

Highlights

Vol. 20 No. 1 September 2011

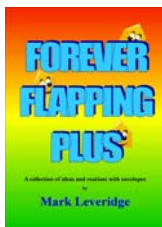


Tip Of The Month: If you want to work through agents and they need you to send some of your publicity to them, you need to supply them with cards, brochures and flyers that do **NOT** have your own personal contact details on them. The agents will only pass the publicity on if it has **THEIR** contact information shown on the materials.

MOST POPULAR

Featuring the most purchased products from my range

Forever Flapping Plus



This E-Book started off life as a comb bound printed book called **In A Flap**. A sequel called **Still Flapping** was published a few years after the original one appeared and then eventually both books were amalgamated and supplemented with a whole load of extra material to become **Forever Flapping Plus**.

If you are interested in the possibilities that gimmicked envelopes can provide, then this E-Book is a perfect starting place. It gives construction details of 9 different individual gimmicked envelopes with loads of routines using them, plus there is a whole range of further effects included in which regular envelopes play an important yet unobtrusive part.

Included in this book are details of both the **Leveridge Envelope** and the **Utility Switch Envelope**, both of which I feel on their own are worth more than the price of the entire book as they are so versatile and effective. **Price: £15.00**

Here are last month's top 5 selling products



CD Illustrated Catalogue - **free**



Promo Card Sticker Packs - **£6**



The Caught Card - **£5**



Seeing Is Believing - **£5**



This One, That One Here - **£8**



Brainstormer - £15.00

This is a really good 'blank deck' trick which has its roots in the Nudist Deck and the Brainwave Deck and yet which achieves its surprising outcome without the use of any rough and smooth cards. A totally blank deck is split in two and half given to a spectator, the other half being retained by the performer. A card is freely named by each person and a few moments later, when the half decks are ribbon spread across the table, the named cards are seen to be the only printed cards, one in each deck half. No sleight of hand required, the special deck does most of the hard work for you.



The Witch And The Prince - £12.00

There are times when you might be working in a family restaurant, or at a wedding, or simply when you have grandchildren and they want you to show them a trick, that having a close up effect designed with young children in mind can be a real boon. This card effect is just one such trick.

It uses specially printed cards which are used to tell a simple version of the witch and the prince story. A witch, jilted by the prince, turns him and several other things into frogs and the magician enlists the help of a young girl 'princess' to break the spell and magically turn the frogs back into their former shapes in order to discover which frog used to be the prince.

Straightforward handling makes this fun to perform and the Bicycle sized cards look really colourful and attractive.

Perfect Intuition - £12.00



Considering the simplicity of the props - a pile of envelopes containing some blank pieces of card - it's amazing the power of this effect!

The reason this works so well is because it appears as if a spectator does everything during the trick and yet an impossible outcome is still achieved. This is the sort of routine that people talk about afterwards such is the strength of the effect.

Perfect Intuition is designed for a close up show or for table hopping where you have about 7 people or more at a table. It involves everyone in a personal way and the handling from your perspective is simple and direct.

If you want to, you can use your business cards in the envelopes instead of blank cards and at the finish you could leave them in the hands of 6 spectators at the finish.



The Ring Competition - £7.00

Master Routine No.4 comes as a set of well illustrated instructions which take you through three good ring onto rope moves but which, more importantly, supplies you with a tremendously entertaining presentation that is ideal for stand up work in cabaret or even off a stage. I have used this routine for many years and have found it to be versatile - you can adapt it to a corporate presentation or even change it to suit a children's show - and also a perfect way to make ring and rope more than just the same effect repeated three times, which is what most other routines seem to be. Supply your own ring and rope.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 40 September 11



Years ago magazines would expect their readers to contact them via the mail when they wanted to raise a point or two. Of course, these days we receive virtually no letters at all, but we do get emails, and each issue we select a few from the Magicseen Inbox to publish in the current issue. Interestingly, although we do get comments about the magazine content, we also receive requests for general help and advice too. Although we are not experts on everything (!) we do always try to give a brief opinion on what we have been asked and hope that it provides a little guidance.

At the 9th British Close Up Magic Symposium in 2005 our headline performer was Richard Sanders from Canada. I organised a UK wide lecture tour for Richard when he came over and everywhere he went he made many friends with his great magic and charming personality. Since then Richard has built on his success and has continued to produce and market highly visual, commercial magic. We chat to Richard in this issue to get a progress report on how things are going and learn what his inspirations have been both now and in the past.



In Issue 39 we started a new series on alternative entertainment for children's parties (other than magic), and in issue 40 we do a feature on face painting. This is a very popular thing to be able to offer at parties and indeed at larger events generally, and we approached three experienced face painters to get their expert advice on what you need to think about and do if you are going to make a success of it all. Some magicians use their wife, partner or a helper who will do the face painting while the magician is doing the rest of the party, and this helps to increase the overall fee.

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Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

It has been nice to see a few magic programmes on the TV in the UK this year after what has been a fairly barren period prior to that with only Derren Brown's shows seeming to be on air. The Magicians on BBC, Penn and Teller: Fool Us on ITV and Dynamo on the cable channel Watch have all done their bit to raise the profile and popularity of magic here at home again.

Of course, as soon as the public starts watching people like Dynamo doing impossible close up magic in the street, it invites them to draw comparisons with us strolling magicians when they meet us face to face. "Can you put my mobile phone into this bottle like that bloke on the TV," I was asked the other day.

Well, nice though it is to have close up on the lay person's antenna again, being challenged to replicate effects which sometimes can only be done on TV and with a team of behind the scenes helpers, is a tricky one to deal with without losing face and without getting involved in some long-winded explanation of why a trick such as that can perhaps only be achieved on the box.

I've been reflecting on this recently and have come up with some thoughts about how to deal with these challenges both without losing face personally and at the same time without belittling what the people have seen on TV. Because I do think it's important not to simply dismiss televised magic to lay people as just a load of camera only effects, because the sense of wonder and amazement created by performers such as Dynamo is doing us all a big favour in mak-

ing what we do seem important and worthy of people's attention.

I think the first thing to note is that lay people don't really know what is an 'impossible' trick and what isn't. In other words, because they have little or no knowledge of methods, a self working card trick may seem as miraculous and inexplicable to them as some of the truly ingenious TV stuff.

So this means that when you make a borrowed ring vanish and instantly appear in your key case, to the lay person that is every bit as amazing as when Dynamo makes a ring penetrate onto the stem of a wine glass. To a magician, Dynamo's trick may seem superior because it may fool us, but I would suggest that to the lay person the two tricks are basically one and the same in terms of impact.

Therefore, I see no reason for us to apologise for the magic that we do and to in any way imply that Dynamo's magic is working on a different level to ours. My response to the Dynamo 'challenge', is to say: "Well, no, I don't do the same tricks as Dynamo as they are his, and he doesn't do mine. Let me show you what I do." Expressing a reply in this way doesn't belittle the TV magic and nor does it make it look like our magic is inferior.

The power of TV was brought home to me recently at a close up gig when on two separate occasions a spectator said: "Ah, you're the magician! I'm Penn, he's Teller, go on fool us!"

Highlights

Vol. 20 No. 2 October 2011



Tip Of The Month: Most bookers looking to hire a magician these days will probably start by going online and NOT by looking in a local directory. So it stands to reason that you need some sort of webpage(s) with an easy way for customers to contact you. Yellow Pages and other paper directories are not a good use of your money now.

MOST POPULAR

Featuring the most purchased products from my range

Wild Dice



When you first release a trick you can never really know whether it will be a huge instant success, whether it will start selling slowly and then build up, whether it will simply sell steadily over a long period, or whether it will just basically bomb. This trick somewhat broke the mould because it has sold really well for countless numbers of years!

Wild Dice is not really a 'commercial' trick in the sense that it needs to be worked on a close up mat and does not re-set, thus making it useless for table hopping. Yet for a one-off close up performance, it is just amazing!

The props are simple - three inverted matchbox drawers and some dice - and the plot is a combination of two classic effects - the cups and balls and the walnut shell and pea. But what makes it stand out is the stunning and unexpected finale when no less than SIX extra dice appear under the boxes. Now, that's impact! **Price: £20.00**

Here are last month's top 5 selling products



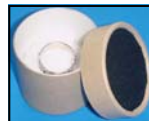
Pay Envelope 2
- £6



The Utility
Switch
Envelope - £5



Pay Envelope 1
- £5



Ultimate
Lightning Ring
Box - £18



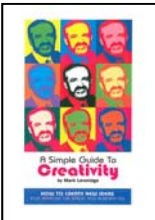
Against All
Odds - £25

Colour Confusion - £15.00



I really enjoy using this colour changing deck effect in my strolling work. It is straightforward to do, can be re-set in a few moments in front of the spectators, and the way the entire deck changes colour, leaving just the spectator's selected card still with its original back colour, is a big surprise. There are lots of colour changing deck effects available, but few, I would suggest, that are as direct and hassle free as **Colour Confusion**. There are no roughed pairs of cards and when the changed deck is shown, every single card back can be displayed openly as there is nothing to hide.

A Simple Guide To Creativity - £12.00



Being creative can mean different things. In its purest form it is when someone comes up with an entirely new principle, concept or effect, but creativity can

also be applied to those small changes or alterations which the performer makes to a known effect too.

This book seeks to explain how you can adapt and invent. Even if you have never considered yourself to be particularly original in what you do, the ideas and practical examples revealed in the 32 A4 size pages contained in this book will show you how. I explain, in easy to understand steps, the different methods that you can use to make your magic improve and come up fresh.

We can't all be a Jay Sankey, but most of us can, by following the principles revealed here, make our magic that little bit better.

Vacation Destination £15.00



Everyone loves a holiday, and this clever mental effect uses holiday destinations and airlines as its theme.

Five envelopes each have an airline attached to them and inside each is a piece of card bearing one of five worldwide holiday destinations. A spectator genuinely freely chooses any one which is placed in view to one side. He has no idea which destination he has selected.

Cards bearing the five different destinations are shown and one at a time four of them are eliminated in a totally random way. Despite this fact, the remaining destination matches the one inside the envelope selected by the spectator at the start.

Easy to do, this comes with everything you need to work this straight away.

Cigarette Through Chip - £25.00



If you like the thought of doing the classic cigarette through coin but are concerned about using the gimmick, this version will give you a wonderful alternative. Instead of a coin this effect has a cigarette or pencil or rolled up banknote penetrate through the solid red centre of a brass poker chip. The great thing is that as the chip is being penetrated it can be shown totally freely **BOTH SIDES** and the moment the penetration is complete, the **VERY SAME CHIP** can be handed for examination leaving your hands empty and with nothing to switch or ditch. Oh, and because this is not a coin, you can't accidentally spend it either!



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 40 September 11



Deputy Editor Graham Hey is a magician and stand up comedian in his own right, and he has worked for years on the stand up comedy circuit as well as written comedy scripts for a number of top names. So, it stands to reason that he has a real interest and knowledge about comedy, and he brings his expertise and enthusiasm for the subject to Magicseen. Currently each issue has an article on some aspect of comedy included in it, and this time Graham has provided a great piece outlining the do's and don'ts of using comedy in your act.

Steve Faulkner may not be a name that you have heard of before, but he is someone who we discovered has gradually been building quite a career for himself in magic. He started off as a street performer, and for some time successfully survived and thrived in that environment. But then he decided he wanted to do more, and so over the last few years he has been steadily and systematically widening his magical horizons and taking on a whole range of different magic projects. You can get to know Steve more by reading all about him in issue 40.



We like to think that as a magazine we are here to entertain and also to a certain extent to educate. We also like to make our readers aware of the good things that are happening out there in the wider magical community. One of those 'good things' is Magic Moments, an annual charitable day of magic, organised and coordinated by Jay Fortune and Richard Leigh, in which magicians all around the country are encouraged to use their talents to raise money for charitable causes on a specific day. This year the date is October 1st, and this article explains it all.

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Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

How far will you travel to do a show? Do you only work within a certain distance of your home or will you consider taking bookings in other parts of the country, or even abroad?

I know of some performers who will basically only accept bookings within a 30 mile radius of their home town. This is great if there are enough potential clients within that area, as there might be in a big city for instance, or if the performer is happy to accept that the number of bookings he gets might be lower than the quantity enjoyed by others who are prepared to travel. But the advantage is that travel costs will be relatively low, the same fee can be quoted for every show, and you will get well known in that local area.

But I suspect that for most of us, such a luxury just will not work if we want to generate a reasonable income from performing. In which case, we are going to need to think about promoting ourselves further afield and then be prepared to put up with spending longer in the car on show days.

When considering a long distance booking, there are a number of factors to consider. The first is just how long will it realistically take to get there and is it therefore logistically possible to arrive in time. This was something I had to address back in the mid-90s when I got the opportunity to work every week throughout the summer at two hotels in Cornwall, one being for a booking on a Tuesday and the other being on a Wednesday. The drive was just over 1.5hrs and each booking consisted of a children's

show starting at about 4pm followed by strolling magic in the evening commencing at 7pm.

The fee per booking was not massive, but I was being offered a 12 week run which meant that the total income was quite significant. However, I didn't feel it was practical for me to come back after the show on the Tuesday and then drive all the way back to virtually the same area for the Wednesday shows, and so I decided to stay overnight each Tuesday at a B&B. Now this added to my costs, but what I was saving on petrol by not going up and back twice every week, I was able to put towards the accommodation costs.

The only other factor about this arrangement was deciding what I was going to do during the day each Wednesday while I was waiting for the late afternoon kids show to start. Well, I took my laptop with me and over the summer I wrote a book! The Magic Party Vol. 2 was written over that summer each Wednesday morning, so that made it a good use of my time.

The second factor is to weigh up whether the overall money is worth the effort and to increase your fee to cover both the extra travel costs but also to recompense you a little for lost time - for the increased hours on the road when you can't be doing another show.

And the final factor is deciding whether you have the energy and desire to travel vast distances to perform. Fine in the summer perhaps, but in the depths of winter?

Highlights

Vol. 20 No. 3 November 2011



Tip Of The Month: If you are having some business cards printed, don't forget that you can have information printed on BOTH sides of the card. So many people waste the opportunity to use the business card back. Alternatively, you can now get business cards which open out like a book and which give you four printable surfaces.

MOST POPULAR

Featuring the most purchased products from my range

Key-Volution



Most 'new' tricks are largely a re-combination of known elements which produces something where perhaps the plot is familiar but the method is different or an improvement. Just occasionally an effect comes along which at the time of its release can genuinely be said to be something fresh, and Key-Volution is one such trick.

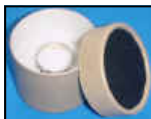
Released in 1983, this easy to do close up effect caused quite a stir. It had a plot that was unusual - a blank key cuts its edge when placed into a spectator's hand - and it used objects which rarely featured in magic routines. So it scored in terms of novelty and also was a great hit in respect of the method and the quality of the gimmick supplied.

In a commercial world where so many tricks flare brightly for a short period and then seemingly vanish, Key-Volution has stayed for all these years as one of my most consistent sellers. **Price: £35.00**

Here are last month's top 5 selling products



2011 CD Illustrated Catalogue - **free**



The Ultimate Lightning Ring Box - **£18**



Assembly Point - **£15**



The Coin Collector's Purse - **£15**



Pay Envelope 2 - **£6**

The Horizontal Card Rise - £20.00



I rather like the contradiction in this trick title, but it is the only way that I could think of to describe what actually happens. Two cards are selected freely and then replaced in the deck which is shuffled. With a single cut the performer successfully finds one of the cards, which he places face up on the top of the deck. Holding the pack squared and steady, the first selection is pushed flush with the deck and as it does so, one card eerily is seen to push itself out of the front of the pack. The card is removed to reveal it is the second selection. You need to watch the dem of this to appreciate its effectiveness. Not hard to do. Clever gimmick.



The Collected Card Magic of Mark Leveridge Vol.1 - £15.00

If you enjoy working on practical card effects, this book is definitely for you.

Included in the 70 A5 size perfect bound pages you will find 15 varied card tricks for close up and stand up performance. Included in here is one of my all time favourite effects, Spin Out, which I still use repeatedly in my commercial bookings.

So many card books are full of minor variations and subtle handling changes or require huge skill to make the material work. This book is very different in that the items included are clear stand alone effects where the accent is on producing magic that you will feel able to actually perform, rather than presenting you with a whole series of knuckle-busting tricks suitable only for showing fellow magicians down the magic club.

I'm A Great Magician £20.00



Kids love badges and this terrifically entertaining routine is therefore perfect for anyone who does kid show work as the entire trick is based on using a set of 55mm badges.

The basic idea is that a number of badges have funny or silly things written on them, while one badge only says 'I'm A Great Magician'. All the badges are dropped into a bag and a child has to remove the badges one at a time sight unseen and must endeavour to leave as the last badge the IAGM one.

As each badge is removed a sound is made by the kids to reflect what it says on the badge and this causes a lot of fun, especially when even the magician gets given a silly badge! True to form the assisting child does leave the IAGM badge to last and thus gets to keep it.



Melt Through - £25.00

Here is a coin box effect which uses completely examinable props, which has no get-ready or reset, and which is ideal for walkabout situations. A slim brass box with lid is shown, both objects having a hole in their centres. An examined half dollar is dropped into the box and the lid put on.

The coin can still be clearly seen through the hole in the lid. A length of ribbon is then threaded into the hole in the lid and amazingly it penetrates right through the coin and emerges through the hole in the box base. As soon as the ribbon is pulled through, the box is opened to show the coin still lying flat inside.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 41 November 11



Benoit Grenier is a French magician who has a bit of a thing for David Copperfield. By that I mean he is a HUGE Copperfield fan and over the last few years has spent a lot of his time immersing himself in David's world and in his magic. Magicseen published Benoit's book on DC called *A Magic Life*, for which Benoit spent quite a bit of time actually with his hero compiling information. Now Benoit has taken this a stage further by setting up in Paris an exhibition of magic and memorabilia from the Copperfield collection, and in this article he tells us all about it.

Ok, I am the first to admit that I have never been able to get up enough courage to use invisible thread in my commercial work, despite several half attempts to do so. But there can be little doubt that some of magic's most memorable and impressive visual tricks are achieved by means of the darned stuff, which means that those who do take the plunge can perform some outstanding effects. If you want to have a go, our guide to the invisible thread is a great place to start as it gives you all the basic information that you need as well as providing reviews and further info on IT products.



I have always loved 'behind-the-scenes' TV programmes where a camera is allowed to go into areas of life where normally only the select few are privileged to go, and this article by Canadian superstar Shawn Farquhar gives us all a blow by blow account of his successful bid to fool Penn and Teller. It's fascinating to hear how the popular TV programme is put together and exactly what it is like to be part of the whole event - the nerves, the mishaps, the hopes and the expectations. It makes you realise just how nerve wracking the whole thing really is! Fascinating.

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Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

I was doing a review for Magicseen recently and I found myself writing the comment that I thought the routines were really 'magic for magicians'. This led me to wonder exactly what that means. After all, magic is surely not something that you define purely by its target audience, is it? It's either magic or it's not, irrespective of who is watching it, isn't it?

Well, actually no. There is such a thing as magic for magicians, and I think it is the failure sometimes to identify the distinction between that and magic more suited for lay people that causes some performers to bore their lay audiences to death!

People who are into magic, who study it, learn it and perform it, tend to get a different perspective on what makes a good trick. This perspective is coloured by their knowledge of method and technique. The net result of this insider information is that when a magician watches another performer, he spends as much, if not more, time analysing the other entertainer's skill and methodology than he does on trying to take an objective view about whether the plot and outcome of the trick is actually either interesting or magical.

Think for a moment about some of the most revered performers in magic. I mean those who are lauded by other magicians. Although it is a bit of a generalisation, I would suggest that many of them are magicians who either have great technical skill or whose ingenuity of method is all too apparent. Their magical colleagues rightly have admiration for the skill and expertise of

these people, but many of them would, I suspect, leave a lay audience confused if not even bored.

You see the lay person tends to take magic more at face value. When he or she sees a magic trick they tend to react instinctively to it. They may be amazed because something visually stunning or unexpected happens. They may be intrigued, because what they have seen defies the normal laws of nature. Or they may be hugely amused and entertained by the presentation which gave them pleasure because of the engaging way that it was put across. But what they won't do, is mull over whether the Elmsley Count was a better choice than any other false card count, because they don't have the knowledge to make such comparisons. Yes, they may try to work out how the trick was done, but it's a passing interest and not likely to turn into an in depth analysis.

Card routines which go on and on with multiple complex phases are great for magicians. They enjoy the complexity and love following the moves. A lay person will soon switch off because a) they don't fully understand why the selected card would want to end up between the two red Aces b) they lose track of what exactly is going on in the first place and c) the performer is so busy mumbling on about 'placing this card here' and 'giving the pack a few shuffles', that he's forgotten to even look at his audience.

Magic gets a bad name with the public when we lose sight of what is 'magic for magicians', and what is not.

Highlights

Vol. 20 No. 4 December 2011



Tip Of The Month: December can be a busy month for shows (although perhaps not so much this year!), so I always think it pays to check over the props you are going to be using to make sure they are OK, and that you have any disposable supplies you use in sufficient quantities to see you through the month.

MOST POPULAR

Featuring the most purchased products from my range

Ring And String Deluxe



A version of my Ring And String Routine was part of my very first lecture and ever since then I have had a fascination and interest in ring and cord moves. There are so many around, but I feel that sometimes the handling required to achieve them, can look a bit suspicious. With this in mind, I set about to try and create and adapt moves which would look as natural as possible in the way they were performed, and I like to think that I have pretty much managed that.

Ring And String Deluxe is a tremendous package offering you a DVD with clear footage and explanation of 6 moves (4 ring 'off' moves and 2 ring 'on'), plus it comes with a colour photo illustrated memory-jogger booklet which is designed to quickly remind you of the moves you have seen on the DVD (very useful if you want to avoid having to go back to the DVD every time) and to complete the package you are supplied with 3 metres of the thin rope which I use and which is perfect for ring and string work. It's all a snip at the price. **Price: £15.00**

Here are last month's top 5 selling products



Promo Card
Sticker Pack -
£6



Forever
Flapping Plus -
£15



Pay Envelope 2
- £6



A Simple Guide
To Creativity
E-Book - £7



The Strolling
Magician Resource
E-Book - £9



The Magic Party Sticker Pack - £30.00

Part of the reason why some bookers spend money on an entertainer for children's parties is that they are hoping that you will control the little devils as well as keep them amused. Controlling youngsters is a skill which is made up of many different facets, but one of the most important is being able to use a child's name. Know the name of every child at the party and you are well on the way to gaining an authority over them, and these packs of 1000 55mm self adhesive stickers will give you an easy way to get those important names without having to resort to a load of memory work. Something like this is what differentiates the pro from the amateur.



Impossible! £10.00

This is a truly stunning card trick. It's the sort of routine which is perfect to use on those occasions when you desperately need

to impress an audience whose mission appears to be to trip you up and work out how all your miracles are done!

This effect is best used when you have plenty of time to perform it and when the audience are paying attention. So, it's probably not the routine to use when racing from one table to the next at a big dinner, but it is exactly the sort of trick to bring out at a party or a more laid back function.

A spectator and the performer both select cards from different decks, and while the two packs are sealed in their boxes, the two selections magically transpose and turn up reversed in the other deck. No gimmicked cards supplied or required, in fact you use your own decks.

The Coin Collector's Purse £15.00



This has been a real hit this year, not only in my own performances, but also with my customers.

A marked coin vanishes leaving both your hands completely empty and is found by a spectator inside a small coin purse which has been lying all the while on his hand.

It's hard to put across in writing how strong this is in performance, but when you start to do it you will soon realise from the reaction that it gets with lay people. It seems to them completely impossible!

As well as receiving a nice black leather coin purse and full instructions, you also get a Vanisher gimmick which is how you are able to make the coin disappear so cleanly. The Vanisher is a fabulous utility device which you will also use in other tricks.



The Mini Leveridge Envelope - £10.00

Over the years I have become quite well known for being the person who uses a lot of envelopes in his magic, and also for devising a number of envelope gimmicks. One of the best ones, in my opinion, because of its versatility, is the Leveridge Envelope, which will produce, vanish or switch any flat object that will fit inside. There are three different sizes available of this innocent looking yet gimmicked envelope, and here I am talking about the mini version which is made in a size that is just a bit bigger than a poker size card. Works really well with business cards too. Comes as a pack of 3.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 41 November 11



Regular readers of Magicseen will know that we are always keen to feature good magicians from all over the world, but we are especially pleased when we are in a position to showcase entertainers from Europe, as often these people can escape the attention of UK magicians. Our cover stars from issue 41, Brynolf and Ljung, hail from Sweden and have had a lot of success with their comedy stage act. In fact, if you are wondering why they may sound a bit familiar, it's because they appeared on the last Penn and Teller: Fool Us series.

We love to laugh in the Magicseen office - our Management Board meetings which we have each year are spent mostly with us roaring with laughter! - and this is hardly surprising when we are fortunate enough to have one of the UK's funniest stand up performers and writers as our Deputy Editor. Since comedy is really Graham Hey's 'thing', it stands to reason that we like to feature a regular page or two of gags and comedy advice, and Graham uses his knowledge and connections with top artistes to create some terrific articles for our lucky readers.



Although I didn't manage to catch all of the last Penn and Teller: Fool Us series, I did happen to see the one featuring our own Graham Jolley. I have always been a big fan of Graham's work, so it was a trifle odd to see him fooling P&T with a self-working Simon Aronson trick! They obviously were keen to have him come over to the States to appear on their show doing his more regular stuff, which is simply great and so funny. Anyway, we chatted to Graham after his TV success and found him more irritated by his lack of subsequent local recognition than anything!

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Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

On the 1st December 1981 I awoke to my first day as a full time professional magician. My contract as a secondary school teacher had finished the previous day and so for the first time I had no salary and I knew that if I was to make any money at all it would have to be all down to my own abilities to create a successful business. No one else would owe me a living, no one else would pay me unless I earned it directly, it was an exciting if not slightly nervous moment!

I wasn't starting entirely from scratch. I presented my first lecture in 1979 at the Zodiac Magical Society in London, and since then I had got bookings for several more which had gone well. On the back of the lectures I had sold a few of the items, and then people started to contact me afterwards to enquire if they could buy some of the things they had seen on the night but which they hadn't bought at the time. In this way, I started mail order.

Looking back, I wonder how I had the nerve to leave a paid job for the insecurities of self employment. My friends, who clearly thought I was a bit crazy, would always say, "Well, if it doesn't work out, you can always go back to teaching." While this was true, I was determined not to go into my new venture with anything other than a positive mindset. In my own mind there was no question of ever going back to teaching.

When you are in your mid-twenties everything seems possible and so I set about creating a business that I hoped would stand the test of time. It wasn't as easy to set a

business up as it is today. There was no internet, credit cards were hardly used at all, and the only way to advertise yourself was through magazine advertising. Most orders arrived by post, and once credit cards gained in popularity, the telephone became the main way that customers would contact me to place orders.

But creating a reputation and getting your message out there was a much slower process and involved travelling the length and breadth of the country appearing at every convention going and presenting as many lectures as possible. Word of mouth and personal appearance were really important so you needed to get out there and be seen.

So this month sees a completion of 30 years since those first steps and naturally enough I have been reflecting on how it has all gone over the last 3 decades. Well, they always say that you don't get rich being a magic dealer, and I'm certainly proof of that (!), but I have enjoyed up to now a wonderful life style that has given me so many highs and very few lows. I still thoroughly enjoy what I do and intend taking my business on still further.

Today there are so many opportunities and possibilities that I find it a really exciting time to be involved in it all. Technological progress has enabled me to incorporate so many new ideas into the presentation of my sales products and the internet has revolutionised the way people access information about magic. 30 years may seem a long time to be doing all this, but in my own mind I feel like I'm still only just starting!

Highlights

Vol. 20 No. 5 January 2012

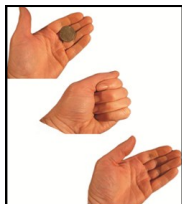


Tip Of The Month: I guess we all like to put new items into our act from time to time, but sometimes looking at older material hidden away in magazines or classic books can provide a richer vein of fresh material than getting the latest 'thing' being pushed by the dealers. Bound compilations of magazines I find particularly useful in this regard.

MOST POPULAR

Featuring the most purchased products from my range

The Vanisher



The best selling product for 2011 was not actually a trick at all but a versatile gimmick. Released a year ago, the **Vanisher** has proved to be hugely popular with magicians everywhere, as it offers a simple yet highly practical method for either vanishing a small object such as a coin or ring, or as a means of temporarily hiding such an object.

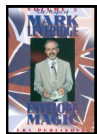
If you wear a jacket when performing, you can set up a **Vanisher** in a matter of moments and you are then ready at any time, and without any get ready, to use it.

Want to vanish a coin leaving both your hands immediately empty and without using your sleeves? With the **Vanisher** you can. Want to show your hands empty and seconds later secretly have a coin in one of them? It will do that too. You'll think of lots of ways to get the most out of it. Comes as a pack of two. **Price: £10.00**

Here are last month's top 5 selling products



Pay Envelope 2 -
£6



Envelope Magic
DVD - £18



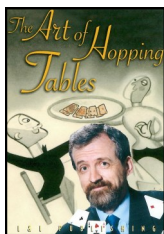
1-2-3 Jumbo
Cards Across -
£20



Pay Envelope 1
- £5



The Utility
Switch Envelope
- £5



The Art Of Hopping Tables DVD - £18.00

How often have you been able to watch a close up magician working at a real booking (as opposed to a 'set up' situation)? Probably virtually never. Well, this 3 hour DVD allows you to not only see me working a commercial booking but it enables me to point out and explain all the things that are going on to make the job what it is using the real situations as examples. It's fascinating and really helpful to anyone who is interested in taking on this type of work. And there are also explanations of half a dozen of the routines that you see me perform too.



Perfect Crime £45.00

Any magic which uses a borrowed finger ring I always think has a certain

appeal for a lay audience, and this effect using two beautifully made brass boxes, a borrowed ring and a small coin, undoubtedly captures the imagination of the spectators.

The plot is very simple. The ring is dropped by a spectator into one of the boxes, the coin into the other. Without any obvious moves, the two objects magically change places, and both boxes are opened by spectators to reveal the outcome.

There is no difficult sleight of hand involved. Instead the well gimmicked boxes and some logical handling have been combined to make this a deceptive illusion.

You receive the gorgeous brass boxes with their screw on lids, two felt carrying bags and full handling instructions.

ESP Match Up £10.00

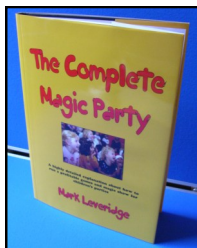


There have been quite a number of card matching methods published or marketed over the years, but this one of mine has stood the test of time and continues to be popular with my customers.

Two sets of five ESP cards are used, one set with red backs, the other with blue. A spectator is given one set and you have the other. Both sets are shuffled.

You place a card face down on the table and then the spectator places any one of his cards face down opposite yours. This is repeated for all five cards. Although you never see the faces of any of his cards, and you always place your card down first, when the cards are collected up and dealt out, they are all in matching pairs!

This is a simple and practical method which avoids over complex handling.



The Complete Magic Party Book - £50.00

If you are finding it more difficult to get children's show bookings these days, perhaps it's time for you to diversify and offer something a little different. A Magic Party is a combination of games/activities and magic, and it allows you to offer to take over all or a significant part of any traditional party. This hard backed book is absolutely packed with expert advice on all aspects of presenting a Magic Party and contains also 40 games, 10 warm ups and 20 magic routines, every single item of which has come from my own commercial shows.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 42 January 12



We have a number of people who write occasional articles for us, and a new name who we have added to the list of contributors appears for the first time in this issue - Eoin Smith. His first article is on the apparent resurgence of major live magic shows which are currently appearing all over the UK. Despite the fact that we are told we are in a bad recession, there is no letting up on the number of events that are being staged, and Eoin looks at and highlights some of the more high profile ones. If you thought live magic was dead, read his article and you'll change your mind.

Cyril Takayama is a bit of a legend in his native Asia where he consistently plays to massive sell out crowds of fans at large venues. He also has many TV appearances and has thus, almost by definition, a considerable YouTube presence too, which has helped to bring him to any even wider worldwide audience. Our cover star chats exclusively to Magicseen about his life and performances, but he also reveals a completely different side of his personality when we learn about his humanitarian work in which he has given physical assistance at some of the recent natural disasters.



For many amateur or semi pro magicians there is a secret dream which they harbour inside them, a dream that one day they will be able to throw off the shackles of their current everyday job and be able to turn to magic as a full time occupation. It all seems rather glamorous - working relatively short hours for a disproportionately high rate of pay in a job which is fun and varied. Well, only a relative few have actually taken that plunge and we get the sage advice of three of them - Shaum McCree, Clive Hymas and John Howtowa - who explain what the reality behind the dream really is.

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Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

Last month I posed a question on my Facebook page about whether anyone else had noticed that show bookings for the usually busy December were down this year. Several others posted comments ranging from simply agreeing to saying that it was the quietest December they could ever remember!

Well, I suppose we should hardly be surprised. When money is tight, one of the very easiest elements of any event to axe or simply not book in the first place, is probably the magician. We are, I guess, very much the icing on the cake, which means people can still have the cake even if the icing hasn't been applied.

I've heard some economists say that the current recession may last not just months, but potentially even years! If this is true, then what we are now experiencing is not a recession, it's a new permanent reality, and so perhaps we would do better to stop moaning about how down the bookings are, and instead get to grips with making the most of this new situation.

The media is obsessed with the bad news elements of the current financial situation, and so it is easy to be fooled into thinking that everything is impossible and hopeless. Nothing could be further from the truth. Even in a recession there are still a lot of people who have a large amount of disposable income which they are looking to spend, and our entertainment is exactly the sort of thing that they may wish to spend it on.

The trick is to make sure that what you have

to offer gets to the right people. It's no longer any good just renewing your annual ad space in Yellow Pages and sitting back to wait for the bookings to come in. Apart from anything else, Yellow Pages is now dead in the water. No matter how much the YP sales people try to tell you the opposite, the reality is that what was once a gigantic publication that absolutely everyone used to source the services and products they needed, is now a pocket size lump of paper destined almost instantly for the re-cycling bin.

As performers we must embrace more diverse forms of publicity. The web is core, of course, but not just putting up any old website and assuming that is the job done, but ensuring that it is optimised and that Google can find it. Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube etc) are all new avenues for us to exploit. Having a blog to keep your profile up there is also a good way to draw attention to yourself, and how about using your database of previous clients (you do keep records of your earlier shows, don't you?) to contact people who have booked you before to see if you can help them again? This is particularly pertinent for kids shows where there are several children in the family.

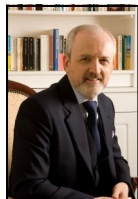
Targeted magazine advertising can also work (although beware expensive scattergun publications which don't have a clearly defined target readership), but whatever you decide, you will need to do something if you wish to continue to get bookings. So, what will you do in 2012?



Highlights



Vol. 20 No. 6 February 2012



Tip Of The Month: If you are booked to entertain at a venue that is not the booker's home, I think it is a good idea to make sure you have the booker's mobile number in case of last minute emergencies, and also if working at a hotel or other formal venue, take the landline number of the venue itself too in case you can't reach the mobile.

MOST POPULAR

Featuring the most purchased products from my range

The Envelope DVD



Although I don't sell a very big range of DVDs, Volume 2 of my three volume set produced by L&L in the US has proved to be particularly popular. For many years I have been associated with magic using envelopes (my **Forever Flapping Plus E-Book** continues to sell extremely well, for instance), and so I suppose it is hardly surprising that this DVD, which has 10 routines using envelopes in one form or another, has been consistently sought after.

The routines included here are quite wide ranging. The Invisible Deck Routine and Credit Transfer are suitable for parlour shows, Devil's Island is an unusual mental effect which can play either big or small, Easy Just Chance uses my gimmicked Leveridge Envelope, while Pre-View and Locator both take advantage of the fabulous Utility Switch Envelope. Intuition is a reputation making effect in which a spectator appears to do all the work, and Instant Card Flight has a moment of stunning visual magic in it. All this plus more makes this a great buy. **Price: £18.00**

Here are last month's top 5 selling products



Pay Envelope 2 -
£6



Colour
Confusion - **£15**



Magic Party
Floor Spots -
£30



Timed Piece -
£15

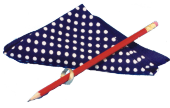


Choin - **£25**



Co-inci-mental - £15.00

The You-Do-As-I-Do plot is well established in magic but the traditional method requires rather a lot of packet switching between the performer and spectator and I always thought that there must be a better and cleaner way. Well, here it is! Two half decks are shuffled and spread face down. The performer selects any card from the spectator's half and the spectator does likewise from the performer's half. Surprisingly both the cards match, but what is far more amazing is that when the rest of the cards are spread face up, the two removed cards turn out to be the only red suited ones in the entire deck!



The Borrowed Ring On Pencil £7.00

This routine will take quite a bit of practice as it is one of the more difficult handlings that I sell, but the effect is really worth it.

Three props are used. A borrowed finger ring, an ordinary pencil and an unprepared handkerchief. No extra rings, no gimmicks.

In three impossible ways the borrowed ring penetrates the handkerchief and ends up on the pencil centre. On the last occasion a spectator is actually holding both ends of the pencil and yet the ring still gets on there. This is powerful stuff!

It should be pointed out that this is not really a table hopping routine because you need to work on a close up mat and it is important that your audience is sitting basically in front of you, but under the right conditions and performed well, this is quite stunning.

The Word £10.00



Book tests have been popular, both with mentalists and their audiences, seemingly forever and there have been countless numbers of variations marketed over the years.

Where **The Word** scores over most of them, is that it can be performed with almost any paperback book. Without any advance preparation, in fact without even knowing ahead of time which book is going to be used, you can be handed a book and immediately launch into the effect.

The pages are riffled and a spectator calls stop. It's a genuinely free choice. The spectator notes the last word on the top line of his chosen page and then the book is shut. Moments later, with no fishing, you are able to reveal the chosen word. With no memory work involved and just some basic handling to master, this is very practical.

Ropey Rope - £15.00



When doing children's shows I love using classic magic dressed up in appropriate presentations, and **Ropey Rope** is a perfect example of what can be achieved if you go down this route. This combines a rope blend, in which several small pieces blend into one long piece, with a silk appearance in a rope knot, with a cut and restored rope, and everything is wrapped in a fun and audience involving presentation that lasts for several minutes. You are supplied with all the ropes and the necessary 12" silk, you simply need to have a pair of scissors and a change bag.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 42 January 12



We like to keep our readers on their toes so that every time they open the latest copy of Magicseen, they are not exactly sure what they will find inside. It's far more exciting that way! And so I suspect that there were few, if any, readers who thought that on working their way through issue 42 they would come across a detailed article on how to arrange a Circus Skills event at children's parties. Since we at Magicseen know absolutely nothing about the subject, we got Kris Katchit, a pro entertainer well versed in the art, to give us his pearls of wisdom., and a great job he made of it too.

At one time, magazine editors would rely on letters arriving in the post to fill their Letters column, but nowadays, of course, it's all by email. However, rather than just having a boring succession of people writing in to say how wonderful (or terrible!) some previous article is, we encourage our readers to send in questions about any magic related subject, and we endeavour to give an informed answer to each one. It's great because we never know what topic is going to crop up and so we think it makes our Readers' Letters page a bit more diverse than most.



Paul Gordon is pretty good at making himself visible in the magic world, and we are perfectly happy to have him in for a chat from time to time to find out what is going on in the world of cards. Many people are amazed that Paul can make an entire living out of just doing card tricks, but there can be no doubt that the appetite that magicians have for card magic never seems to diminish, and that with the right presentation and personality, card magic can be made highly palatable for the lay public too. And Paul is a bit of a master at working in both camps.

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Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

It's generally recognised as a sign of getting old. You suddenly discover that you are finding it difficult to remember peoples' names, even people who you know really well sometimes! We've all had the experience I'm sure where our mother calls us by three or four different names until she reaches the right one. But when it starts happening to you, you realise that it is something you don't have any control over, it's just part of the 'fun' of getting on a bit.

When you are working as an entertainer, if you forget a spectator's name after they have told it to you only moments before, you can get round it normally by simply not using the name until such time as it perhaps flashes back into your memory. But what about if this temporary memory lapse spreads to other things?

Go on, admit it, I'll bet that as some point in your life you have been performing a routine and suddenly you have gone completely blank about what you do next. This is particularly likely if the routine in question is some complicated card effect in which you need to perform several different counts or moves one after the other, and you suddenly lose your way with it all.

I've actually seen some magicians who have suddenly stopped what they are performing and literally gone right back to the very beginning and started again, because the only way that they could get through the entire effect was if it was performed in sequence from start to finish!

I can remember being abroad at a conven-

tion and being asked to dem Wild Dice. I must have done that trick thousands of times over the years, yet after the first few seconds I suddenly went completely blank and had no idea exactly how I needed to proceed.

Of course, there can be good reasons why we get lost halfway through an effect. A sudden interruption which breaks the concentration can sometimes do it, but it's often not so much to do with a sudden loss of memory, but more to do with an interruption of the physical memory. By this I mean that when you perform a trick many times, you get into a rhythm of actions as anyone does with any sequence that they repeat endlessly. You are not consciously thinking through the combination of moves every time, your hands just get accustomed to moving in a prescribed order, which then frees up your brain to concentrate on other things. If you then get interrupted, because your brain wasn't actually engaged in the trick handling, it can't sometimes work out where you are and therefore what comes next. And that's why people need to go back to the beginning and start again.

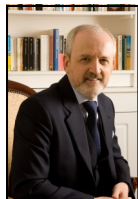
I have a lot of different tricks to remember and to be able to demonstrate at the drop of a hat, and as I get older it does get a bit harder to keep them all up to scratch. In fact I've taken to running through some of my range of effects before lectures or conventions simply to remind my body of the handling combinations required. That way when I get asked to do it, I find it easier to click into action than I would if I hadn't even looked at the trick for months.



Highlights



Vol. 20 No. 7 March 2012

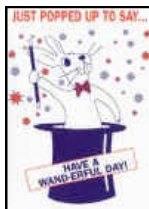


Tip Of The Month: Don't underestimate the importance of using some form of PA when performing at children's parties. A portable amp ensures that you can always be heard without the need to shout and makes organising games much easier, plus when doing a magic show it allows you to add nuance and tone to everything you say.

MOST POPULAR

Featuring the most purchased products from my range

Birthday Card Surprise



I can remember that when I first released **Birthday Card Surprise** it was a bit of a departure for me. Up to that point I had only sold close up magic and now here I was offering something that was exclusively and totally aimed at children's entertainers. I was concerned that although I had been doing children's shows myself for many years, my customers might not realise and might wonder what I knew about the subject. However I needn't have worried as this trick has been really popular ever since it first burst on to the scene.

Birthday parties have always been the mainstay of children's work, and this effect plugs into that. You are supplied with 10 different routines as variations on the main idea of producing by magic a give away birthday card, so there is plenty of variety. And the cards are designed so that you can leave your name and/or publicity details inside them so that the trick even ends up being a publicity vehicle for you as well. Easy to do, this is good magic that you will use. **Price: £25.00**

Here are last month's top 5 selling products



Pay Envelope 1 -
£5



The Vanisher -
£10



The Coin
Collector's
Purse - £15



CD Illustrated
Catalogue - free



Ring And
String Deluxe -
£15



Animal Badge Pack - £20.00

This **New Release** comprises of a set of 60 attractive full colour badges which children's entertainers can use as gifts to reward their young helpers during their shows. Kids love to collect badges and will be delighted to receive these cute looking animal designs. The pack has ten each of six different pictures, and this makes a nice motivational tool during a games section of a party as you can get the kids to try to eventually win the whole set. For years I have been supplying First Class Helper Badges, these new designs give you further variety to offer at your shows.



The El Duco/ Leveridge Combo £75.00

New Release! The El Duco Hip Style Wallet was designed as an easy way to achieve a no-palm card to wallet, but the design of the wallet itself lends it to several other possibilities as well, and I have created this product in order to take advantage of these possibilities.

The black leather wallet is beautifully slim and as a bill fold slips easily into your jacket or back pocket. You can use it as a palm card to wallet as it provides the easiest palm loading mechanism I've seen. It will also enable you to switch cards placed inside and also provides a perfect way to peek cards placed inside.

The 60 minute DVD supplied explains everything it will do, provides 6 routines along with a set of 12 special cards required.

The Exchange £15.00



Based on the routine Business Exchange which features in my Going Walkabout lecture, this **New Release** offers you an easy to do routine which is ideal for walkabout, table hopping or stand up shows.

Two spectators each randomly select cards which they slip into envelopes which they have examined. The performer writes the card names on the envelope flaps and the spectators hold their cards in full view.

Bringing the two envelopes together until they touch, the spectators are surprised to discover when they remove the cards from their envelopes that the two cards have instantly changed places.

No reset, this comes with a special deck which makes everything a breeze to perform, plus a supply of envelopes.

Monster Badge Pack - £20.00



As a companion to the **Animal Badge Pack** detailed above, this **New Release** of 60 55mm badges contains ten each of six different monster designs. Ideal for boys, as with the other badge packs these do not attach with pins but have the totally safe Kids Klip plastic fastening which enables you to give them out without fear that any child will hurt themselves. I can also offer a personalisation service for all the badges which enables you to order sets which have your contact details printed as part of the badge, thus making every badge you give away like a business card for you.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue
Issue 43 March 12



Although as a general rule we don't have regular columns in Magicseen, as we feel it can get a bit boring and too predictable when the same people are writing every issue, we do have themes which we like to return to from time to time, and one of those is our ongoing series of background features on magic in specific countries. It's an interesting way to get a snapshot of what is happening magically in different places around the world and to discover who are the movers and shakers there. Our latest foray into this sees us cross the border into Scotland in the company of Eoin Smith.

One of the most instantly recognisable faces currently in magic, Teller (the quiet one from Penn and Teller) appears on our cover and gives us a world exclusive interview inside. He talks, of course, about his working relationship with Penn and inevitably about how the Fool Us TV show came about, but he also explains much about his other work away from his role in the duo, which is possibly a side of him that most people are unaware of. Considering that normally you never hear him speak, I was concerned that the interview would be hard going, but it was quite the opposite.



Every now and again a book comes along which makes a bit of a stir in the magic world. It might be because the book features someone who is famous or important, or it might be that the publication is seen as something of a seminal work on its chosen subject. Tony Middleton's Performing Magic book comes in the latter category, and the reviews of it so far have been nothing less than highly complimentary. It's interesting that a book about performance rather than actual tricks should be so well considered, and we chat to Tony about it all in this interesting article.

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Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

By the middle of April this year all of my closest magical friends will have retired from their regular jobs. Two have been retired for a while, but the other two are taking early retirement. Having worked hard at their regular jobs for 30+ years, they can't wait to shed the responsibilities of their day to day employment and get on with enjoying the rest of their lives doing things that are more attractive and fulfilling. And of course, magic is top of their 'to do' list.

As someone who has spent the same amount of time working as a self employed magician, I don't have the luxury of someone else paying me an employment pension. And to be honest, I'm enjoying (and always have enjoyed) what I do so much that the thought of stopping to do anything else never enters my head!

However, it is fascinating watching others who I have known for so long coming to terms with one of life's major changes, and seeing how important magic is as something that will frame much of their newly found free time. After all, for many people the idea of being available to do shows if they want, or to attend magic conventions, or do justice to reading the magic mags which arrive every month, or to be able to sit during the day and watch magic DVDs, study magic books, or even to practise those tricks which really require it, is a pretty attractive prospect when normally there is no time for such luxuries.

Yet despite this it can be a scary prospect. When contemplating giving up the day job, there can be a concern about losing the very

structure that while you are trapped in it you desperately want to escape! So magic as a pretty all consuming hobby has a very important part to play, and can offer a haven and an interest that is very reassuring.

Of course, one major benefit of being involved in magic is that it gives a retired person the opportunity to still create some income! Anyone who has been trying to fit a few paid shows a year in around a regular job schedule can suddenly feel the shackles being removed as the opportunity to consider taking on more shows becomes a possibility. This can be particularly nice if you have a pension or savings that allow you the luxury of picking and choosing which bookings you take on. Unlike the regular pro who needs to make his living from magic and who therefore may not be able to be too choosy when it comes to accepting work, the retired magic 'pro' has a completely different attitude and can select only those engagements which sound fun!

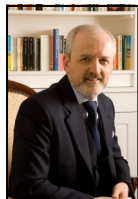
But I think the biggest benefit that involvement in magic brings is the social structure that it provides. Friends who you work with in your normal job may well suddenly not stay your friends for long after the day to day contact has been removed, but your magic friends are still there after you retire and the common bond that magic affords us all means we are still plugged into a source of human contact that is lasting and strong. Our interest in magic brings us all together and enables our friendships to endure, and in fact I look forward to seeing more of my magic buddies in the future, not less.



Highlights



Vol. 20 No. 8 April 2012



Tip Of The Month: If you need advice with your magic, try to get that help from those who have the knowledge and expertise to give you good feedback. A small circle of trusted friends who know you and your magic and who have plenty of experience will prove far more useful to you than random people from down the magic club.

MOST POPULAR

Featuring the most purchased products from my range

1-2-3 Jumbo Cards Across



I came up with this version of the classic Cards Across many years ago, and it is still a routine that I perform myself regularly in both adult and children's shows. I love the fact that it uses two un gimmicked envelopes, that there are no special counts or sleights required, and that the plot is so simple that even young children can appreciate what is going on. And to be honest, you can't say that of most Cards Across routines.

You see, the regular Cards Across effect uses two sets of ten cards, and you are asking children, perhaps, to understand the concept that two piles of ten changes to a pile of seven and a pile of thirteen and that therefore this means three cards must have gone from one pile to the other. Not sure that's a concept many youngsters would be able to fully grasp. However, with **1-2-3 Jumbo Cards Across**, there are just six cards, three in each of two envelopes, and at the end one envelope is empty and all six cards are in the other. Simple! **Price: £20.00**

Here are last month's top 5 selling products



The Vanisher -
£10



Wild Dice - **£20**



CD Illustrated
Catalogue - **free**



The Exchange -
£15



1-2-3 Jumbo
Cards Across -
£20



The Magic Party Floor Spots - £30.00

This set of 6 colourful rubber non-slip mats are useful for either doing games or simply for organising kids to make your life easier. For instance, if you have three children up to help you in your magic show, they often fidget and move around so that you keep needing to adjust where they are standing so that they don't block the audience's view. Use three of these Floor Spots as 'magic circles' on which the kids have to stand to make the magic work, and you'll find they are happy to stay put where you need them to be. Little things like this show good attention to detail, don't you think?



Hide And Seek £8.00

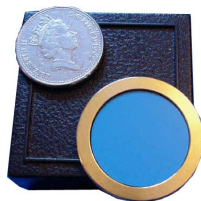
If you perform in situations where there are no tables and where your audience may also all be standing, you need effects

which can be done entirely up in your hands, and this card routine was designed for just such situations.

In essence this routine can best be described as the Ambitious Card, in reverse! Instead of a selected card being put into the deck centre and constantly coming back to the top, a card you claim does not enjoy the limelight keeps disappearing from the top of the deck and hiding itself away in the middle of the pack.

And just as the audience are getting the picture, you hit them with a surprise when the back of the selected card changes colour. No reset, this uses your own regular Bicycle deck.

Choin £25.00



One thing that you notice when you perform a lot for lay people, is that their concentration is often fairly poor and their attention to the details of a plot, for example, may be a bit sketchy.

As a result I often try to simplify tricks so that the audience has less chance of losing the thread of what is going on, and **Choin** is an example of this.

Based on the classic Hopping Halves, this variation uses two very different objects (a brass poker chip with a blue centre and a 10p coin) instead of two similar looking coins, and the routine consists of two quick transpos followed by a surprise ending.

With no re-set to worry about either, this is one table hopping trick that has a lot going for it. Room in your pocket for one?

The Collected
Card Magic
Of
Mark Leveridge



Volume Two

The Collected Card Magic of Mark Leveridge Vol.2 - £15.00

Do you enjoy card magic? Many people do, and if you are one of them you are going to love this 80 page A5 size perfect bound book as it contains 10 of my card creations. Included here are full details of previously marketed effects 007, the Modest Card and Diary Of A Nobody, as well as routines still in my current catalogue such as Seeing Is Believing and 1-2-3 Jumbo Cards Across. If you have Vol.1 you'll want the Vol.2 for sure.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue
Issue 43 March 12



Magic seems to be having something of a revival on UK TV these days, which is great to see. The general popularity of Penn and Teller: Fool Us, The Magicians, Dynamo's Magician Impossible and of course the occasional Derren Brown programmes, means magic is to the forefront again. This means that even children's TV (no doubt fuelled by Harry Potter interest too) also is looking for magic related programmes, and in this article we find out more about Anthony Owen's latest magical BBC offering in which Supply Teachers turn out to be more than just teachers!

Ever wanted to come up with your own tricks? Ever wished you could be a bit more creative with the magic that you already do? Well, we can't all be a Jay Sankey, but if you know the right way to go about it, most people have the capacity to alter, improve and innovate with their magic - you just need to know how to get started. In Squeezing The Creative Juices we look at the 6 best ways to go about the process of developing magic that is a little different. It takes some imagination and a measure of knowledge, but our article will give you pointers to set you off on the right track.



Anyone who has read Magicseen will know that we like to have a bit of a laugh in our pages, and we don't tend to take ourselves too seriously! Deputy Editor Graham Hey is an excellent stand up comedy performer and writer and he uses his contacts in the comedy world to provide our readers with comedy related articles, interviews and material on his Comedy Page. In issue 43 he chats to highly successful stand up comedian Patrick Monahan who has won big money in recent times for his act and he tells us a bit more about his success.

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Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

Sometimes I get customers who ask my advice about which trick(s) they should buy and they say things like, "I need something that's easy to do because I don't get any time to practise." And I must admit that when people say that I have often felt that that was just an excuse for a lack of effort, but actually it may not be. Here's perhaps why.

Most magicians are hobbyists and amateurs who probably have a full time regular job to do. This means that mentally and physically they are tied up with work no doubt for 5 days of most weeks. So unless they have a job such as a night porter in a hotel, or perhaps a security guard, where there are lengthy quiet periods when they have to be present but are not necessarily actively doing anything in particular, the likelihood is that there is no weekday practice time.

So this means that magic has to be put off to the evenings or weekends. When you get home from work, if you have a family or partner, you need to see them, talk to them, probably eat a meal with them, and see to all the myriad of little chores and tasks that having a home entails.

Then there are your social activities. Seeing friends, playing sport perhaps, even attending a magic club meeting or going along to some other social club or event, all these mean you are out and occupied so that your magic practice gets put off again. And even if you do have an evening in when there's a bit of spare time, you're probably a bit tired after everything else you've done during the day and so you'd rather put your feet up and

watch the football on TV than get to grips with The Pass!

Weekends then. Surely there must be plenty of time on a Saturday or Sunday? Well, what about washing the car, that decorating job you've been promising to do for weeks, the garden that seems to sprout weeds almost as soon as you look at it, the weekly supermarket food shop, oh and that trip to take the kids to their swimming lesson, football practice, Judo class etc, all these will require your time. Hmmm, still no free space then.

The fact is that most of us have really busy lives and unless magic practice is seen as something important or even essential (such as if you have an important show coming up that you need to get ready for), you will probably never get round to it and the days, weeks and eventually years can pass by without you ever getting round to any proper training.

This is why the most practice is done by teenagers and students - both have plenty of time and few responsibilities and so can devote themselves to uninterrupted periods of practice if they so desire.

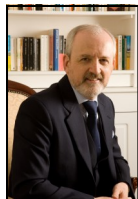
But for the rest of us, the only way to guarantee practice time and to therefore improve our skill set, is to literally schedule it in. Set a realistic amount of time aside in your diary and treat it like an important appointment that you can't get out of. Take it seriously, shut the door, stop looking at your emails and don't answer the 'phone! It's the only way you'll ever get round to it.



Highlights



Vol. 20 No. 9 May 2012



Tip Of The Month: If you are working a dinner function with close up, try to find out in advance whether the tables will be served and cleared in any particular order. If they are, it will help you to approach the tables at a time which is the **LEAST** likely to suffer an interruption from the waiting staff.

MOST POPULAR

Featuring the most purchased products from my range

Excalibur



Whenever I attend a convention, I like to put some of the more interesting looking props out on display in order to draw the attention of customers to the products. One item that always gets a lot of attention is the lovely 6" pewter sword which is supplied with **Excalibur**.

Although not gimmicked in any way, the sword is very striking and interesting looking, and provides the ideal prop for this easy-to-master card stab.

A card is freely chosen, signed and lost back in the deck which is completely wrapped in tissue paper. The sword is thrust through the package and when the tissue is removed it is discovered that the sword has split the deck right next to the signed card. No re-set, this highly popular trick will serve you well. **Price: £15.00**

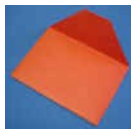
Here are last month's top 5 selling products



Wild Dice - £20



Forever
Flapping Plus -
£15



Jumbo
Leveridge
Envelope - £5



Master
Routines - Coll.
Works - £25



Master
Routines DVD -
£18



The Invisible Deck Routine - £28.00

I love using this version of the classic Invisible Deck in my stand up act, because there is so much scope for fun in the presentation and as such, it makes an ideal opener. This routine does not use any physical deck at all. Instead, a spectator is handed an invisible pack and is invited to shuffle it and remove any card which he names out loud. He then examines a pay envelope, slips his invisible card inside, and puts his initials on the flap. Moments later, the performer removes a **VISIBLE** card from the same initialled envelope which matches the freely named selected. No force, no palming.



Timed Piece £15.00

Timed Piece is a startling piece of magic which makes an ideal alternative to the Fly-

ing Ring.

A man's finger ring is borrowed, placed under a handkerchief and given to someone to hold. With empty hands the performer removes his watch and holds it up to enable a second spectator to time how long the trick is going to take.

Suddenly the handkerchief is pulled out of the spectator's grasp, and instantly the ring disappears only to simultaneously appear linked on the sealed strap of the magician's watch!

The sudden transposition of the ring often produces a gasp from lay people and it really is visual magic at its best. Comes with special hanky, gimmick and instructions.

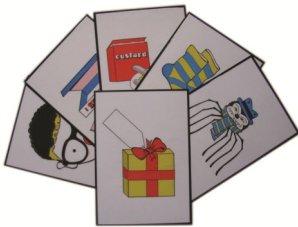
Yes And No £8.00



Mentalism of almost any sort is currently very popular with the lay public, and this little packet effect is a nice example of what can be achieved with some simple handling and a pile of 5 ESP cards.

A spectator is shown the ESP cards and invited to name any one of them. No matter which one he selects, you can reveal that you knew he would choose that particular symbol, as the other four cards have the word **NO** printed on their backs while the selection has a **YES** on its back.

Only 5 cards are used, and there is no force of symbol. This is ideal as a trick to slip into your wallet and to carry around with you at all times, as it is always ready to go at any time. It is not hard to do either, so you can relax when performing it. Comes with the set of specially printed cards.



The Present - £20.00

If you entertain at children's birthday parties and you don't have this marvellous routine, you are really missing out. The effect centres on a child's attempt to secure a picture of a present for himself by magic, thus avoiding all the pictures of funny/silly presents. With loads of business and audience participation built in, this is great for children aged 3-6. You are supplied with a set of 6 brightly coloured and laminated A5 size pictures, two envelopes and the routine.



Magicseen

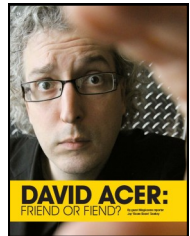
Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 44 May 12



One of the really interesting aspects of being the Editor of Magicseen is that I get sent all manner of products and articles for potential inclusion in the magazine. You never really know what is going to turn up next! Recently I received the pdf of a new book on Improvisation, and let's face it, they don't come along every day. We decided to give our readers a taste of what this book has to offer by publishing this extract in which author Mowgli explains how having a knowledge and aptitude for Improv can be hugely beneficial when presenting commercial close up.

Because we like to cast the Magicseen net as widely as we can, it's not always possible for us to personally interview everyone who we would like to include in our pages. So to get round this we ask trusted others to sit down and conduct a Q and A session with some target celebrities on our behalf. When we asked Jay Sankey to interview fellow Canadian magician and friend David Acer, we didn't realise quite how funny the resulting article would be, but funny it is, and enlightening too. So I guess if the creativity ever dries up, Jay can always fall back on his journalist skills.



Jay Fortune is a long standing personal friend as well as a great supporter of Magicseen, and from time to time he puts his thinking cap on and pens a Think Tank column for us. In the current issue, Jay cranks up the irony with a hugely tongue-in-cheek article about how to maximise your income from magic in these somewhat trying times. Jay loves to poke fun at things and so I don't recommend that you ACTUALLY follow what he says, but it should give you a good grin imagining what it would be like if you really did take his advice at face value!

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Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

I have always found the creative process involved in coming up with new ideas totally fascinating. And when I put together the content for my book *A Simple Guide To Creativity*, it was a really interesting exercise because it meant I had to sit and carefully work out exactly what it is that I do to come up with new stuff, something which normally I just did relatively intuitively.

But the fact is, coming up with the initial concept or 'wish list' of what I want to achieve, is only half of the process. The other half consists of getting the bits and pieces together needed to perform the trick, devising and then practising any moves required to make it work, and of course trying to evolve a presentation that will pass muster in the real world.

Often it is in the course of practising the intended moves that things start to change as I realise that there may be reasons which make what in theory had seemed like a good idea, actually pretty impractical! Sometimes a move can seem wrong, but actually all it needs is a lot more handling practice and then it will come right. Other times, no amount of handling will ever make the thing work, because the concept is not lived up to by the reality, and on these occasions, once I have come to this conclusion, I try to re-think the method and work up another, better solution.

With some tricks, everything drops into place relatively quickly and easily, while with others it can feel like you are bashing your head against a brick wall. Some ideas soon become favourites, others never seem

to get past the drawing board stage. But one thing is certain, at some point in a trick's development, I will have to take the plunge and actually try it out in a show.

You see, no amount of thinking, of preparation and of practice can ever replace an actual road test of a new idea. Even when you think you have worked out every possible potential problem, and even when you have practised your proposed handling until it is second nature, there can still be unforeseen problems which only a real performance will highlight.

An example of this is an idea I had with a borrowed watch. To practise this I used my own watch, and I had the handling completely sorted. The first time I performed it for real, the watch I was handed was hugely heavy, far heavier than mine. This meant I found it much harder to handle it as I needed to and although I got through it, it was really tricky. The second time I tried it, a lady handed me her watch, and the strap was very thin and very limp, with the result that again, I struggled to handle the trick smoothly.

The upshot of both of these experiences is that I have gone back to the drawing board to see if I can come up with a more robust handling in order to get round the variety of watches that I may be required to use.

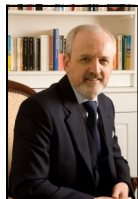
So if you are trying to be a bit creative, don't forget the importance of road testing. It can be stressful but in the end, if you genuinely want a good trick, it's the only way to get something truly workable.



Highlights



Vol. 20 No. 10 June 2012



Tip Of The Month: One of the problems of being a table magician is that often you can be trying to work when there is a lot of background noise and/or music. Sometimes this noise can all but drown you out, so make sure that you have a few tricks you can perform silently and which are visually self explanatory - it can be a life saver.

MOST POPULAR

Featuring the most purchased products from my range

The British Close Up Magic Symposium The First Decade

This is a big book in every respect. Firstly it is physically big, running as it does to 214 A4 size pages, with hard covers and a glossy dust jacket. Then it is big in terms of its content, as there are over 80 contributions from 52 close up luminaries. And then it is big with respect to who those contributors are, as you can appreciate when I tell you that Michael Ammar, David Roth, Tommy Wonder, John Bannon, Andy Nyman, Michael Vincent, Paul Wilson, Simon Lovell, Guy Hollingworth and Aldo Colombini are amongst those providing their magic and thoughts.



All in all this is a fabulous book full of great magic and thought provoking and useful ideas and opinions. You'll be glad you got your copy. **Price: £30.00**

Here are last month's top 5 selling products



The Coin Collector's Purse - £15



Ring And String Deluxe - £15



Timed Piece - £15



The Vanisher - £10



El Duco/Leveridge Wallet Combo - £75

Spot The Difference - £15.00



Jumbo card effects are often a good choice for a stand up spot as they pack small yet can play reasonably big, but many of the 'find-the-lady' type routines always seem to me to be either highly contrived, in terms of their patter theme, or simply monotonous, as the performer keeps repeating essentially the same sequences for no apparent reason other than that he knows different methods to achieve it! In contrast, this routine has a great internal logic, is easy to do, ends on a surprise and is commercial in every sense.



Risky Business £15.00

There are two very good reasons for considering this close up routine for your repertoire.

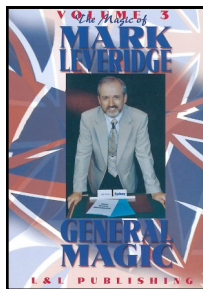
Firstly, it's a fast paced, entertaining Just Chance effect in which a spectator really tries hard to keep track of which envelope of three contains a bank note, yet the money always remains elusive!

Secondly, you receive with this trick three of my Leverage Envelopes, which not only make the trick convincing yet easy to do, but also which can be used in any other effects where you need an envelope that can produce, vanish or switch anything that will fit inside.

Risky Business is designed to be worked on a close up mat and is not suitable therefore for strolling or table work, but as a set piece routine it is great fun and provides some very puzzling magic!

General Magic DVD £18.00

This DVD is the third in my triple set of L&L filmed and produced DVDs, the other two being the Envelope Magic DVD and the Money Magic DVD.



As the title implies, this DVD features a mixture of magic suitable for close up and parlour work. Included here are 9 routines, namely: Holiday, Missing The Point, Are You A Winner?, 1-2-3 Jumbo Cards Across, Sili-Coin Chip, Countdown Prediction, My Card, Sir (two versions), The Magic Ring and Diary Of A Nobody.

Each routine is performed for the L&L audience and then carefully explained. There's plenty of variety in these contents to please just about everybody, so if you need some new magic to work on, why not try this?



Deck-Aid - £15.00

Sneaky, sneaky! That's the best way to describe **Deck-Aid**, which is a rather unique gimmick which you can slip into your Bicycle or Piatnik deck and thus give yourself powers of card control which normally you would require large amounts of practice and/or skill to achieve. Keep track of a card or a whole block of cards while shuffling, cut immediately to a selected card that has merely been glanced at in the deck, all this

plus much more is explained in the **Deck-Aid** booklet and on the accompanying 35 minute DVD. This is really something a bit different in terms of card gimmicks.



Magicseen

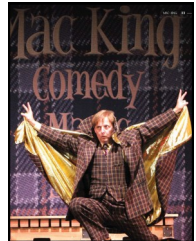
Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 44 May 12



In just about every issue of Magicseen we try to include an article that is designed to provide help and advice on a specific magical topic that we hope will be of interest to our readers. Having noticed the large numbers of people who are advertising the fact that they are lecturing at Magic Clubs these days, I thought it would be interesting to put together one of our help files on what it takes to put together and then present a good lecture. To help with this I enlisted the help of two lecture stalwarts, Tony Griffith and Paul Gordon, who helped me to impart plenty of great advice.

Our contact in Vegas, Benoit Grenier, has produced some great interviews and features covering several top names in the US world of magic (and we still have more in the pipeline), and his latest foray into the lives of the rich and famous sees us spending some time with Mac King. He is not really your typical Vegas showman, coming as he does from Louisville and performing an act that is the complete opposite to the 'big cats' spectaculars that you so often see in the world's biggest gambling city. Maybe it is his quirky difference that makes him such an attraction.



Sometimes a story will land on my desk (or more accurately in my Inbox) completely unexpectedly, and this feature on successful young pro performers Steve Dela and Paul Dabek is one such article. Most people are probably not aware that Steve and Paul, like one or two other magical luminaries such as Geoff Ray, have their roots in, of all places, Shrewsbury! Nothing wrong with Shrewsbury, but if you were compiling a list of UK magical hotspots, Shrewsbury would probably not be one of the more obvious choices. But this article proves that it really should be on that list.

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Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

When I was at 4Fs in the US in April, I was interviewed by Scott Wells for his daily podcast which he included as part of a blog published during the convention. Part of the discussion that we had was about the state of magic conventions in the UK, as Scott was interested to know how events were coping during the current recession.

Then when the May edition of Magic Magazine arrived, there was an article written by Scott all about the demise of a number of well established and previously popular US conventions, which had suddenly been discontinued. It seems that in the United States, it is getting increasingly difficult to stage conventions without making a loss, and as a result, some organisers have decided that enough is enough and have reluctantly ceased running their events.

I have commented in this Chatter Blog before about how I have felt for some time that the heyday of major conventions is past, or at the very least on the wane. With the notable exception of Blackpool, most other events can no longer rely on the steadfast support of magicians in the UK, as it seems that the hobbyist magician, faced with quite a choice of events and with probably less money to spend on them, will be forced to select from the list rather than try to attend several.

But it's not just a money problem really, is it? With such a wide array of entertainment and distraction available to most of us now via our computers and televisions, the need or even the desire to get up and out at not inconsiderable cost, is not the attractive

option it might once have been. Certainly I would suggest that younger magicians are perfectly happy to interact with each other via YouTube and would therefore perhaps not see the point or value of travelling miles to spend a day in some drafty hall watching magic of wildly varying standards and surrounded by, as they would see it, a load of old duffers!

And to cap it all, the draw of the dealer hall has been massively reduced by the all pervasive, slick video trailers available on most magic websites which enable anyone with access to a computer to watch endless dems of the latest releases without leaving their chair.

It's hard to see how larger conventions in the UK will be able to survive. The British Ring's annual event is looking very sickly, for instance, and you wonder how long even the massive happening that is Blackpool will be able to stave off an almost inevitable drop in numbers.

Personally, I feel that small, niche events or gatherings are more likely to thrive. Low key, low budget, yet highly focused conventions which concentrate on a specific type of magic might be able to continue to succeed. Events such as The Session, or L.A.D.S., get togethers arranged by individuals or magic shops, any event which does not rely on numbers to survive, may well be the future. They provide a forum for those who are interested to connect, leaving anyone else, who is too lazy or jaded to even leave home, to experience everything through a glass screen.



Highlights



Vol. 20 No. 11 July 2012



Tip Of The Month: If you are talking to a potential show booker on the telephone, keep the words ‘customer benefit’ at all times in your head. In other words, don’t just tell them what you do, find out what they need and then slant what you say to show how what you can offer will specifically solve their problems and fulfil their needs.

MOST POPULAR

Featuring the most purchased products from my range

Jumbo Animal Antics



Participation effects for children’s shows are always popular and this routine gets six children involved and creates loads of fun as a result.

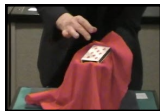
Five colourful pictures of cartoon zoo animals are displayed and five children are invited up one at a time to do funny mimes of the animal characters. A sixth child is then nominated to select his or her favourite mime, and a prediction placed aside before the start proves to be a picture of the chosen animal.

Easy to do, you get all the necessary full colour animal picture cards and the full presentation including the patter to ensure that you quickly get the most out of this ‘packs flat, plays big’ effect. Works well for children up to about 8 years of age. **Price: £20.00**

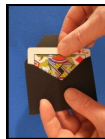
Here are last month’s top 5 selling products



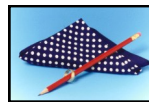
Promo Card Sticker Packs -
£6



Breakout - **£5**



Mini Leveridge Envelope - **£10**



The Borrowed Ring On Pencil
- **£7**



Magic Party Number Pack -
£25



In Flight Entertainment - £20.00

Here's a lightweight magic/mental effect which uses DVDs. Five different films are displayed one at a time and then placed under a handkerchief which is held by a spectator. One of five cards, each of which bears one of the film titles, is now chosen and placed down sight unseen. Without touching the DVDs, the performer makes one of the films disappear, and the name of that film matches the film title chosen by the spectator. And the DVD itself is found back in the box the DVDs were removed from at the start.



Promo Cards £12.00

With this you receive a 28 page A5 size colour photo illustrated booklet

which explains how you can easily turn any blank Bicycle card into an attractive looking business card through the use of printed stickers.

Because the business card is on regular Bicycle card stock, it can be put into a regular matching Bicycle deck and can then be used as a surprise finish to a number of different effects.

As well as explaining how you can make your own cards, the booklet offers you 7 routines using these types of cards, and each effect culminates in you being able to give away the business card to the onlooker.

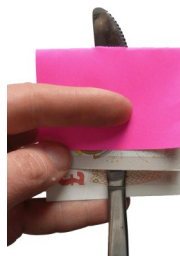
I can also offer to produce personalised stickers for you so that you only have to peel them off and attach them to cards. See my website for details.

Table Hopper's Coin Into Bottle £25.00



The coin into bottle is a classic trick and one that, if done well, can leave quite an impression with an audience. The trouble is, for the restaurant or walkabout magician it's not really practical to carry round a drink's bottle. So I decided to use a different type of smaller glass jar instead and also to change the method so that no folding coin was required. Which is great because it means no more broken bands to worry about!

This version uses a bottle that can be examined, has no folding coins, requires no re-set or get ready, and which is perfect for small group table work. If you've always liked the idea of doing coin into bottle but were put off by the problems I mentioned above, this could be the answer that you have been waiting for.



Ultimate Ripped - £15.00

This looks so convincing that you'll start to believe you can do real magic yourself! A borrowed £10 note is used and is signed or marked with an initialled sticker. It is folded in half and an examined Post It Note sheet is folded round it. An ordinary dinner knife is slid into the fold and suddenly pushed right through. The sliced note can be shown very close up from both sides. The knife is then ripped across the note with an audible ripping sound, yet when the Post It Note is removed, the signed note is found to be completely unharmed. No re-set, this is awesomely effective.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 45 July 12



The latest advice article is a brilliant one - it's all about how to busk with magic on the street. OK, so it may not be something that everybody wants to get up and do, but reading the advice of Keith Fields and Noel Britten, as they explain all the various aspects of the job, just makes you realise how much there is to know about it all and I think it's fascinating. The two guys are very generous with their suggestions and what they say paints a realistic picture which they can only do because they have both been there and done it many times. Gold dust in a magazine!

How do the Germans do it? Not only do they manage to produce awesome international football teams, plus basically run the Eurozone in Europe, but they also seem to develop a steady stream of top quality magicians. Just think of the impact that the Flicking Fingers group of magicians has had, for instance, and also the number of FISM winners such as Topas and Franklin. Well, in issue 45 we introduce you to the latest German TV star, Florian Zimmer, who is set to become the next big thing, and who spends some time with us to chat about himself and his magic.



Deputy Editor Graham Hey is a terrific writer of gags as well as being a great stand up magician/comedian, and he has a big interest in the comedy scene. In issue 45 Graham has got an article about John Marshall, who runs a chain of highly successful comedy clubs across the UK where many of the best known stand up comedy stars have cut their performing teeth, and he has also used his contacts to get some of the best comedians to offer Magicseen readers selections of their own one-liner gags. In issue 45 Tim Vine and Gary Delaney will get you smiling with theirs.

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Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

“I see close up as a sort of artificial conversation”.

So says Mowgli in his book on improvisation which we featured an extract from in a recent issue of *Magicseen*. I thought this was an interesting way of looking at commercial close up, as in a way for me it sums up an attitude and approach to this type of entertainment that I think has quite a bit to recommend it.

In the old days, if you went to see a magician perform, it would probably be at a theatre. You would sit in the dark in an auditorium and the miracle maker would strut his stuff up on a high stage. He would effectively proceed through a series of ‘experiments’ or happenings, and the greatest amount of interaction that he would engineer with the audience, would be when he invited one or two of them to come up on stage to either examine one of the props or perhaps to play a limited part in the tricks themselves. But apart from some initial pleasantries (“What’s your name? Where do you come from? etc), there would probably have been little interaction between the magician and his audience assistant.

Compare this to the situation for the modern day close up magician. When you think about it, close up nowadays is often performed at informal events where people are mixing, socialising and of course, talking. The strolling magician walks up to a group of attendees at one of these events and effectively hijacks the conversation and the attention of the group. In my view, a good close up worker will then try his best to

engage with the spectators, not just by showing them minor miracles up very close, but also by involving them directly and interacting with them often in a very personal way. It is just like having some sort of extended conversation.

The longer I have been involved in close up commercially, the more I have become convinced that the way you interact and chat with your spectators is far more important than the tricks you choose to perform for them. Your ‘conversation’ with your audience, in other words, needs to be absorbing, interesting and worthy of their attention, and if it is, they will come away thinking that you are a good performer.

Anyone who does close up bookings will no doubt also recognise, that often you are prevented from entertaining on occasions by people who literally do just want to chat with you. For them, the opportunity to talk to a magician presents in itself a fascinating opportunity to ask some of those questions which people often think they’d like to ask a magician, but up to now have never had the chance! It may be a bit tedious to us to have to answer for the millionth time how we got started in magic, and is it a full time job or not, but we should never forget that for some of our spectators, this short conversation may be the bit that they remember from their encounter with us, and could be more the stuff of future conversations that these spectators have with others when they talk about us, than the magic itself.

So, artificial or not, being good at conversation may well help your success.



Highlights



Vol. 20 No. 12 August 2012

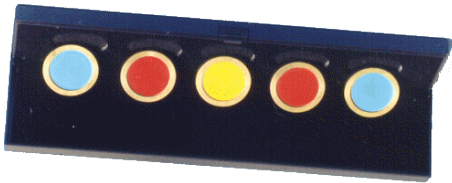


Tip Of The Month: Do you always make a point of getting referrals following any shows that you do? If not, you're missing out. Nothing sells a performer better than someone who has already booked him saying how great he was, so the more quotes you can get from satisfied bookers, the more powerful your sales message will become.

MOST POPULAR

Featuring the most purchased products from my range

The Clausen Chips



This set of quality brass chips are made by Danish magical craftsman Per Clausen (hence the product title), and they have been part of my catalogue for over 25 years!

The principle of having a brass chip with a brightly coloured centre and which can be used with shims has been used in countless effects (many of them devised by Per) but this particular set is unique in that it comes with 5 of the chips and an instruction booklet explaining 14 different effects using them. In many ways this set is the 'daddy' of such products given the amount that you receive, and this is probably why it has maintained its popularity over so many years. These chips are a delight to use and the effects with them are often very simple to perform as the precision made chips do most of the hard stuff for you. **Price: £35.00**

Here are last month's top 5 selling products



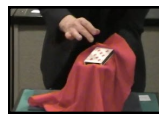
CD Illustrated Catalogue -
FREE



Promo Card Sticker Packs -
£6



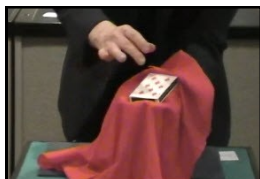
Forever Flapping Plus -
£15



Breakout - **£5**



Pay Envelope 1 - **£5**



Breakout - £5.00

For some years now I have been offering TricKlips, which are Windows Media Player files featuring individual video routines extracted from my range of marketed DVDs. Now I have introduced TricKlips Xtra, which are effects made available as downloads or on a CD for computer playback which have not appeared in video format before. The first release under this banner,

Breakout, is a terrific easy-to-do card routine taken directly from my own current working repertoire. It's practical, entertaining and requires no re-set. Watch the dem on my website.



Fly-Ring £30.00

I've always said that if I had to give up most of my magic and retain just a small number of tricks, my Ring And String Deluxe and this product,

Fly-Ring, would make the shortlist.

I use **Fly-Ring** without exception every time I work close up commercially, and I know of no other effect which gets such a consistently strong and noticeable reaction from lay people.

There are many versions of the basic idea of a borrowed ring vanishing and appearing inside a key case, of course, but what I like about this method is that there is no reel involved at all, which takes away the worry of the mechanism breaking, jamming or of the ring coming free.

Either on its own or as a finish to any ring and string sequence, this takes some beating.

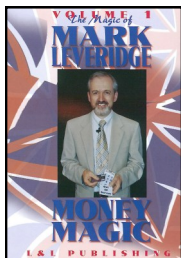
The Utopia Card Frame £50.00



After an absence of more than 20 years, this versatile pocket sized picture frame is back enabling you to make any card appear inside.

As a variation on a standard card to wallet, this is great because it adds novelty and surprise, but it can be used in other ways too, and the instructions which come with the specially gimmicked wooden frame detail no less than five different effects. There are four routines for close up, plus one for children's shows.

To use the frame you will need to be wearing a jacket (the frame has to be kept in your inside pocket) and you will also be required to palm a card to load the frame, but the impact that you will get when you use it, will prove more than compensation.



The Money Magic DVD - £18.00

Magic with coins and bank notes is always popular, both with magicians and also with their audiences, and this DVD offers you a collection of 9 of my best routines. There is a pleasing variety of magic here from set piece close up routines such as the Okito And Boston Box Routine and Magnetic Attraction, through to table hopping magic such as Paper Money, ATM and The Detective Coin. Filmed in the USA, this DVD features live performances of each effect followed by thorough explanations. If you like money magic, I'm sure you'll enjoy the contents provided here.



Magicseen

Here are some of the great things from the current issue

Issue 45 July 12



It's often said that if you want to keep a trick a secret, publish it in a magazine! People often fail to notice little gems of ideas when they are reading a periodical, but there's really no excuse with Magicseen because we usually only have a couple of tricks in each issue, and so it should be much easier for the reader to concentrate on the ideas that are there. In this issue we have two young contributors - from Scotland Marcus Gordon shares a neat Collectors routine, while from Russia, Alexandr Erohin teaches a clever yet practical card reversal concept.

Entertainers who perform under more than one name or persona are often tricky to talk about. Do you make reference to them as their 'character' or as the real person who lies underneath? Tom Binns, the cover star of this issue, is a case in point. He has worked under more than one character name, but currently he is achieving spectacular success with Ian D. Montfort, a comedy psychic who not only has the audience in hysterics, but who also manages at the same time to fool them hugely too. We chat to Ian/Tom (see, difficult isn't it!) to find out more about this great act.



There was a time when magicians favoured a particular deck for their performances. When I first started it was Fox Lake Aviator cards, for instance. And over time, the trend and favouritism would change a little but not that much and really not that often or quickly. But now we have the Designer Deck. Actually, not just one, but seemingly hundreds of uniquely crafted, artistically designed packs flood the marketplace and are collected avidly by those who value such things. It's amazing the attraction that these special decks hold for some people, as Eoin Smith discovers.

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Chatter

The Mark Leveridge Blog

On Tuesday 9th October this year I am holding a special event called The Magic Marketing Masterclass in Newbury. The idea of the day is to provide detailed and relevant marketing advice aimed at magicians who are keen to improve their self promotion and who want to increase the number of paid bookings that they do.

The idea for this particular one-off event came about because of my involvement with Nigel Botterill's Entrepreneur's Circle, which is a national organisation dedicated to helping businesses of all sorts to improve their performance. During my two year membership of the EC I have learnt a huge amount and it has made me realise just how amateurish most of us are at marketing ourselves, and the main reason for this, I suspect, is a lack of awareness of what is possible and what is really essential to do if we want to reap the proper rewards of plenty of shows.

Certainly it has made me look at what I have been doing myself and caused me to re-evaluate and often change things that I have done for years but which were becoming less and less effective. I think it's all too easy to carry on doing what we've always done, not because it is necessarily wildly successful, but because we are either too lazy to make a change, or because we are unaware of the alternatives.

In a way, the recession that we have been living through in recent times and which has undoubtedly affected virtually all of us in terms of the quantity of shows that we get invited to perform, could be seen as a call to

change what we do. If you've noticed a drop in shows, how have you reacted? Reduced your advertising because you are earning less from your ads and so you need to pay out less? Sat around moaning, perhaps? Shrugged your shoulders and blamed the government/banks/anyone and everyone? Actually the only one to blame is you!

The fact is that even in a recession there are still a lot of people out there with plenty of money which they are looking to spend on their entertainment, it's just that we are going to have to try harder to be noticed by these people and to do that we are going to have to act smarter and in a more professional manner.

And that's what the Magic Marketing Masterclass is all about. I'm looking to provide some expert help and guidance to performers who are serious about wanting to look again at how they market themselves. There will be Social Media expert Julia Bramble presenting a session on how you can harness Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn effectively; Bob Yelland will be doing his highly professional talk on marketing strategies which will help you to stop wasting money on ineffective self-promotion; and I will be telling attendees how I have managed to achieve an amazing 10-fold increase in my success rate of converting enquiries into bookings.

So don't just moan, be pro-active and come along. I honestly don't think anyone can now just sit and do nothing and expect to succeed, and intelligent marketing can make all the difference.