knowledge and expertise I have been grateful to receive. Many of my marketed lines have been tweaked and improved following sessions with these guys. And in turn, I have been able to help them too.

One of my close circle of friends was due to perform a short act at an event and wanted to include a new stage routine. He showed what he intended to do to me and we discussed it, analysed it, cut out irrelevant bits, changed the emphasis of the presentation, improved and simplified both the handling and the method, and after half an hour he had a far more practical and entertaining effect than he had started out with. On his own, he would never have gone down that road, it's just because we were able to talk about the trick together - two minds really can be better than one!

Some magic clubs will occasionally put on a night where members are invited to bring along an effect they are working on and members watch it and then offer their advice. While this seems like a good idea in principle, I'm not sure it works particularly well. The problem is that from a large group of people you will probably get too many differing opinions, some from people who may not be really qualified to advise. Collaboration can only be effective if the people doing the advising have the right skills and expertise to come up with sensible and desirable alternatives. That is why I think we all need to find a small circle of trusted confidants whose ideas and opinions we genuinely trust and respect, and then some real progress will be made.

Highlights

www.markleveridge.co.uk



“Happy New Year! If you worked a load of shows during December, I trust they went well and that you are now recovering. I suspect that shows are perhaps not as plentiful as in years gone by, but in a recession I suppose we need to be grateful for any that we still get. The magician is an easy element to strike off any list of essentials for a function, as I guess we are usually the icing on the cake rather than the cake itself, so I hope you got enough work to keep you happy.” Mark

Feature Trick Of The Month

Ring And String Deluxe



If I was a castaway on a desert island and I had to take just one trick with me (somewhat illogical since presumably there would be no one on the island to show it to!) I would take a length of cord and a ring so that I could perform a Ring And String Routine.

I have always enjoyed ring and string moves and my latest DVD, Ring And String Deluxe, contains the performance and explanation of 6 great moves, 4 to make a borrowed ring penetrate off a cord, and 2 to make it penetrate on.

Of course, you probably wouldn't perform all six moves to the same audience, but having the knowledge of several alternatives puts you in the strong position of being able to choose which move(s) would be best for a given audience or performing situation. The current package provides not only a DVD but also enough thin rope to make 5 suitable lengths of cord plus a colour illustrated booklet. **Price: £15.00**

Here are last month's top 5 selling products



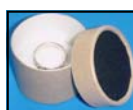
2010 CD Illustrated Catalogue - **free**



ESP Match Up - **£10**



The Magic Party Sticker Pack - **£30**



Ultimate Lighting Ring Box - **£18**



Impossible - **£10**

The Invisible Deck Routine - £28.00



For many years this has been one of my favourite opening effects for when I do a stand up show. It combines loads of humour with a real kicker finish. A spectator genuinely freely names any card and moments after he has examined and initialled an empty envelope, a card matching his selection is slid from that very same envelope. No palming, no difficult sleights, this is a terrific way to present the Invisible Deck as there is never any deck actually used! This can be performed up close but is not a table hopping trick as there is a small reset and although the props can be carried in your jacket, you probably wouldn't want to.



Birthday Card Surprise £25.00

It's always great to be able to incorporate a give-away in one of your children's routines, as it not only leaves the birthday child with something that they will want to keep, but it acts as a publicity tool for you at the same time.

Using a Jumbo version of my Leveridge Envelope, you magically produce a birthday card. The instructions contain 10 different routines and the pack comes with 40 of the nicely printed give-away cards.



Wild Dice 20.00

As an inventor of magic routines, you know that sometimes you will come up with something

which turns out to be a huge success, and Wild Dice is one of those tricks.

Combining a variation of two classic effects, the walnut shell and pea plus the cups and balls, Wild Dice creates a terrific feature close up effect in which a white die, placed under an inverted matchbox drawer, is never where it should be when mixed with two other drawers.

Then the die penetrates through the back of one of the drawers, before jumping from the pocket to under a drawer. But all this is just a prelude to the amazing finish, when SIX extra dice are produced in quick succession from under the drawers leaving your audience truly stunned!



The Lecture Collection Download - £15.00

This download contains three pdf lecture books featuring a total of 46 effects described and illustrated over a total of 130 pages. The three books are: *The Mark Leveridge Lecture Experience*, *Solutions* and *The Serial Thriller Lecture Book*. These early lecture books are full of great material which is often performed with everyday objects. Although mainly close up, there are some items suitable for stand up work and even the odd effect which can be used in children's shows. All in all this download is terrific value for money.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 36 January 11



Every issue of Magicseen has a selection of the letters (actually almost all of them are emails, of course) which we've received and they cover all manner of topics, not just comments on things that have appeared in the previous issue. If appropriate, we like to add a comment or two ourselves, so we get readers who ask us general questions and we try to provide a relevant answer. Although I am Editor, it is in fact the Deputy Editor Graham Hey who compiles and answers the correspondence, and a good job he does too!

Andi Gladwin is doing very well for himself. He's the co-organiser of the annual close up convention called The Session which takes place in Gloucester each January, he runs the dealership Invisible Inc with Joshua Jay, he performs and he invents products too. Fortunately we managed to catch him in a spare few moments to get more information about this young success story and issue 36 features him both on the cover and inside. At Magicseen we take a lot of pleasure in showcasing British talent, and Andi is another example.



Show reviews are something which we like to include from time to time, although with a bi-monthly publishing schedule, the review needs to fall just right so that it is timely enough to be relevant. Chris Dugdale has recently finished a run of his show at the Riverside in London. Chris combines close up magic (filmed by an overhead camera) with more stage type magic and Mike McClean went to see the show and it is he who writes the report for Magicseen. Live magic shows are an important avenue for performers and we are happy to promote their efforts.

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Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

When people book a magician for their party or event, presumably they do so because they think that it will add something exciting to their function which will make it memorable and entertaining for their guests. They talk to the magician about what he will do and so they can envisage the impact that it will probably have. And satisfied that this sounds good, they commit to the booking and part with perhaps a relatively large sum of money in order to have that magician come along and strut his stuff.

So why is it then, that after making all this effort to set up the entertainment, some people then seem to let things conspire to utterly ruin what they had planned and paid for.

For instance, it is a fairly regular complaint of children's entertainers, that when they are working at a party to which the parents are invited to stay as well, those parents will more often than not stand around at the back of the room talking loudly and creating so much noise and distraction that the poor entertainer is left not only having to battle to be heard above their noise, but also having to struggle to keep the attention of the kids amidst all the chaos.

Now experienced performers may well be able to cope with this situation, mainly because they have probably come across it so many times before, but they really shouldn't have to. The booker has paid good money to provide entertainment for the children, but those parents show little or no regard for this fact and thus often almost ruin the show.

You get a similar situation occur when working close up. Anyone who has worked tables in family restaurants or at family parties, will know that small children can contrive to ruin the concentration and therefore ultimately the enjoyment of adults when you are performing for them. Parents seem incapable of requiring their children to behave or simply be quiet for a few minutes, and therefore are constantly distracted as the young ones talk loudly while you are trying to work, thereby making it almost impossible for you to give the booker true value for money.

Yes, I know you can involve the children in the table side show, and I do, but the danger is that the adults then start to think the entertainment by the magician is just for the kids and not for them, which most of the time is the opposite of what it should be.

Weddings these days seem replete with children running around and making noise at inopportune moments, and it makes your job as the magician that much harder.

I must confess to getting frustrated sometimes when I feel I have been prevented from really having the full impact because the booker has not organised their event properly. As a pro you learn to adapt and adjust to fit the conditions you meet each time, but wouldn't it be nice if more bookers used a bit of common sense and realised that if they want to get value for money from their magician, they might just want to have a little think about the conditions they are giving him to work in.

Highlights

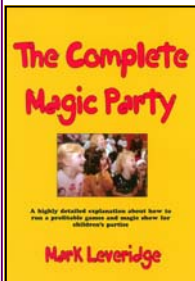
www.markleveridge.co.uk



“It’s my favourite month of the year because at last I can tell you about all the New Releases that I have been preparing over the last few weeks and months ready for the 1st February launch. It’s amazing how much extra work is required to update everything at this time of year because I also need to re-do my Catalogue and price list plus make a whole range of changes, additions and updates to the website, all of which takes a lot of time. But I wouldn’t want to swap it!” Mark

Feature Product Of The Month

The Complete Magic Party



I remember being told once that as a rule, children’s entertainers don’t buy magic just for fun or for casual interest, but because they are hoping to use it in their commercial kids shows. If this is true, then **The Complete Magic Party Book** should be on the bookshelf of just about all children’s entertainers because its 189 A4 size pages are crammed with commercial advice and routines designed to make the reader money!

Getting paid work as a children’s entertainer is not easy at the best of times, and at the moment it is particularly difficult, so you need to be able to offer something that your competitors don’t.

Adding games and activities to your show is a great way to make yourself into someone who can run an entire party for a booker, thus making their life easier.

This book contains 10 warm ups, 40 games and 20 magic routines as well as detailed advice on how to create a Magic Party - it’s a solid investment. **Price: £50.00**

Here are last month’s top 5 selling products



Promo Card
Sticker Packs -
£6.00



Choin - **£25**



The Master
Routine Series
DVD - **£18**



Birthday Card
Surprise Spare
Packs - **£20**



Master Routine
Series Collected
Works - **£25**



The Vanisher - £10.00 (New Release 2011)

I first came up with and started to use this simple idea more than 25 years ago, and over the years I have used it in a number of different routines to great effect. The Vanisher is a simple to install and straightforward to use secret gimmick which enables you to vanish any small object leaving your hands genuinely empty. It doesn't use magnets, pulls or topits. You do need to wear a jacket to use it, but there is no sleeving involved. As well as vanishing an object the gimmick can also be used to secretly hold a prop which you will need part way through a routine thus saving you having to palm it. Comes as a pack of 2 gimmicks.



The Coin Collector's Purse £15.00 (New Release 2011)

I have been using this routine a lot recently in my own paid close up work and I have been delighted with the way it has been received. Play it right and your spectators will be stunned!

A coin marked with a spectator's initials is placed on his hand, a small empty leather coin pouch is placed on his other hand.

Taking the coin from him you vanish it showing both of your hands empty and the spectator himself lifts the purse off his hand and opens it to find his signed coin inside.

No re-set, this is great for mix and mingle work or tables. You receive the leather coin pouch, a Vanisher gimmick (see above) and colour photo illustrated instructions.



Timed Piece £15.00 (New Release 2011)

I have always loved magic with a borrowed finger ring, and here I offer you another effect which comes from my own repertoire using this attention grabbing object.

A man's finger ring is borrowed and placed under a handkerchief where it is held by another spectator. With empty hands the performer removes his watch, securing the strap again, and holds the watch face towards another onlooker so that he can time how long the trick takes.

Suddenly the handkerchief is pulled from the spectator's grasp and the ring instantly vanishes. Immediately it is found linked on the performer's watchstrap much to the surprise of the audience! This is another great impact piece of magic for lay people.



The Collected Card Magic of Mark Leveridge Vol. 2 - £15.00 (New Release 2011)

Last year I released the first of my projected four volume set of card routine books, and now here is the second instalment. Vol. 2 has 10 effects described and illustrated in an 80 page A5 size perfect bound book, and as with the first volume, all the contents are full effects rather than minor handling changes or descriptions of technique. Nothing hugely difficult is included here, just practical card magic you will enjoy using.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 36 January 11



James Clark is a man who really knows what he thinks about things and who is not afraid to tell everyone! So if you want some forthright views, this article will give you them. But James is also a man who feels driven to try and genuinely make a difference in the world, and so this article also shows the other side of him as he tells us about his humanitarian work in major disaster areas around the world where he gives of his time and expertise. Reading what James has seen and the conditions he has worked under really puts the problems of the rest of us into perspective.

A few years ago we ran an article about buying magic on the internet, and at that time we did 'secret shopper' type reviews of 20 sites which were selling magic online at that time. Over 4 years on, we decided it would be a good moment to take another snapshot look at the state of online magic trading, and so our reviewers wrote up their views on another 12 different sites. The results are most interesting, with some new kids on the block being compared with well established traders. Maybe your favourite dealer was among those we looked at? Find out in issue 36!



Ian Adair is one of those magicians who seems to have been around the magic world for ever! His 30+ year association with Edwin Hooper's Supreme Magic Co is well documented of course, not least by Ian himself you recently published a book in which he told the story of that up and down business relationship, but Ian is also a highly prolific inventor of magic. He likes to set himself a target of coming up with an idea a day - some pressure, eh? Our article on him gives you a bit more background and information about this one-off character.

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Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

I'm sure you've noticed that we happen to be in a bit of a recession at the moment, and it is something which affects most of us in one way or another.

For the pro entertainer and dealer such as myself, it is shown by the fact that it is more difficult to get bookings and that magicians clearly have a bit less money to spend. Magic is, after all, a bit of a luxury, it's an extra, not in any way vital to life, except for those of us who make our living at it!

But I do get pretty fed up with the constant barrage of bad news that the media seems hell bent on bombarding us with. It is as if they delight in reminding us at every opportunity just how awful everything either is or is about to be, and while there may be no escaping the facts, such a negative attitude is not going to help anyone to work their way out of the current situation.

So, I decided that I was not going to keep on worrying about how bad things are or might get, but instead try to keep a positive mental attitude and to put less energy into worrying and more energy into doing things which might help me to survive and thrive.

For instance, when money is tight, it is easy to cut back on advertising. It seems like an expenditure which one can easily do without. But this is wrong. No matter what the state of the economy, there are always people who still do very well and who have money to spend and are looking for things to spend it on. These people need to know that you exist and what you have to offer otherwise they aren't going to spend their

cash with you.

So, rather than cut back on my advertising for close up shows this year, I have actually increased it. I simply have made sure that the places where I am publicising myself are seen by the right sort of people i.e. those who have money to spend.

In order to afford this I have cut back on publicity that does not work, and for me that has been Yellow Pages. I track where all my shows come from and I know that Yellow Pages no longer produces any work for me. So, although it seemed quite a wrench after an unbroken run of about 30 years, I withdrew myself both from Yellow Pages itself and also Yell.com. There is no point in continuing with something if it isn't working just because you've always done it in the past. Things move on and you need to keep an eye on that.

Then I decided that since a good deal of my show enquiries come via my website, that Google Ads would be something to get involved with in order to try and maximise the traffic to the site. So this year I am running a campaign to see whether this will produce some extra work too.

Things like this you will only really do if you have a positive attitude. Instead of moaning about how bad this year might be, why not try to think instead about how you could make it the best year you've had for a while! Being pro-active and thinking about your situation will surely help, and you'll feel better if you are doing something positive rather than dwelling on the negative.

Highlights

www.markleveridge.co.uk



“Did you make any New Year Resolutions this year? If so, have any of them been done or are they even still on track? It’s funny how we love to make these promises to ourselves about the year ahead and then how soon these ideas can be lost in the day-to-day running of our lives. One of the biggest challenges we face is in following through on our intentions, so my NYR was to make sure that I did what I said I was going to do. And my NYR was not do any of my NYRs! Job done.” Mark

Feature Product Of The Month

Fly-Ring



There are so many versions of the classic Flying Ring trick around that it must be hard for anyone looking to purchase one to decide which one to go for. Most versions use some form of pull or reel, but the trouble is with these, there is always the chance that the reel will jam or break in use. Or that when you release the ring and it flies up your sleeve, that the ring will come off the clasp and get lost (it’s happened to many people!).

Well, these are just some of the problems that you DON’T get with **Fly-Ring** because there is no reel of any sort used. And there is no get-ready or re-set like there is with the above mentioned variations. Oh and with my version, you can easily use it as a finish to a ring and string sequence which makes for a really strong ending. Plus, the key case can be openly shown all round as there is nothing to hide and there are no extra gimmicks required like thumb tips or magnets, so to re-set the trick you simply put the key case away and you’re ready to go. I’ve used this **Fly-Ring** for decades, you will too. **Price: £30.00**



The Vanisher -
£10.00



The Coin
Collector's Purse -
£15



Timed Piece -
£15



Coll. Card
Magic of ML
Vol.2 - £15



2011 CD
Illustrated
Catalogue - free



Assembly Point - £15.00 (New Release 2011)

This is a neat and surprising coin matrix effect. Four coins are tipped from a purse which is left on the table. The coins are placed in time honoured fashion in the four corners of the close up mat where they are covered by four Aces. Instantly the coins vanish one at a time from under the cards until there are four cards but no coins at all. So where are the coins? They are found to have collected together back in the purse. You receive a DVD which takes you through the handling, and you are supplied with a suitable leather purse. Use any coins as there are no gimmicks involved. Nice magic!



Impossible! £10.00

I think this is a terrific card effect which is perfect for those occasions when you are entertaining bright individuals who seem to spend their whole time trying to work out how you are doing your magic!

A spectator selects any card from a blue backed deck which is then boxed and given to him to hold. The performer selects a card from a red backed deck which is then similarly cased and kept in view.

Without any obvious handling, the two selected cards change places. The blue deck has the performer's red backed card now reversed in its centre, while the spectator's genuinely freely chosen blue backed card is found face up in the red deck. Not only this, but both packs are immediately handed out for examination to prove there are no duplicates and no gimmicks!

Ropey Rope £15.00



The cut and restored rope is a staple effect for many children's entertainers, and **Ropey Rope** offers an excellent extended version that is full of fun and audience participation.

A young helper and the magician set out to collect the various props needed for a rope trick. Loads of fun occurs when the long piece of rope required turns out to be lots of little pieces and magic is used to make them all blend into one long piece. A bandage is needed so the rope is tied in a knot and simultaneously a silk appears threaded through the knot.

The rope is then cut cleanly in two and the silk bandage is used to tie the severed ends together. A pull on the rope and the silk jumps off leaving the rope restored. This comes with all the ropes, silk and routine. You need scissors and a change bag.

Colour Confusion - £15.00 (New Release 2011)



I wanted a quick and surprising version of the colour changing deck which I could perform in a walkabout situation and without a table. **Colour Confusion** fits the bill exactly. A spectator touches the back of any card which is displayed and then shuffled back into the deck. Suddenly the backs of all the cards are seen to have changed colour - and every single card back can be shown (no rough and smooth). However, there is one single card back which has not changed colour - and that is turned over to reveal the selected card. Re-set can be done in a moment in front of the spectators.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 37 March 11



Angela Funovits may not be a name you have heard of before, but if you do a search on YouTube you will soon find several videos that you can watch of her presenting her mentalism. Although still very young, she has already had great success in her native America and if you see her handling a pack of cards you will soon realise that she has loads of skill and talent which extends beyond her mental magic. With so few high profile women performers around it was great to be able to talk to her and find out more about her career so far and her plans for the future.

As if it wasn't enough that Chris Dugdale has been presenting his own show in London's West End, we now discover that he has also recently been jetting around the world to work at a dream gig. If someone rang you up and suggested that they wanted you to fly to Rio in order to entertain at an event organised to honour the players from the 1970 Brazilian World Cup winning football team, and that you would end up actually holding the World Cup trophy itself, you'd probably be packing your bag before you could say 'OK'. And that's exactly what we discover Chris did!



Starting with this issue Magicseen will be printed and distributed simultaneously in the United States. I believe this is the first time that a magic magazine has been published in this way, and we are very excited about the potential for increasing our readership in the USA. To be able to do this we have created a partnership with Lybrary.com who are probably the world's leading magical digital publication distributor, and in a Dealer's Booth Special we introduce our readers to Lybrary.com and their owner Chris Wasshuber.

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Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

Being a good magician is not just a case of having a good selection of material to call upon when entertaining, it's so much more than that. Yes, it pays to have excellent tricks and of course it goes without saying that ideally you should be able to perform them really well, but these factors alone will not decide whether the audience likes you or appreciates you. The major extra quality that you need is a likeable performing personality.

Some of the best technical close up workers I've ever seen fall into the trap of believing that their skill alone will make people flock to watch them. It might make magicians revere them and talk of them in grand terms, but the average lay person may well find them quite frankly a bit boring!

Having a strong performing persona helps an audience relate to you and enjoy what you do. Entertainers such as Karrel Fox, Jay Marshall and Billy McComb are examples from yesteryear of performers who understood that being likeable was the key to success. As an audience you wanted them to entertain you, and you responded with warmth to everything that they did. In short, you LIKED them.

However, this is not the whole story. Truly great entertainers such as the aforementioned three also knew how to work an audience, to bend them to their will and to leave them wanting more. They had the skills to adapt what they did to ensure that whatever the current audience seemed to be wanting, they would try to provide.

Being sensitive to your audience and its mood is, I think, a hugely important skill to try and adopt. We've all perhaps had the experience where your act for some reason just hasn't gone down as well as normal, and it's easy on those occasions to pass it off as being the fault of the audience. And it may well be that there are circumstances beyond your control which have put the spectators into a collective bad mood and as a result you simply can't bring them round.

But what is unforgivable, in my book, is the performer who pays absolutely no regard to the mood and type of audience he is entertaining, and who tries to ride roughshod over them without making any attempt to adapt either his material or his style. The attitude for this type of performer is that the audience have to adapt to him, not the other way round.

Anyone who attended the recent Blackpool Convention will have witnessed at first hand a compere who seemed to have this arrogant attitude towards his audience. His material was clearly not being appreciated by the vast majority of the spectators yet instead of moderating his approach, or toning down or changing his material, he continued as he started and as a result was slow handclapped and eventually actually replaced half way through the show!

Whether it's a close up audience at a table or a theatre full of spectators, as performers we have a responsibility to do all we can to give everyone a good time, even it means altering what we set out to do.

Highlights

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“Last month saw the debut of my new lecture/dem Going Walkabout which I presented at the North Western Society Of Magicians in Barrow-in-Furness and at the Hull Magicians’ Circle in er...Hull! I was very pleased with the way the lecture went down and I felt I was able to get a lot of practical information into the evening as well as provide performance and explanation of some strong magic. If you fancy your club booking it, get the secretary to contact me soon.” Mark

Feature Product Of The Month

The Wish List



The Card To Wallet is, of course, one of the all-time classic close up effects, but what I am offering here with **The Wish List**, must surely be one of the most unusual presentations ever for the effect. This routine does not actually look like a card to wallet effect at all, and for this reason there is genuine surprise when the card is found inside the wallet at the conclusion.

The basic presentation is all to do with buying gifts. A couple who are together are asked to select from a Wish List of 8 different gifts what they would like their partner to buy for them for a birthday or as a Christmas gift. The selections are genuinely free. A set of cards is shuffled and the man touches any card in an attempt to select, sight unseen, what his partner wants. Amazingly he succeeds! But even more surprising, is that the card bearing his choice is found inside the performer’s wallet!

You can use any card to wallet prop (not supplied), I provide the cards and full routine. This is a really interesting and personal piece of magic. **Price: £15.00**

Here are last month’s top 5 selling products



The Vanisher -
£10.00



The Coin
Collector’s Purse -
£15



2011 CD
Illustrated
Catalogue - free



Timed Piece -
£15



Colour
Confusion - £15



The Professional Magician's Signed Card To Wallet

- **£35.00**

When I work commercially I like to try and make things as simple for myself as possible, and this version of the Card To Wallet is great because it uses a no-palm method to get the signed card into the zippered compartment of the wallet. In fact the wallet itself, which is a good quality black leather full size wallet, can be handled safely by a spectator without its subtle gimmicking being discovered. This wallet is perfect for use with The Wish List (featured on the previous page). See my website for a special price if you buy the two together.



Cigarette Through Chip

£25.00

Imagine a cigarette through coin type effect in which you don't have to switch anything at the start, which enables you to show the chip clearly BOTH SIDES while the cigarette is penetrating through its solid centre, and which at the finish, requires no switching or secret ditching as the entire chip can be handed out for examination.

You've just imagined my Cigarette Through Chip.

These days I rarely use a cigarette for this trick. Instead I borrow a banknote and roll that up and push that through the chip centre. Alternatively, you could use a pencil, if you prefer.

The trick requires a small re-set after performance, but it only takes a matter of moments.

A Simple Guide To Creativity

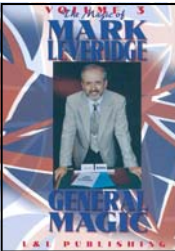
£12.00



If you want to be a little different from all the other magicians out there, it pays to try to have some elements of originality in your act. This doesn't mean you have to create an entire repertoire of fresh magic, but if you can incorporate some different thinking somewhere it will help you to stand out from the crowd.

This A4 size 32 page soft cover book lays out in easy to understand sections the various thought processes that you can try in order to bring something a little 'you' into what you perform. There are lots of practical ways explained that will help you to think a bit outside the box, and enable you to reconsider how you do, what you do.

This guide has been written to de-mystify the creative process and make it accessible to everyone.



The General Magic DVD - **£18.00**

Filmed at L&L in the US, this lively DVD contains 9 varied effects from my close up and stand up repertoires. Routines include 1-2-3 Jumbo Cards Across, which is perfect for either adult stand up work or children's shows, The Magic Ring, which is a killer trick for walkabout using a ring and a handkerchief, and Diary Of A Nobody, which is my version of the classic Danson Diary Trick but done with just one deck and one diary and with a twist at the end. The performances are filmed in front of a live audience and the explanations are thorough. Good entertainment and instruction.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 37 March 11



Magic, as a hobby, is already pretty strange, but then there are those magicians who take it to a new level of weirdness by creating massive collections of magical props! Mark Lee of Merlins of Wakefield has a thing about Tenyo magic items. For years he has been collecting these often ingenious products, and as a result he is a bit of a fan of the oriental range of magic. In this article Mark tries to explain his interest in Tenyo and attempts to persuade the reader that he too should appreciate these clever works of art. Mark's work partner Phil Peters just calls it an obsession!

Ali Cook appeared with Peter Firman on the very first Magicseen cover back in March 2005, and six years on he's done it again - only this time he's managed to sneak off without his erstwhile sidekick. In this new feature we learn what he has been up to since we last threw the spotlight on him, and it turns out he's been doing a lot. Apart from the doing TV magic (Dirty Tricks) and writing and performing two Edinburgh shows in 2008 and 2010, he's also been working on film projects outside of magic, including executive producing a Halle Berry film. Hmm, doing OK!



When Abra Magazine was in its heyday, it used to regularly feature reports on what the magic clubs up and down the country were up to. Nowadays this information is harder to get, so we thought it would be good to give UK clubs the chance to shout about who they are, where they are, and what they do. Club Land will be featuring one club an issue and the first society to take advantage of the new series is the Leicester Magic Circle. The article gives all the relevant contact details, plus it includes a short history of the club to put it all into context.

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Vol. 19 No. 8 April 2011

Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

Every so often my magic friend Jay Fortune comes round and we put the magic world to rights and eat pizza! The last time he crossed my threshold I got him to sing for his supper by getting him to have a discussion with me about agents, which I filmed for a Mark's Monthly Message, an advice video which members of my E-Club Pro online club receive in the middle of each month. As Jay has an agency as one of his businesses he was able to provide loads of great pointers about how to get the most out of an association with an agent.

However, one comment that he made surprised me. He said that it is getting almost impossible to book out close up magicians. Apparently there is a feeling amongst many agents that the whole 'magician-going-round-the-tables' bit has run its course and clients are looking for other forms of entertainment. Admittedly he was basing this mainly on agents operating in London, but the point still remains.

So, I wonder if it's true or whether this is more jaded agents talking rather than the feelings of the average client? There can be no doubt that close up magic has been hugely popular for at least 10-15 years now in the UK, and in the same way that many traditional children's entertainers are finding bookings less plentiful as parents look for new things to do with their birthday child, so perhaps venues and those who put on regular events have seen enough close up magic for now and they too are requesting something different.

Despite this fact, however, I have to say that

I have not noticed any particular downturn in enquiries for close up from individuals organising private or business parties or from those who are having weddings. In fact if anything, I would say demand is better than ever since the concept of having a wandering or a table side magician is now sufficiently established that many lay people have seen it occasionally and are keen to have it at their function.

Close up usually does leave a strong impression with lay people when they see it and from the many comments that I hear lay people make about close up, I would judge that the general public certainly has not had its fill of it quite yet.

A few years ago, John Bannon appeared at one of my British Close Up Magic Symposium events and as part of the day's schedule, he and I had a discussion about creativity. I remember him making a comment about close up in that he said he wasn't sure whether the type of format that magicians were currently using would be able to survive much longer and that it might be necessary for us all to have a re-think in order to find a format which would bring the whole concept of commercial close up magic up fresh again. He admitted that he didn't know what shape that new format might take, but he felt that at some point something new would be needed in order for it to survive. He said that way back in 1999.

Maybe the moment he was referring to is now upon us. What are **you** going to do to keep it all fresh and alive?

Highlights

www.markleveridge.co.uk



“My online club for magicians, E-Club Pro, is getting nicely into its stride, and the amount of material now on there for members to benefit from is getting ever larger. This month I have added a brand new section to the E-Club Pro members’ only pages called the TrickKlip Viewer. Each month this page will have an embedded video featuring performance and explanation footage from one of my professionally produced DVDs. Yet another good reason to join E-Club Pro.” Mark

Feature Product Of The Month

The Collected Card Magic Of Mark Leveridge Vol.1



Over the years I have devised quite a number of different card routines. Some I have included in lectures and the accompanying lecture books, some have been released as stand alone products, while others again have been published in my books. However, as years go by, these various effects can become lost or at least well out of the general view of current magicians, and so I decided I would collect the vast majority of my card work together into four new volumes in order to bring it to the attention of a new audience of magicians.

In total four volumes have been scheduled for release, and this is the first. It includes 15 card effects, some of which, such as The Unprint Button, Pacey Aces and The Thought Indicator Cards, have come from my early years, while others such as Brainstormer, Give Me A Number and Spin Out are either still available or currently form part of my working repertoire. There’s great variety and every effect is a solid piece of work that you will enjoy performing. And the good thing is, none of the tricks will take you for ever to learn or master. **Price: £15.00**

Here are last month’s top 5 selling products



The Magic Party Number Pack - **£25**



Pay Envelope 1 - **£5**



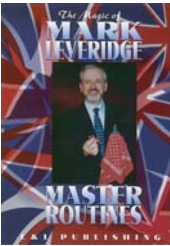
The Coin Collector's Purse - **£15**



I'm A Great Magician Spare Pack - **£12**



Brainstormer - **£15**



The Master Routine Series DVD - £18.00

You may be surprised to learn that the 12 extended routines performed and thoroughly explained on this DVD actually took me 20 years to devise! The reason is because I never attempted to come up with routines simply to include in the series, but when a suitable effect did come along, I would release it under the Master Routine Series banner. For a trick to be included it had to be a performance piece consisting of at least three separate sections and designed either for close up or stand up work. So, no quick tricks, no mentalism, nothing for kid show workers, just solid longer routines.



Horoscope £20.00

This is an effect that I came up with when I was doing a regular Friday night strolling magic spot in a pizza restaurant.

I noticed that the venue would often attract groups of all women, so I was looking for something that I thought might interest them in particular, and this routine using Star Signs went down really well.

A spectator is handed a set of 12 cards which have all the signs of the Zodiac on them and she removes hers which is hidden in a small envelope and left in view. A second set of Zodiac cards, each of which has a definition of people born under the star sign, is shuffled and three spectators select a card each at random. By reading out the definitions on the selected cards you eliminate two and when the remaining one is seen it matches the spectator's own star sign.

The Table Hopper's Coin Into Bottle £25.00



The Coin Into Bottle is a classic of close up but it does require you to either carry or be able to pick up a large drinks bottle and probably to use a folding coin, a coin whose bands could break at any moment! Not convenient or relaxing.

My version does away with the folding coin completely and rather than having a large bottle, a small glass jar is substituted instead. Now you can carry all the props required around more easily, and with no folding coin to cause you a problem, you can relax a bit more.

The jar and lid are both completely examinable, and the trick never requires a reset. You are supplied with a couple of gimmicked coins along with a couple of other special props required.

Yes And No - £8.00



If you would like to have a simple and direct ESP effect to carry around in your wallet, this would be ideal. It uses a set of 5 specially printed ESP cards which have the normal symbols on one side, but on the back of four of the cards is printed the word NO, and on one is the word YES. In the effect, a spectator is invited to freely select any of the 5 ESP symbols (and it is a genuinely free choice too) and when the card backs are shown, the four he didn't choose have the word NO on their back and the one he did has the word YES.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 38 May 11



We've all sat and watched magic competitions and at times we've no doubt thought, "Huh, I could do better than that!" Well, it actually takes a lot of thought and preparation in order to scoop the top prize, especially in the big international competitions, and so we went to three highly successful winners, Peter Wardell, Nicholas Einhorn and Marc Oberon, and asked them just how they did it! The advice they give is really excellent and would be of great help to anyone who wants to put together a good competition act that really won't have the spectators thinking that they could do better!

I have long been an admirer of American card magician John Bannon. I feel he brings an intelligent and thoughtful approach to everything that he does and his books, DVDs and marketed effects always have the trademark Bannon thinking running through them. And so it is with particular pleasure that we are able to welcome John to Magicseen, and not only that but to bestow upon him the honour of being our cover personality. John also submits one of his routines for the Masterclass Award 2011 too, so you can not only read about John but learn from him too.



Deputy Editor Graham Hey is a very funny man. I should know, I've been working with him on Magicseen for over 6 years! His stand up comedy magic act he uses professionally in the tough world of comedy clubs where the audiences can be unforgiving if your material is not up to the mark, and Graham survives well with his material as well as provides much comedy for other top acts too. With this background, there could be no one better to pen the new Comedy Cavern section in Magicseen in which Graham brings together comedy advice as well as useable material.

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Vol. 19 No. 9 May 2011

Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

As spring turns into summer and the days get warmer, the same little problem arises for me every year. Being a strolling magician means that in the summer months I often get asked to perform outside, and while it may be fine for those invited to, say, a BBQ, to turn up in shorts, a sleeveless T-Shirt and flip flops, I don't feel that it's OK for me, as the entertainer, to do the same.

I dare say that there are those who do stroll into a booking carrying a deck of cards and looking like they've just come off the beach, but for me, that just isn't the image that I am comfortable with for myself.

I am one of these 'old fashioned' types who still thinks it's right to wear a tie with a suit. Yep, I know I'm probably in the minority, but I just don't feel as if I'm dressing correctly as the entertainer if I turn up at a business event or a wedding without my trusty tie! I feel it sorts of makes a suit look neat, and for someone of my age, is the right thing to wear.

Well, that's all very fine for indoor work at dinners and so on, but what about when working at a party being held outside in the grounds of a hotel or perhaps someone's house? Or at an al fresco wedding? Or a birthday party, or a country fayre? Somehow, arriving in a suit to work outside in 23 degrees of heat, is probably not right either.

The thing is, there are a couple of issues here for me. The first is that I like to wear a jacket when performing because I rely heavily on the pockets and if I lose the jacket, I

feel all wrong because I am so used to storing the props for my act in it and also using it as a secret aid during my routines.

The second issue is one of sunburn! I have fair skin and, as Woody Allen once remarked about himself, "I don't tan, I just stroke!" My skin burns very quickly if I don't protect myself, which is fine for arms and neck where you can apply sun shield cream, but difficult when it comes to the top of my head, where a singular lack of hair causes me to turn red and painful within about an hour.

So, I've decided this year to solve the problem in a way that I think satisfies me on a number of levels. I have had some baseball caps embroidered with my logo, and also the logo put onto some good quality cotton T-Shirts. The T-Shirts I will wear under a light cotton summer jacket, and since the logo is in the centre of the chest area, it will show when the jacket is open.

What I feel this does is a) the whole outfit is not so hot to wear b) although it looks more casual the T-Shirt logo gives it a more professional appearance (rather than it just looking like I've come to perform in a T-Shirt I just happened to be wearing that day!) and c) the hat stops my head burning, but again the logo makes it look more like performance wear.

And the jacket provides me with the necessary pockets, so I can still function as a magician. There you are, problem solved. And the good thing is, it's only taken me 30 years as a pro to arrive at the solution!

Highlights

www.markleveridge.co.uk



“Starting this month I am introducing something called Celebrate With Mark. This December I will have completed 30 years as a pro magician, and to mark the occasion I will be having a special event in early December (details later). But also, for the 26 weeks running up to then, I will be having a weekly offer with huge savings and freebies. And the customer who takes advantage of the most offers will receive a mega prize worth over £215! See the site for more details.” Mark

Feature Product Of The Month

I'm A Great Magician



Kids love badges, and so an entire routine which features them is not only unusual, it is also very appealing to them. I'm A Great Magician has been in my show for a number of years and I have found it to create a lot of fun.

The idea is that the birthday child is going to see whether he is magic on his birthday. A number of 55mm diameter badges are shown, but the designs on the front are kept secret for the time being. The badges are dropped into an examinable bag and shaken around to mix them up. The birthday boy reaches into the bag and, without looking, starts to pick out badges at random one at a time. The first three badges will be given out to three of his friends, the fourth badge will be for the magician, and the final badge he will get to keep. As the badges come out it turns out that they have funny things on them and the children are encouraged to make noises that illustrate what is seen on the badges. But the badge that he manages to leave for himself says 'I'm A Great Magician', and so he gets to keep it to prove that indeed he was! Comes with all badges, bag and handling which is very easy. **Price: £20.00**

Here are last month's top 5 selling products



The Coll. Card
Magic of ML
Vol.2 - £15



The Vanisher - £10



The Coin
Collector's
Purse - £15



The Magic
Party Floor
Spots - £30



Colour
Confusion - £15



Co-inci-mental - £15.00

You-Do-As-I-Do is a classic card magic plot. The spectator and magician select cards from two separate decks, swap the cards over, then the decks themselves, and when the selected cards are removed they match. I have always thought the method is illogical and confusing. Co-inci-mental gets round all this and is as clean as a whistle. Two half decks, one with red backs the other blue, are ribbon spread face down. The spectator and performer remove cards at random—they match! And when the two deck halves are spread face up, all the other cards have different face colours. Very easy.



Colour Coins £45.00

If you do any sort of magic with regular coins, you might want to consider investing in this superior quality set of 9 brass coins. Measuring the same diameter as a half dollar and made of slim brass with brightly coloured centres, these discs will make any coin routine using regular coins more visible and more attractive.

With the set of discs, some of which have the same colour both sides, others different colours on each side, you receive a DVD which not only gives instruction on handling the coins, but also details six routines. Three of these need an Okito Box and so you are also supplied with a beautiful brass slimline Okito Box which has been made specially for the coins.

Colour Coins is a superb quality outfit and one you will be proud to own and use.

The Shiner £7.00



Simple tricks are often the most effective, and this is a little gem of an idea that it would be easy to overlook but which it would be a pity if you did!

You show a circular mirror which has a plain white back. The mirror can be examined if you wish. You explain that this is a large version of what a card cheat calls a 'shiner' - a secret device used to glimpse a card face.

A card is selected and passed over the mirror, but the performer names a different card. Temporary confusion until he reveals that the card he saw in the mirror actually tells him the name of the top face down card of the pack—and turning the card over it is seen to be true. To get the name of the selected card, you just turn the mirror over—and the card value is now printed there.

The British Close Up Magic Symposium—The 1st Decade - £30.00



This is a really fabulous book which will be a genuine treat for anyone who is into close up. The book consists of 214 A4 size pages, hard backed and with a silky black dust jacket. It contains over 80 contributions from 52 of the close up stars who worked at the legendary British Close Up Magic Symposiums between 1989 and 1999. Names such as Michael Ammar, Tommy Wonder, John Bannon, David Roth, Paul R. Wilson, Guy Hollingworth, Aldo Colombini and many more give of their best to provide you with a tremendous variety of magic and opinion.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 38 May 11



Several years ago I was invited to lecture at the annual get together of the Fellowship Of Christian Magicians. I duly went along and spent an interesting couple of days at their convention which was a cross between a magic event and a religious conference. In issue 38 we take an inside view of the Fellowship and discover what it is all about. From small beginnings it has grown into quite a sizeable and successful organisation, the centrepiece of their year being this convention. Magic is a diverse art which is used in many different ways, as this article shows.

The great thing about Magicseen (well, I think there are lots of great things!) is that we love to showcase up and coming talent as well as the big names who everyone knows. Colin McLeod, I must admit, was a new name to me and so it was great that Deputy Editor Graham Hey was able to get together with the young mentalist and find out more about him. He has already had considerable success with his one man show and he is someone who I suspect we will be hearing a lot more of in the near future. Just remember that you heard it first in Magicseen!



You may not realise it, but Holland is the birthplace of some of magic's biggest stars, both past and present. Tommy Wonder, Richard Ross, Henk Vermeyden, Fred Kaps, Flip, Hans Klok these are just some of the world famous stars to come from the Netherlands, and so we were delighted when Fritz Alkemade agreed to put together this article all about the magic scene there. He has done an excellent job as he has covered everything that you need to know about magic in Holland including information on the performers, the dealers, the clubs and more.

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Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

The same thing happened to me twice in a week at two close up gigs recently, something which has rarely happened to me before.

Both events were large dinners with about 17 tables at each event, and I was booked to entertain at the table sides during the meal. And at both events I failed to get round all the tables, something which only occurs on a very few occasions.

I don't like it when I have to miss out tables, but at both events it was impossible to continue after the end of the meal. At the first one, the lights went down, the band started and the people at the tables completely dispersed. At the second, which was a fund raising charity gala dinner, the speeches, awards and auction followed the meal end, and so that prevented me from continuing as well.

I was thinking about this situation and wondered if I could have done things any differently. The common factor between the two events was that there were more tables than I had been led to believe would be there. The first event I was told would have about 100 people—in fact there were 170. The second dinner, which I had done the previous year, had had 140 people but this had gone up to 180 for this year.

Had I known the true numbers I would probably have warned the organisers that there was a chance that I might not get round all the tables. At least then I would not have felt any guilt if I ran out of time. But because the true situation was not ap-

parent until I arrived, I did not have that opportunity.

I usually reckon that I can do an absolute maximum of 8 tables an hour—and that is by really motoring and doing probably no more than 2 tricks per table. But with some dinners, there can be a lot of other things which get in the way and cut down on time.

The speed of the service by the waiting staff is one factor. Some places work like lightning and are hugely efficient, which means that the meal is over quicker and so you can end up with less time than anticipated. Some events, such as the charity ones, have fund raising announcements or activities in between the courses of the meal, which cuts right across your performance time. Then again, occasionally, the break between courses is used for speeches or the presentation of awards. You just can't work while that sort of thing is going on.

Another factor is the number of courses. It's cheaper to have less courses, so I've noticed that whereas events used to have a minimum of 3 and often 4 courses, some are now down to just a couple with coffee at the finish, again leaving you with less time to perform.

No matter how fast you work, there is a limit to how little time you can spend at a table. Working at great speed is never very satisfying for either you as the performer or the diners, yet that can be the nature of the beast. Yet although unavoidable, it still doesn't feel right not to get to everyone.

Highlights

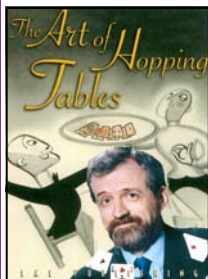
www.markleveridge.co.uk



“My online club, E-Club Pro, has a brand new section starting this month. Called the Lecture Room, it’s a place where members are able to watch bite size segments of my video recorded lectures. The first lecture to be serialised is my latest one, Going Walkabout, which includes lots of advice on how to perform this type of magic as well as performance and explanation of suitable routines. E-Club Pro is fantastic value as there is so much content. Check it out.” Mark

Feature Product Of The Month

The Art Of Hopping Tables DVD



When this DVD first came out it was fairly ground breaking in the sense that it was one of the first times that an instructional DVD had included footage of a performer working at a genuine paid show rather than with a set up audience or in a studio in front of an invited crowd. The first section of the DVD was in fact shot live at a gig I was doing every week at the time in a hotel in Cornwall, and it gives the viewer a great opportunity to see just what it is like working close up commercially.

After the initial live footage, the DVD then goes into a phase where I discuss with my colleague Chris Payne the various things that happened during the show and from this many points and tips come out for the viewer to benefit from. Then the next section of the DVD is a discussion with another magic friend Stuart Bowie about the techniques for working dinner functions, and the final part of the 3hr DVD concentrates on the explanation of a selection of the routines seen in the initial performance phase. **Price: £18.00**

Here are last month's top 5 selling products



CD Illustrated Catalogue -
FREE



The Vanisher - **£10**



Pay Envelope 2
- **£6**



Promo Card
Sticker Pack -
£6



Coin
Collector's
Purse - **£15**



ESP Match Up - £10.00

There have been quite a few versions of the card matching plot, but I like to think that this one is arguably one of the very best. The handling is consistent and straightforward, and the effect does not rely on lots of different 'outs' depending on which cards are chosen. It all looks very fair, because you put down your symbols face down each time before the spectator places his selections face down opposite yours, and yet when the cards are collected up and the pairs turned over, they all match! You receive the two sets of ESP cards in a carry wallet and full instructions.



The Word £10.00

Looking for a book test? Would you like one that that doesn't require a gaffed book? In fact would you really like one that you could do with ANY book offered to you? Without advance preparation? Without any force of page and without any artificial method for selecting that page?

OK, if you answered 'yes' to the above, you need The Word. Someone can hand you a paperback book off their shelf and you can immediately take it, hold it up and riffle down the page edges with your head turned away so that a spectator can call 'stop'. The place they choose is genuinely free, and they can change their mind if they're not entirely happy. The spectator remembers the last word on the top line of their chosen page and you immediately shut the book and put it down. Moments later, with no 'fishing' you announce their word! Awesome!

The Borrowed Ring On Pencil £7.00



This close up routine uses three ungimmicked objects - a borrowed ring, a pencil and a handkerchief - in an effect that is equally stunning to both magicians and lay people.

In three different ways you make the finger ring penetrate through the handkerchief and on to the pencil centre, but that bald description does not really do the impact of the magic justice.

You are going to have to practise this quite a lot because this is one of the more difficult effects in my range. That's not to say it's impossibly hard, but compared to most of the rest of my items, it's going to take longer to master and to do it well. But if you make the effort, you'll have something hugely worthwhile. Comes as well illustrated instructions.

The Deck Of Cars - £20.00



The title of this trick is not a typo! This really is a deck of 'cars' because the pack supplied (actually this comes with two) has a picture of a car on the rear of blank faced cards. This unique deck then lends itself to all sorts of presentations that would not normally make any sense with a regular deck but which is perfect for one designed in this way. The instructions give full details of four routines that you can present, all of which are straightforward to do. So why not add a bit of novelty to your card work?



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 39 July 11



I met Eric Jones at a 4Fs convention in the United States earlier this year and I didn't realise that Deputy Editor Graham Hey had already lined him up as a featured performer for this issue of Magicseen! Eric is a quietly spoken, smooth close up performer, and in this article we find out what his background is, what his magical challenges have been, and what his magical likes and dislikes are. He comes across as being a modest, likeable man who lets his card skills do most of the talking for him. Once again Magicseen gives you personal access to a top performer!

We try to make Magicseen interesting to just about everyone in magic, and to provide articles of specific relevance to particular magic groups. Starting in this issue we have a series directed at children's entertainers. Called **It Ain't All Magic**, this series will be looking at a number of different non-magic forms of entertainment suitable for children's parties. We will be covering face painting, puppets, balloon modelling, circus skills workshops etc, and in issue 39 we start by looking at games, which is a lucrative way of broadening the appeal to potential bookers.



Magic is full of characters, some of whom are more memorable and different than others. Chris Cross is most definitely one of those who you would struggle to forget in a hurry! His lifestyle is as colourful as his performance persona, and in this article we don some protective clothing and dive in to find out what he has been up to and what makes him tick. When you hear about his background, and see some of the things that he has had to go through, you start to understand what it is that has made him into the person and performer he now is. It's a bit of an eye opener.

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Vol. 19 No. 11 July 2011

Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

When someone books you to perform at a function or event, they presumably want you to perform to the very best of your ability. But to be fair to the booker, it may well be that they have no idea what would help you as a performer and what would hinder you. So it's up to us as the entertainers to make sure that the conditions are right.

Twice in my career I failed to do this, and on both occasions I came away from the booking feeling highly dissatisfied.

The first occasion was when I was contacted by a local venue which was having a mediaeval banquet and they were having various entertainers to mix with the guests while they were eating. So in theory having a strolling magician was a good idea. However, in order to make everything seem authentic, they wanted me to dress up in a jester's outfit, complete with leggings, hat and shoes.

In order to get the booking, and perhaps not having thought through the consequences, I agreed. Not only did this involve me hiring a suitable outfit, with the inconvenience that this involved, but I then realised that all the pockets I normally relied on to carry my props were suddenly unavailable to me, because the outfit didn't have any!

To get round this I had to transport all of my apparatus in a small bag which I had to carry around with me. I couldn't do any of the effects (such as Sponge Balls or the Flying Ring for example) that required me to secretly use the pockets either, so that meant my normal repertoire was restricted.

Then, of course, the magic I was doing in any case didn't really fit in with the theme of the evening anyway! So, the evening was really awkward and I know that I didn't do a very good job that night.

The other occasion was when I was asked to dress up in a massive Merlin's costume complete with pointed hat and required to wander round a huge call centre performing magic to the telesales operators in between their calls as a sort of 'perk' for them! Apart from the fact that the entire premise was a bit stupid, trying to perform magic wearing this diaphanous garment, which I kept treading and tripping up on, made the whole job a bit of a nightmare!

Both of these events were way back in the 1980s at a time when I lacked the experience, and perhaps to a certain extent the confidence, to realise that I would not be able to perform to my potential dressed in these ways. From the booker's point of view, asking me to dress up in this way was just what someone thought was a good idea, so it was up to me as the entertainer to say whether I was prepared to do as they requested or not. For some performers this might not be a problem, but for me it is, and so since that time I have never accepted any booking that requires me to wear anything other than what I think is appropriate or convenient for me to present my magic.

Being prepared to turn down a booking because it simply isn't our particular strength may seem like looking a gift horse in the mouth, but I think it's more important to deliver the goods every time.



Highlights



www.markleveridge.co.uk



“The BIG news this month is that I am going to be holding one final British Close Up Magic Symposium! The one day convention will take place on Sunday 8th January 2012 and will be held in the comfortable Redwood Country Club in Bristol. This final Symposium will be the 10th and brings to a close the sequence of conventions which stretches back to its start in 1989. It’s bound to be a great day of close up and a fitting way to conclude my Celebrate With Mark period.” Mark

Feature Product Of The Month

Deck-Aid



When I first came up with this idea, I actually could think of two very different yet equally good applications for it. Eventually I released both products, but Deck-Aid was the later of the two and so for a while I was able to use it and often fool magicians with it as the principle had not, as far as I am aware, been used before.

So what exactly is it? Well, essentially it is a simple yet unique gimmick which is the thickness of one card and which you can add to your regular deck to enable you to perform card controls and locations with an ease that normally would require some serious sleight of hand. For instance, you can hold up a deck, have a card peeked, put the deck down immediately and yet when you pick it up again, instantly you will be able to locate the peeked card. Or, then again, you can overhand shuffle the deck very fairly, and immediately produce the four Aces. There are lots of different ways this idea can be used, and the DVD and booklet which come with this explain several. **Price: £15.00**

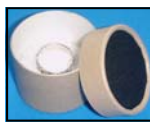
Here are last month's top 5 selling products



Assembly Point
- £15



Colour Confusion -
£15



Ultimate
Lightning Ring
Box - £18



Pay Envelope 2
- £6



The Vanisher -
£10



Jumbo Animal Antics - £20.00

If you entertain children you will absolutely love this full-on participation effect. Five colour printed Jumbo cards are shown to have zoo animals on them and one at a time children are invited up to act out the animals. This creates a huge amount of fun! Then one child is invited to judge which animal he or she liked the best. Despite the fact that it's a genuinely free choice, a single card which was shown at the start to be in a window envelope is removed to reveal it has a picture of the chosen animal on it. Very easy to do, this comes with all the colour printed cards, envelope and full patter and presentation.



The Cut And Restored Credit Card £20.00

This is one of those effects which is so straightforward to perform that you really can just enjoy doing it!

Designed for a parlour or close up show, this routine has inbuilt comedy potential which means you do not have to be a comedian to get fun out of it.

A borrowed credit card is slipped into an envelope which has the spectator's initials placed on the flap. Cutting the envelope entirely in half, the performer confidently predicts the card will restore itself - except it doesn't! Just when it looks like a genuine mistake has occurred, the performer removes a small leather wallet from his pocket to reveal the borrowed card in tact inside.

No palming or difficult handling, this really is great to perform.

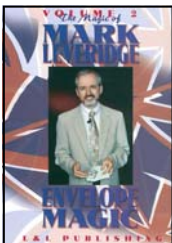
The Walkabout Coin Box Routine £25.00



I use this routine every single time I work close up in a walk-about situation and I have had a huge amount of success with it.

With no gimmicks to worry about, everything can be examined and yet a coin penetrates in and out of the examined brass box with apparent total ease. Then, just as the spectators start to watch particularly closely, you hit them with a totally surprise ending as the coin completely vanishes and a sponge ball is found inside the box instead!

You will need to practise this as it requires some sleight of hand. If you are used to handling coins or perhaps you already do an Okito Box routine, you'll not find this much of a technical challenge, but even if you need to work on it, the resultant routine is definitely worth it.



The Envelope Magic DVD - £18.00

Guess what's on this DVD? Yes, the title really does say it all. As most of my customers will know, I have a bit of a 'thing' about envelopes and this DVD has a selection of my ideas using both gimmicked ones and regular ones. The great thing about an envelope is that it can be an intrinsic part of the trick's method, and yet because it looks so ordinary and commonplace, it never arouses suspicion and so it becomes a highly potent secret aid. Filmed in the US before a live audience, this DVD is entertaining as well as instructional.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

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When I saw the close up act of Yann Frisch at this year's 4Fs Convention in the States I was blown away by the originality of it. The concept behind the presentation of what is basically just a cup and ball routine, is unique, and I wondered what sort of mind could come up with such a concept. Well, in issue 39 we ask him about the creation of this prize winning act and learn that this is just one aspect of his performing repertoire, not the sum total of it. Some people find it hard to follow up a big success with something new, Yann Frisch probably not have that problem.

Right from the very first issue we decided that Magicseen was not going to be a periodical that contained lots of tricks. We took the view that if no new tricks were ever invented, there would still be plenty to keep us all going pretty much for ever! However, we knew that our readers do like to have the odd new thing to play around with and so we publish the Masterclass column in each issue which features a couple of effects for people to learn. And currently we are running a £250 cash prize competition for the best contribution in Volume 7. Have you submitted anything yet?



It's great when magic gets a high profile show being staged, and they don't come much bigger than Paul Stone's Palladium Magic performance which will be taking place in London this September. We like to help promote and publicise shows such as these, and in this issue we hear from Paul about what Palladium Magic will consist of, and it all sounds like a treat is in store for anyone who chooses to attend. As well as the big stage magic stars who will be treading the famous boards, there will be a lot of close up too, making it a really major day for magic in London.

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Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

The recent big revelations about the phone tapping allegedly used by News Of The World reporters may seem like news to most people, but to those of us involved in the murky underworld of small town magic, this is nothing new. Little Snivelington Circle Of Magicians was founded in 1939 by stage magician Hapless Hector and magic book seller Page Turner. Both could see that war was looming - but this was nothing to do with the military might of a certain German dictator, it was all to do with the Circle's feud with the Greater Snobbery Magicians' Club which met just down the road.

The Greater Snobbery's president at the time was Myles Better, who had originally been on the Council of the Snivelington Circle, but who had left in a fury after his suggestion that all new applicants for the Circle should have to undergo an initiation ceremony before being allowed to join, was thrown out by the rest of the committee. The other committee members had felt that applicants might be a touch put off when they discovered that they were to be blindfolded, stripped naked, and dumped at midnight in the middle of the countryside with nothing on them except a deck of Waddington's No.1 playing cards and a copy of the Royal Road To Card Magic.

Myles soon created the Greater Snobbery Club, and started producing a newsletter. Each copy was lovingly typed by Myles' girlfriend Daisy Wheel, and as well as announcing that the club's annual close up, stage and mentalism competitions had all been won (again) by Myles Better, the newsletters also featured editorial about the

Circle. Headlines such as: "Snivelington member's invisible pass spotted", "Are Hapless Hector's doves really pigeons?", "Cheating Circle member caught doing double lift with one card", "Circle's Happy Harry reveals his Punch and Judy are getting a divorce", were commonplace, and everybody wondered how on earth Myles managed to get his information.

Well, I can now report how it was all possible. The Little Snivelington Circle of Magicians met once a month at the Cock and Bull Pub which was owned by Snobbery member Phil Emup. The Circle met in the back room of the pub whose side wall adjoined the pub's toilet. The empty beer glass sitting on the toilet window ledge may seem odd until you understand that Phil was using it to press against the toilet wall to listen in to the conversations held during the Circle meetings! Yes, it was an early form of phone tapping.

But Phil had other methods too. The window of the meeting room was the cleanest in the pub, scrubbed as it was once a month, and the bar maid, Helen Hunt (who allegedly virtually ran the place - certainly if you lost anything while there you were always told to go to Helen Hunt for it), would make multiple trips into the meeting room to take drink orders, suspicious when you know she was still doing it well past last orders. I maintain that these were the methods that Myles used to glean the information he needed and I believe that these tactics were noted by the Greater Snobbery Magicians' Club Press Officer at the time, a certain Mr. R. Murdoch.