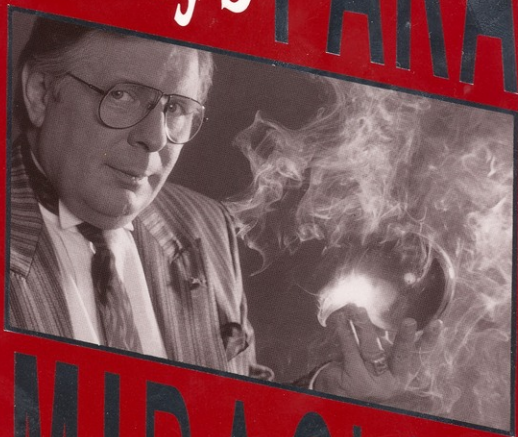


 Ted
Lesley's

PARA



MIRACLES

PARAMIRACLES

by
Ted Lesley



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*This book is dedicated to my friends in both life and
magic,*

CHARLES AND REGINA REYNOLDS

and

to the finest medical "wizard" I know,

PROF. DR. HARTMUT PAHLIG

AND

HIS WIFE INGRID.



INTRODUCTION

by
T.A. Waters

MANY PERFORMERS first became aware of Ted Lesley some years ago, when his Working Performer's Marked Deck was marketed by Martin Breese. Mentalists and magicians who had avoided using marked decks, because of the difficulty in interpreting the marks under the pressure of performance, found that many effects using this principle could now be performed with relative ease. The deck was well-named; for the working performer it is an eminently practical device.

In the pages that follow, you will find the same sort of practicality. In my own researches, and in my tenure as a book reviewer, I've had to read through a good deal of what is loosely called magical literature. Time and again I've had the experience of reading an effect and realizing that the creator had never tried it out in front of an audience—because either

it was technically unfeasible or impossible, or it simply would not deceive anyone.

You won't find such pipe dreams here. As you read through this book you will find not only a wealth of practical material, but also those invaluable little touches and angles, refinements that only come from repeated testing in the crucible of live performance. What follows is material taken from his own professional repertoire; these are effects and routines that have proven successful for Ted—both artistically and financially.

Will using this material give you the same kind of commercial and artistic success enjoyed by Ted Lesley? That's something no mentalist can predict—but Ted has done his part in providing you with tested professional effects.

The rest is up to you.

T.A. Waters
September 1994

FOREWORD

by
Toni Forster

MAGIC IS a peculiar thing: It can totally fascinate people or bore them enormously, depending on how it's presented. In no other art form are there so many "artists" hanging around who, without the least self-criticism, have the nerve to serve up something to an audience, then to believe that they have accomplished a truly magnificent act. The commercialization that exists in all fields of business has likewise had its effect on magic—every trick can be had for a price. Surprisingly, many of the purchasers of some cheap plastic puzzle, within minutes of their possession of it, think of themselves as serious competition for Siegfried and Roy. Because it is common for such individuals to use the patter furnished with commercially sold tricks, without the slightest alteration, it is certainly possible that a spectator who sees a trick performed in exactly the same way by several "magicians" could become bored.

When I reached school age, it was an impossible thing to coax a secret from a magic dealer; and I admit that I shamelessly tried every ploy I could think of. *Hofzinsler's Card Conjuring* by Ottokar Fischer was one of my first magic books, and I guarded it as if it were a costly treasure. Until about twenty years ago it proved to be an extremely difficult task in Germany to discover usable magical literature; so much so, that to find any source at all, one had to turn to English works. But even in English, works on magic were relatively uncommon compared to today's market. Currently scores of books and magazines are published each year; so many in fact that, even if you have a fanatical interest in the subject, it is no longer possible to buy and read everything. This is the case not only for the English magical literature, but also for the German and other languages as well. A wave of exhibitionism seems to have broken out. Self-typed—and as far as correct writing and grammar are concerned—error filled manuscripts are commonly sold as "books". And what do we find in them? So-called tricks, with methods that don't work because they are too complicated, and with effects impossible for the spectator to understand. Some of the pipe dreams read well enough, even when it is highly doubtful that proper conditions necessary for their performance exist anywhere in the world. And not a few authors on the magic scene count on their colleagues not being well-read, and don't give the smallest thought to providing literary details or references concerning the sources from whom they have copied their tricks.

These days the redundancy of magical publications indicates at least that there is no longer a lack of reading material. On the other hand, there is a problem of selection. How can you separate the wheat from the chaff if you do not have an unending source of money, a huge library and an immense amount of time at your disposal? There are some names in magic that represent a guarantee of quality in their publications. It has been my experience, however, that people who

possess outstanding creativity and entertaining writing skills are often mediocre performers. Many professionals, on the other hand, keep their working secrets for themselves and explain them generally to a tight circle of friends. This is only understandable, when you realize that a person making a living from magic cannot be overjoyed to find that hosts of amateurs are imitating what has taken him much hard work and experience to learn—and then most often their mimicry proves incorrect and is badly done. This issue is not primarily a matter of money. A magician who really loves the art must sometimes endure a high level of frustration on witnessing the performances of certain colleagues, who would never perform a trick before an audience if they had loved magic as fervently.

These statements may cause you to wonder why I am writing the introduction to this book. Believe me, I have wondered just as hard why I've been asked to do it—and because I've accepted the task, you are entitled to my justifications. They are many, and I won't withhold them from you. To explain them I'll organize my thoughts by topic.

TED LESLEY AS MAGIC ENTHUSIAST

I know only a few people who are as enamored of their work as Ted. One might assume that even magic could become tiresome to someone who is occupied with it on a permanent basis, but that isn't the case with this friend of mine. He is at heart like a little boy who is addicted to magic. One must have a great love for his work to remain so enthusiastic about it over these many years.

Over twenty-five years ago, I read Ted Lesley's writings in Werry's *Magische Welt*, in which he could not conceal his strong interest in the mental branch of our art. Even then, many of his ideas were based on knowledge he had gained from English magical literature, which was—as I have said—by no means as easy to obtain as it is today. Over the years,

Ted has grown even more industrious as an author for *Magische Welt*. His articles are not only among the most interesting, due to the reports and information they contain about the magic scene, but within them also lie magical pearls, which no alert reader who knows the subject will pass by without notice. Above all, I have been fascinated by his subtle ways of thinking about mental magic.

About ten years ago, I got to know Ted personally, thanks to the telephone. Both of us are members of the Psychic Entertainers Association. At that time there were practically no other members of this unusual organization in Germany, other than the old master, Punx, who had already been elected an honorary member. Today I don't recall the occasion of our first conversation, but it concerned the P.E. A. As time passed, our phone conversations grew longer and longer, and during them I was constantly amazed that Ted always knew all of the freshest innovations in magic, worldwide! Since then I have learned that Ted knows God and the whole world of magic. He is in contact with the majority of magicians of rank and reputation in every country, and he is friends with most of them. He is also a great benefactor and patron of the German postal service and especially the telephone company, as his monthly bills will attest.

TED LESLEY AS PERFORMER

I have often had the opportunity in years past to enjoy Ted's performances; and not just for audiences of magicians, but also for public engagements done for substantial fees. The tricks he does on such occasions are by no means unknown to the informed magician—but, oh, how Ted presents them! It is charming to watch him suffer an initial bout of stage fright before every show, even after years of professional performing, just like an amateur going before an audience for the first time. Yet after just a few seconds on stage, he has the whole auditorium in the palm of his hand.

All of his presentations have his personal stamp and, above all, are based on thoroughly thought-out methods combined with congenial patter. Ted values interaction with his audiences, and uses these interchanges to display a quick wit. In reality, though, an enormous amount of work and experience lie behind that seemingly spontaneous humor.

Thinking about Ted's talent as a performer reminds me of a show we did together in a Montreux casino before an international audience of doctors. To be frank, I did not have my best day by any means. The stage had been totally commandeered by the band, so I was forced to do my mental act on the dance floor, where I was almost invisible to the back tables. With such a diverse audience, the only language to use was English, and to make things a bit more challenging we had a public-address system of dubious value. Because only the front half of the audience could properly follow what I was doing, the reaction of the entire group was less than overwhelming. And after all this, Ted Lesley had to follow me. In spite of these extremely difficult performing conditions, in less than five minutes the whole room was going crazy! Such moments reveal the true pro, even though rumor has it that Ted needs a gimmicked deck to do a double lift!

TED LESLEY AS MENSCH

On this subject it is difficult for me to write of the many things I know, because Ted would be unhappy with me if I went into detail. To express it briefly, without the elaboration I would like, Ted has often given extensive help to friends in need. It might be seeing that an old, abandoned magician receives needed care, or that the survivors of a friend who had died are not left alone and helpless. Because such kindness and charity are so unusual these days, he has my complete respect, and my permission to make an error in judgment any time he likes.

When it comes to fine food, Ted long ago declared war on anorexia and he has clearly conquered it. With respect to eating and drinking, he has obviously reached such a high grade of asceticism that he has even given up abstinence.

As a teller of jokes he absolutely drives you crazy! Not only because he can tell jokes for hours (make that all night long) without repeating himself, but he also acts the jokes out in a way that, after an hour, leaves your stomach and chest hurting from laughter. You know the feeling? You do! Good, isn't it!

TED LESLEY AS INVENTOR

There are two given possibilities for invention in magic:

- Either one refines methods, adapts them to fit the times or uses new objects, materials or handlings.
- Or one thinks of novel effects, which is, to be sure, much more difficult.

Both types of invention are found in this book, but I most value the subtleties that represent the essentials of mental magic. Ted offers us a large number of these. So, as you read the routines described in these pages, pay close attention to the details. They are often the things that add quality to a performance.

FINALLY, ABOUT THIS BOOK

This brings me to our central topic. I greatly appreciate the fact that Ted has finally decided to publish this book; not only because the routines described here are of a special quality and are genuinely usable (within the limits of your personal style, of course) but, above all, because it is extremely useful when someone permits you to view the thought processes behind the tricks, so that you can adapt these methods of thinking.

This book is not intended for the beginner in magic, but then neither is mental magic. Just because the techniques are

often boringly or ingeniously simple, the amateur or beginner in magic often feels compelled to perform one or more mental effects, because he can spare himself the practicing of difficult sleights—most of the time. It is frequently overlooked that other aspects in the performance of mental magic require so much more practice and experience: dramatics, verbal facility, body movement, interactional skills, linguistics, etc. For this reason an effect looks like a miracle in the hands of a skilled mentalist, while in the hands of a performer who is concerned only with ease of execution it achieves nothing better than puzzle status.

In this book, Ted touches on a few things with which every reader knowledgeable in the literature of magic should be familiar. If the reader has not experimented with the original version, it is advisable to examine it first, then study the variations and improvements that came after. Only then will a true appreciation of the variation described here, with all its refinements, be possible. I will not deprive you of the pleasure of making your own discoveries as you review each effect and its methods, but I will permit myself to make you aware of a few "trivialities", in the hope of sharpening your eye for professional thinking and handling.

The ridged card principle and the Kismet Envelope discussed in Chapter One offer enormous possibilities for further combinations and, therefore, other effects. It would amaze me if the creativity of most readers was not stimulated by this material, causing them to invent their own routines. The same thing holds true for the Teleport Envelope described in Chapter Six. I consider this method of making something appear or disappear in a spectator's hand to be invaluable.

Ted's "Seer of the Trivial" (pp. 60-68) makes it especially clear how a completely inexplicable miracle can be created by combining clever methodology with further subtleties. While it may seem a minor point, just the advice of putting a coin

in an envelope so that it will fall easily out of a larger one is worth its weight in gold to a working performer. (Why don't we come upon these things ourselves?) These are the details that make the fine differences!

Likewise with Ted's headline prediction (pp. 263-272). Naturally, the performance of such predictions is limited to the appropriate circumstances. One must learn to perform such sensational effects sparingly, perhaps only once in a lifetime; and then, in the right place and at the right time. But at that place and time the impact can make a lifelong reputation.

The "New Pseudo-psychometric Exercises" in Chapter Five contain significantly more than can be gleaned from a superficial reading. Because I am convinced that the methods Ted describes are undetectable—with the proper presentation—it remains only for the reader to develop such a presentation that fits his or her personality.

The version of "Premonition" (pp. 149-162) is a fine example of how you can send the thinking of the spectators spinning down the wrong track by use of a subtlety (two decks in a champagne pail), thereby rendering their recognition of a correct solution almost impossible. In addition, the rubber band card index appears to me to be as simple a gimmick as is conceivable, as well as the best. It is the first card index I have found usable.

Ted Lesley has given us something in this book that in my opinion represents a genuine enrichment of magical literature. Here is the writing of a born-in-the-wool professional whose methods are simple and learnable, who knows which effects are successful before an audience and which are practical under various performing conditions. Do not forget that he has given you the freedom to work out your own form of presentation. Read between the lines to get a glimpse into the mind of a professional and you will profit much, much more from this book than from just the methods and effects he describes.

In this sense, I hope you enjoy studying the following pages, with the certainty that only the truly committed reader will recognize all that Ted Lesley is willing to share with us from his great treasury of experience.

Professor Dr. Toni Forster
Certified Psychologist

Notes on My Life with Friends

~~~~~BEFORE we begin talking about tricks, I hope that some scanty autobiographical information will not seem overly vain. It occurs to me that knowing a little background of the fellow whose material one is poised to read may lend it some credentials, some evidence that it is worth your time and consideration. So if you will permit me, I'll now tell you just a little about this odd entertainer, this Ted Lesley, yours truly.

On my birth in 1937, in the town of Düren in the Rheinland, my parents had no idea, quite naturally, what my presence in their lives portended. For a short time, I attended the Werner school in Düren, but was forced to leave when my father, who was a member of the military welfare office, was

transferred to Halle on the Saale. In 1947, as the Russians marched into Halle, we retraced our way back to the Rheinland. Our family now consisted of four, as my brother Wolfgang had come into the world. We could not return to Düren, because the war had totally destroyed what had been the second wealthiest city in Germany. For this reason we first went to an aunt on my mother's side who lived in Quadrath-Ichendorf near Cologne. By 1948 my parents were able to open a glass and porcelain business in this idyllic little town.

During our flight from the Russians, most of it on foot, we had the misfortune to drink from a well along the way that was infested with the typhus bacillus. My mother and I caught this dreadful illness and were confined to bed for several months in the University Clinic in Cologne. During this time, naturally I couldn't attend school, so when I returned home my parents hired a tutor to help me make up the lost school year as quickly as possible. The tutor was Carl Bornhausen, and it was he who laid the cornerstone of my future career as a magical entertainer. He would award "achievement cards" when we completed our assignments, and we could wish for something when we had collected ten of them. Herr Bornhausen could perform a few simple magic tricks, and I was more than happy when I had fulfilled my achievement card requirement, because every time, again and again, I would ask this outstanding teacher—much to the dismay of the other participants in this private instruction—to show me some magic. No matter how hard I tried, I never figured out how he did his amusing tricks.

That same year, one of my fellow students was given a magic set. This, as you will readily understand, fascinated me. He performed each of the tricks for me, but to my great disappointment, he wouldn't explain any of the miracles he had shown. As a result, I had to have the same magic set, no matter what the cost. However, my allowance was only two

groschen a week, and the magic set, which I found in the toy shop in the neighboring town, cost no less than five and a half marks, fifty-five of my little groschens! This made me determined to increase my income. But how?

"Traudchen", my aunt, and godmother to my sister Ursula (a recent addition to our family), lived with us. One day she asked me to fetch some coal from the cellar for her, and for hauling up four full buckets I received one groschen! With this new source of income added to my normal allowance, it took several weeks to save enough money for the magic set. When I went to buy it, in a book store along the way I discovered *The Card Magician* by G. Rosanelli, price three marks. Once more I had to save carefully, and within a few more weeks this booklet became the foundation stone of my magical library. From then on I probably got on the nerves of my parents and relatives, as well as my schoolmates, as I displayed my newly learned tricks. My parents, especially my dear father, did not approve of this "hobby", as he saw it. Instead, I must learn "something reasonable", which meant one day taking over the family business.

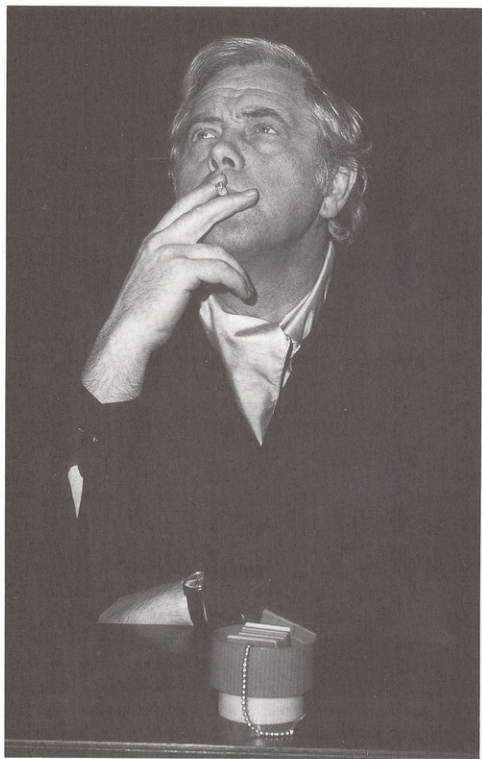
On completing public school, I went to trade school in the neighboring town of Horrem. To save money for a monthly train ticket, I walked over two miles to school each day, and invested the money I saved in magic tricks, which I purchased at the time from the firm of Janos Bartl in Hamburg. One of these tricks was the well-known Perfect Silk Miracle (Wonder Box), which I performed any time, anywhere. My father's sister lived in Düren, and my family occasionally visited her there. It so happened that I had this prop with me during a weekend visit and my aunt had never seen this "sensational" effect. My cousins, however, wanted to go to the movies, and I discovered to my dismay that they hadn't the slightest interest in seeing my new trick. Thanks to this set of circumstances, I found myself sitting in the movie theater

with my Perfect Silk Miracle lying ignored in my lap. The man seated next to me looked with surprise at the chrome-plated thing, and later told me he was a mechanic for a magic dealer named Werner Geissler, known to magicians as Werry. To my great excitement he promised to take me to Werry's shop after the show.

I got to know Werry in his former location on Paradiesplatz in Düren. He was the first dealer who performed his tricks for me—even though I hadn't a pfennig in my pocket. Naturally, the good Werry did not suspect this, so I tried to remain as cool as possible after the performance of each Werry miracle. For this reason, after each trick I asked him, "Don't you have anything else?" I must have really undermined his morale with this remark. Nevertheless, Werry never let it show, and when we talk about our first meeting over thirty years ago, we still laugh about my cheeky, youthful remarks. I still vividly remember the trick I purchased from Werry, the Coin in Bottle, which he sold for a ridiculously low three and a half marks. This was one of the best purchases I ever made, and I still feature it in my shows. Later I contributed some of my earliest writings on magic to Werry's magazine and "favorite child", *Magische Welt*, and today I'm extremely proud to number Werry among my friends.

At that time, in our town there were only two or three television sets. I remember quite well the one in the *Römertreppchen*, the tavern where my father was a regular. This set had a screen the size of a postcard. One evening a live broadcast of the well-known illusionist Kalanag was announced. I watched this show in total amazement and wonder. It was in the *Römertreppchen* as well that I got through my first formal show as a "magician", performing for my father's friends.

During that same period I belonged to the Catholic Kolling Youth Club, which met twice a month in a tavern in the



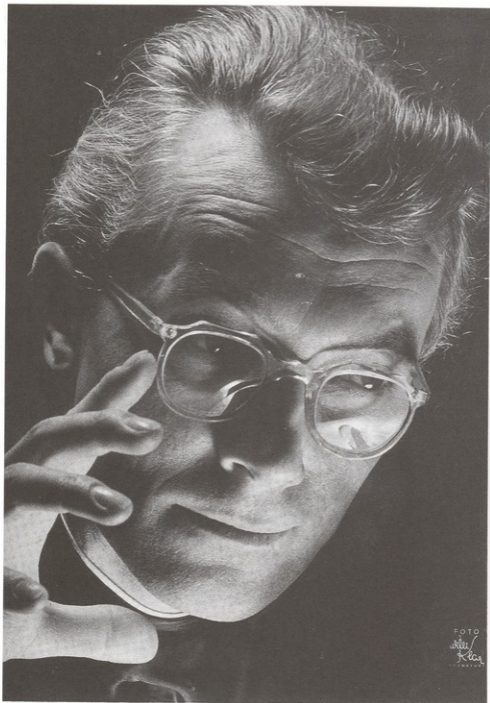
WERRY

neighboring town of Ichendorf. In the party room of this tavern there was a sensational television set for that period. This set projected its image onto what seemed at the time a gigantic special screen. It was almost like being at the movies. If a magic show was advertised in a magazine, I would always try to be in this tavern to watch it.

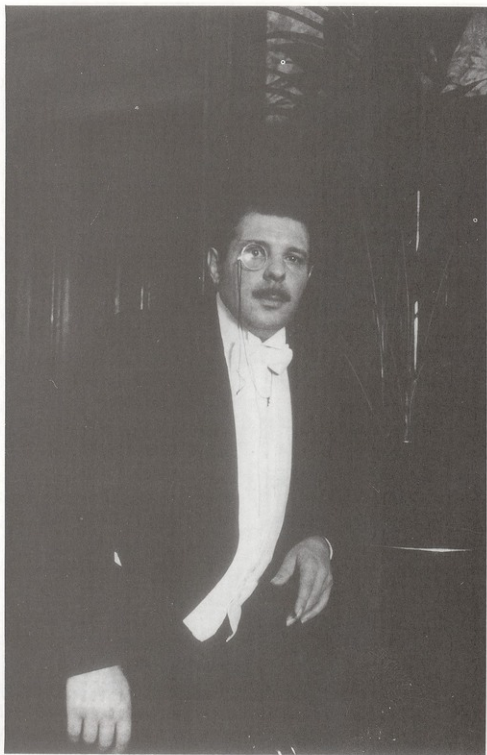
One magician, whom I was able to admire many times on the gigantic Ichendorf screen, fascinated me far more than Kalanag. The artistic personality whom I admired so much was Punx, who is certainly well-known to all readers of this book. His television performances overshadowed everything I had seen at the time. He was also the first artist who did not simply perform, but in his extraordinary way *celebrated* unusual, diabolical trick principles with presentations that were tailor-made for his personality. I have been more than fortunate to be able to know him and his charming wife Dagmar personally for more than twelve years. Ironically, Ludwig Hanemann-Punx appears to enjoy more popularity in the English-speaking world than in Germany since his two books, ...*setzt Euch zu meinen Füßen* and *Abschiedsvorstellung*, as well as his series of brochures *Experimente mit dem Überraum* have been masterfully translated into English by the American magician Bill Palmer. These three translations—*Magical Adventures and Fairy Tales*, *Fourth Dimensional Mysteries*, and *Farewell Performance*—have received dozens of outstanding reviews and excellent sales in the U.S.A. In my opinion, Punx is the Hofzinser of this century, from whom generations after us can and will learn.

Eventually I did learn something "respectable", as my parents wished. At first I apprenticed with the tax office, and in 1963 I was made a bookkeeper and was transferred to Berlin. At this time the Red Rose, a nightclub that enjoyed high praise from the critics, was established in that city. There I became acquainted with many great magicians and entertainers,





PUNX



*THE DISREPUTABLE PLAGETH*

whom I visited almost every evening, and I became friends with several of the artists I met in this club.

In 1974 I was booked for a large fair show in Hanover, which an old friend, Raxon, helped me land (more of this and him in Chapter Four). For it I conceived a stage performance that was recorded by Z.D.F. (*Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen*), a German television network, which later broadcast it.

At this time, I was still a bookkeeper and worked for a Berlin film producer, who was quarreling with his partner, Ottokar Runze. Because they both wanted to dissolve the partnership, it was my task to draw up a separation agreement. The final conversation took place in Runze's home. In order to relax the emotion laden atmosphere a little, I first performed a couple of mental effects, which fascinated Herr Runze. To my surprise he immediately offered me the role of second lead in his new film *The Lord of Barmbek*. I played a shady salesman named Plageth. After the shooting, I decided to hang up my former profession for the last time and become a professional entertainer.

Rolf S. Eden, a nightclub owner known far beyond the borders of Berlin, saw my performance on the Z.D.F. broadcast. He called me one day and contracted me to work at his club, the New Eden, for a week's trial run, as a sort of "all-around performer". From this week at the New Eden came almost four years of nearly uninterrupted activity, which I consider to be my term of apprenticeship in my new profession as a magical entertainer and mentalist. I am still thankful to Herr Eden for making this possible.

During the first year of my engagement at New Eden, I met Bernd Martin Langschied, who was to become my dearest friend and my partner on stage and in business. Without Bernd I would never have achieved my goal to become a prominent entertainer.



*BERND MARTIN LANGSCHIED*

During this same period several concert directors and talent agents began to show interest in me, which led to my doing some large shows (galas) and month-long engagements. On the occasion of one of these galas at the former Berlin Hilton (now the Intercontinental), the director, Herr Engelhardt, noticed me and engaged me as an entertainer in the Hilton Pavilion bar. There I performed only a part of my stage show, but on occasion I also worked the tables of the guests as a close-up performer, a type of work that, at this time, was practically unknown in Germany. Through this contact with the exclusive guests of the hotel I became quite well-known and was able to assemble a lucrative group of clients. Some of these hotel guests continue to book me to this day. (Over the years I have found that word-of-mouth advertising is far superior to any other type of publicity.)

By 1981 many companies were asking me if I could put together large programs for them. For this reason, my partner Bernd and I founded a gala-show direction service, which is now well-known throughout Germany under the name, Magic Productions Show Service GmbH Berlin...

...which brings us pretty much up to date. While there are many more stories I could tell, I have set out here to write a book of my professional secrets and routines, not an autobiography. However, as we proceed I shall mention a few very special friends who have particularly helped and inspired me during my career. Now, though, let me just sum up everything in my life by admitting that I love magic more than anything in the world; and so, I hope, do you. So let's talk about some of the material I've developed and performed professionally over the years. Yes! Let's talk about our mutual love.

Ted Lesley  
Berlin, 1994



**THE MAGIC PRODUCTIONS SHOW SERVICE GMBH BERLIN STAFF**

*From left to right: Henning Heinrich (project leader),  
Sabine Adrian (secretary), Ted Lesley (executive),  
Bernd M. Langschied (executive, director, show designer)*

# Chapter One



## Tricks of Raised Consciousness







...and friends

## Dany Ray & Marcelle

HE WAS my great example as a professional. He worked for many years at the famous Lido, before all the great nightclubs and variety shows in the world discovered him. Dany, who unfortunately died in 1989, was for me the *ne plus ultra* of magical entertainers. It pleased him to captivate the most difficult audiences with small tricks. Even magicians were often baffled by many of his effects. During his appearances in Berlin, I saw his show many times and learned from them how a top professional behaves on stage. We often had long discussions concerning various trick principles, during which he gave me valuable tips and useful ideas.

Marcelle, Dany's wife, was the most perfect assistant I've ever seen for a professional magician. She revolutionized the old-school of subservient and affected behavior so often adopted by magicians' assistants. Although she was on stage for only a few moments, the audience felt and recognized her ineffable intelligence and charm. Future generations of magicians' assistants could learn much from Marcelle!



ONE OF the first magic books in English that I purchased, more than thirty-five years ago from my friend Werry in Düren, was *Greater Magic* by John Northern Hilliard. On pages 478 and 479, under the heading "Two New Locator Cards", are the descriptions of two varieties of "ridged" key cards, invented by Will De Seive and Jontay. Over time these special cards have been forgotten by many magicians—unjustly forgotten, as I will show you shortly.

I remember it was in 1955 when I constructed my first ridged card. However, I made a crucial error in the simple preparation. According to the instructions, when the deck was cut, the special card was supposed to wind up at the *face* of the pack. My first gimmick ended up at the *back* of the pack each time!

In those early days I knew little about forcing cards, so I gladly adopted this "newly discovered" (though technically incorrect) tool as an easy forcing method. Because the prepared card almost always found its way to the back of the pack when someone cut the cards, I relied on the ridge principle to force the prepared card. However, when at a later date I learned a deceptive force that never failed, I retired my ridged card.

I became interested in mental magic around 1963, when my friend Dany Ray gave me a copy of *Annemann's Practical Mental Effects*. On page 137 of that book, under the heading "An Original Faked Envelope" is the description of a "three-way" envelope. This envelope is constructed in such a way that, when it is opened, one of three playing cards or billets, each in a separate compartment, can be dropped out of it quite naturally and without fumbling. This discovery made me think again of the old ridged cards, and suddenly I had the idea of using not just one but *three* ridged cards as forcing gimmicks in a deck.

I constructed a simple trick around the Annemann envelope and a pack prepared with three of these ridged cards. During an eight month engagement in the Pavillon Bar at the Berlin Hilton, I broke in the effect and it became the hit of my close-up mental program. Returning guests to the bar always asked about this experiment. Recognizing that I had come up with something quite special, I made it a point to keep it exclusive, *never* performing it when other magicians came to see me work.

T.A. Waters appears to have been one of the very few magicians besides myself (perhaps the only one) to whom the idea occurred of using ridged cards to accomplish a force with the deck in the spectator's hands. In his 1981 booklet, *Trionic*,<sup>1</sup> he describes a trick using just *one* such card.

In 1985 the last piece fell into place for me. The Dutch magician, Dick Koornwinder published a small booklet, *Dick Koornwinder's Diverting Kreations*. This booklet came with a prepared playing card, which made possible the "Koornwinder Kard Kontrol". My friend Ken Brooke once told me that he believed Dick Koornwinder must have invented this gimmicked card in the late 1960s or earlier, since Ken had

<sup>1</sup>Later reprinted in his huge 1993 compilation, *Mind, Myth & Magick* (1993), pp. 69-85.

purchased tricks from him during that period that employed the gimmick. In the Koornwinder booklet,<sup>2</sup> a force is described that uses this special card, but this force is entirely different from the method to which I put it.

Before teaching the tricks I've devised using ridged cards, I would like to describe these versatile gimmicks for the benefit of those unfamiliar with them.



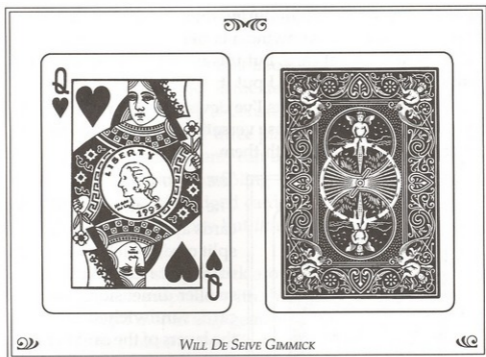
#### THE SPLIT CARD

The forerunner of all ridged cards appears to have been a split card, which had a piece of thin cardboard, cut to smaller dimensions than the card, sandwiched between the layers of the card to make the center section slightly thicker.

#### THE WILL DE SEIVE GIMMICK

You can make this gimmick in a few seconds. Place a quarter or a coin of similar size onto the face of a card, positioning it in the center. Hold the coin firmly in place with both thumbs, while putting your fingers under the card. Now firmly press the fingertips against the back of the card just around the circumference of the coin, forming a circular impression (an embossment) in the back design. Use only face cards for this gimmick, as the intricate picture on the card renders the quarter-sized impression nearly invisible. Those familiar with the original De Seive gimmick will note that we have just made a "reverse" gimmick; that is, the impression is raised on the back of the card, rather than on the face. All my tricks require such reverse gimmicks.

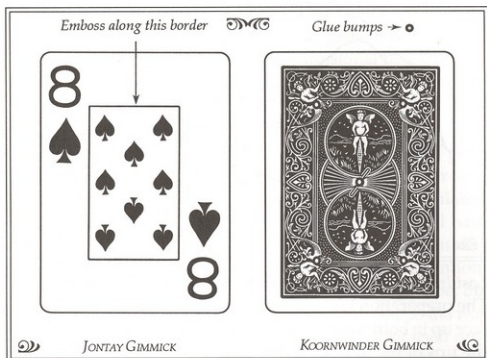
<sup>2</sup>P. 13.



The first time you prepare a Will De Seive gimmick, you might make two coin impressions in the card, one beside the other. This is recommended particularly if you are just developing a presentation for a routine. This double-embossed gimmick increases the probability of the gimmick being cut to the top. Therefore, you have a little less to distract you from your presentation. After you have gained some experience, you can, if you like, change to a more subtle form of ridged preparation.

#### *THE JONTAY GIMMICK*

Likewise, this trick card should be constructed from a face card—or a jumbo-index playing card, the type with a border around court and spot cards alike. Using a dry ball-point pen and a ruler, “draw” a line along the frame around the face of the card, bearing down firmly. This produces an almost invisible embossed line on the back of the card. A folded newspaper, used as a cushion under the card, is helpful in making this raised border.

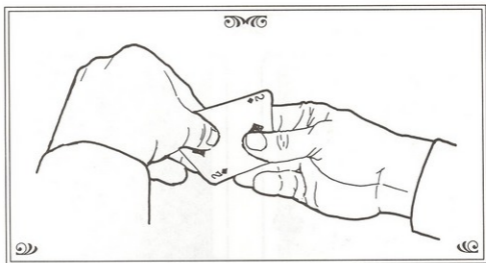


### THE KOORNWINDER GIMMICK

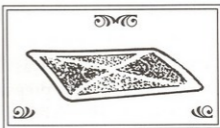
Dick Koornwinder conceived the idea of constructing ridged cards using two-part epoxy cement. In the United States both Duro and Borden, Inc. make suitable cements for our purpose. I color the cement with either red or blue aniline dye when mixing the components, to match the back of the card I am gimmicking. Using a toothpick, place five tiny dots of your colored cement mixture on the back of the card, one at each corner and the fifth in the middle. These glue spots should be no larger than the head of a pin. Let the cement harden for a few hours and the card will be ready for use. This type of preparation is particularly well-suited for jumbo cards.

### THE BREATHER CRIMP

While Larry Jennings was living in Berlin a few years ago, he showed me another prepared card that serves the function we're concerned with here. This was used by professional card sharps (and probably still is today). Recently it has been meticulously described in *The Vernon Chronicles, Volume 1: The*



*Lost Inner Secrets*<sup>3</sup> under the heading of "The Breather Crimp". The preparation is simple: Hold the card you wish to prepare face up in both hands, thumbs on the face, fingers below. Press the tips of the thumbs firmly onto the center of the card and slide them apart, moving them toward diagonally opposite corners as you maintain heavy pressure. Do this two or three times, until a shallow trough forms along one diagonal of the card. Then repeat this process along the other diagonal, forming another trough. The two troughs intersect at the center of the card, making a mild depression there that is barely perceptible, yet is enough to do the task we require of it. This subtle crimp will remain in the card through any sort of shuffling. For further details, see the Vernon volume. This crimped card can be particularly useful when you find yourself without a ridged card or working with a borrowed deck, as the breather crimp can be put into a card in just seconds. However, if this crimp is to be dependable, the deck must be in good condition; a battered relic from the kitchen drawer is not suitable.



<sup>3</sup>1987, pp. 96-97.

Other types of ridged cards exist and have been used by conjurers; however, my experience has proven that the five I've just described are the best for professional use. With the help of these gimmicks, genuine miracles can be accomplished, because you never need to handle the cards. Your spectator will unwittingly force the card on himself!

This principle makes possible some extraordinarily powerful close-up, cabaret and stage routines; and, as is true of almost all of my tricks and routines, little or no manipulative skill is required. I am not a "magician's magician" and have never been mistaken as a finger-flinger. The methods I use are simple and direct. I've seen many magicians at conventions who are far more brilliant technically than I will ever be; but this exceedingly polished technique *sometimes* gets in the way of their being good entertainers, and technique by itself only bores the paying public. This is damaging to professional conjuring. If a magician or a mentalist is being well paid for a performance, he should give the audience what the *audience* wants from a mystery worker: amazement, mystification and entertainment! In my mind, that's what makes the difference! Exquisite technique is fine, but without a strong presentation, it is worse than useless.

You will find the items in this book easy to perform from a manipulative standpoint, but they require high levels of showmanship and presentation. The patter I use is tailored for me, since it has been developed slowly through arduous work. Therefore, I have most often omitted my patter from the descriptions, as I am of the opinion that borrowed gags and presentations fit a performer as badly as a borrowed suit.



## The Principle

FOR MY stage and close-up performances, I exclusively use Bicycle poker-sized jumbo-index cards. The very large indices of these cards make their values recognizable at greater distances.

To perform the first two tricks in this chapter, you will require *three* ridged cards. If you decide on the Jontay gimmicks, you can use either face or spot cards with a jumbo-index deck. With Will De Seive gimmicks, use three different face cards.

Place one of your ridged cards approximately in the center of the pack. If you now do a one-handed cut, such as a Charlier Pass, you will find that the prepared card comes to the top of the deck, with ninety percent certainty, thanks to the raised area on the back of the card.

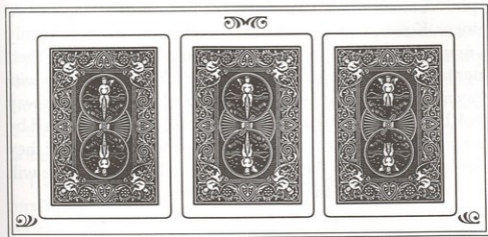
Ninety percent certainty is not good enough, though, for a professional mentalist or magician. That is why I use *three*

gimmicks in a deck of cards. The backs of these gimmicks are marked as well. Now the spectator can shuffle the cards himself; yet, when he cuts the pack, one of the three prepared cards will *almost always* come to the top. And on those very few occasions when this fails, another cut or two will resolve the problem.

*Important:* I have found that a force card is more certain to be cut to the top of the pack if the spectator cuts the cards *in his hands*, not on a table.

There is the possibility that an awkward spectator will drop the cards. For such occurrences, I always have in my pocket a second pack prepared with the same ridged cards. It looks quite inelegant for the performer to have to hunker down and pick up cards from the floor. Being prepared for such situations is part of being *professional*, and audiences recognize this.

The force cards are marked on the backs, using a felt-tip marker that matches the color of the back pattern. These cards are marked one, two and three, to be recognized quickly and certainly. Here is the marking method I use with Bicycle Rider-back decks: There are two bicycle-riding angels on the backs of these cards. With your felt-tip marker, fill in the *left* wing on both angels. This makes the wing "invisible". When you put in your preferred ridge-work, this marked card becomes Force Card One.



The angels on Force Card Two have the *right* wing blocked out—and on Force Card Three you remove the lower half of the bicycle wheel.

These marks, though bold, are noticeable only to the performer and can be seen at a fair distance in only a glance.

Most commercially manufactured forcing decks cannot be passed out for examination, as their preparation would be immediately detected. On the other hand, this marked ridged-card deck can bear a reasonable inspection without yielding its secret, since only three cards are prepared, and the preparation is fairly subtle. For this reason, I am convinced that this deck is the superior tool for professional mentalists and magicians.

*One last, important tip:* Marked ridged cards should *never* remain in the pack if it is stored in a card case after performance. Always keep the prepared cards in a separate envelope. If ridged cards are subjected to pressure, the subtle embossments will deteriorate and the cards will cease to function as surely as they should.



Certain theorists of mentalism have asserted time and again that there is no place for card tricks or magic effects in a mental program. Yet, as this book will show, I am of a different opinion, as are many *professional* mentalists. Artists like Dunninger, Koran, Fogel, Kreskin and Osterlind, to mention only a few, have and do perform “common magic tricks” in their mental shows with great success, *including experiments with playing cards*. The card effects in this book do not in any way look like “tricks”. To the public, they can only be explained by paranormal abilities. As for mentalists and magicians, if they aren’t familiar with the principles described here, there will be no possibility of their fathoming these subtle secrets.

## The Kismet Connection

~~~~~EFFECT:  
The performer takes a red-backed deck of cards and a small envelope from his pocket. He removes a single card from this red pack and places it into the envelope without showing it to the audience. This envelope is left leaning against a glass on the performer's table, in full view.

Someone is handed a blue-backed deck of cards and asked to remove the advertising card and the two jokers (normally present in all decks). These are put aside. Next the spectator shuffles the cards and cuts them. He then places the top card of the pack face down on the table or in his pocket without looking at it.

The performer now picks up his envelope, holding it at the very tips of his fingers, and with the utmost fairness tips out the card inside. It is, for example, the King of Spades. The

spectator reveals his randomly chosen card—and it, too, is the King of Spades!

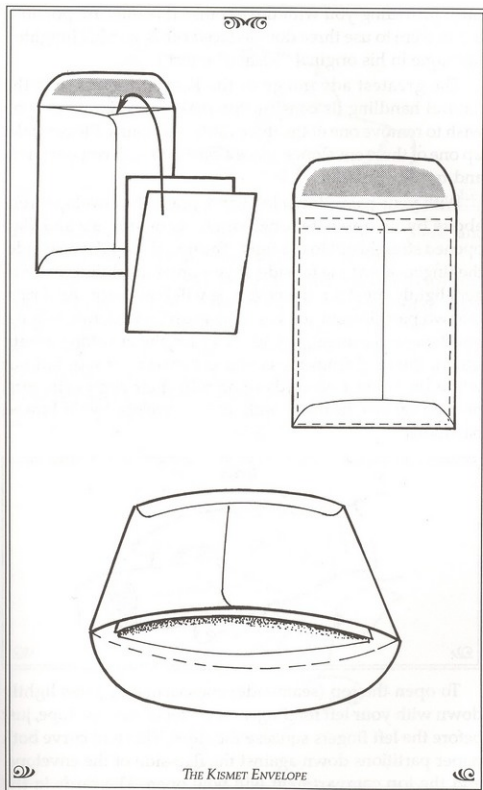
PREPARATION

This striking prediction uses a three-way envelope. I have mentioned Annemann's original three-way envelope, but more advanced envelope designs have been devised since Annemann's time. In my opinion, the best envelope of this type is Norman Houghton's, which was originally sold under the name "Kismet" by Micky Hades International⁴. This envelope allows you to place a card into it during performance, using a natural handling. The naturalness carries through to the later removal of the card from the envelope. A Kismet Envelope can be constructed in less than two minutes and has the added advantage of being immediately reusable.

The drawings of the envelope on the facing page show its construction. It is made from an opaque, end-opening envelope measuring approximately three-and-a-quarter by four-and-three-quarters inches, and has a double partition fashioned from one piece of paper, nine inches long and folded at the bottom into the shape of an uneven V. This folded piece must match the paper stock from which the envelope is made, and is just slightly narrower than the envelope. The partition lying on the flap-side of the envelope is roughly an eighth of an inch shorter than the interior of the envelope; and the partition toward the seam-side of the envelope is a quarter of an inch shorter than its companion.

The partitions divide the envelope into three compartments. Each compartment is capable of holding a playing

⁴Now Hades Publications. Its owner, Brian Hades, has generously given his permission for me to describe this envelope here, along with several of my applications for it, which first appeared in my booklet, *The Kismet Connection*, also published by the Hades company.

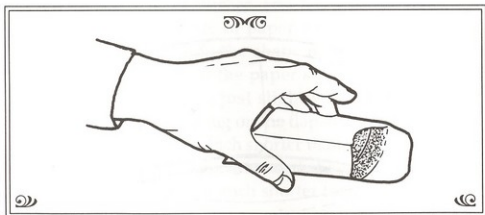


THE KISMET ENVELOPE

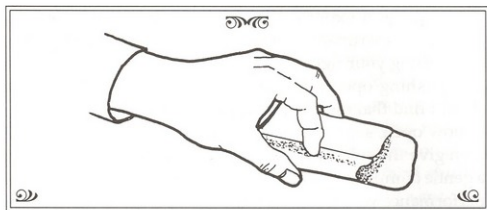
card, providing you with three "outs". (Six outs are possible, if you were to use three double-faced cards, as Mr. Houghton has done in his original "Kismet" effect.)

The greatest advantage of the Kismet Envelope is the natural handling its construction makes possible when you wish to remove one of the three cards it contains. Please make up one of these envelopes, place a card into each compartment and try this yourself:

With your palm-down left hand, grasp the envelope from above by its opposite long edges, seam-side up and flap opened straight out to the right. The thumb is at the near side, the fingers are at the far side. If you press the thumb and fingers lightly together, the envelope will bow open. As a rule, the two partitions inside will bow apart as well, opening the middle compartment. If you now turn the envelope mouth down, the card from the center compartment will fall out while the other two cards remain in their compartments, pressed against the inside walls of the envelope by the bowed partitions.

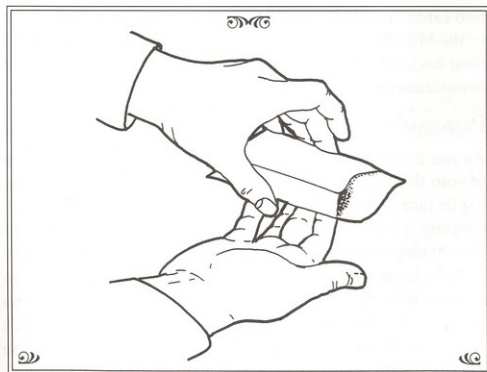


To open the top (seam-side) compartment, press lightly down with your left forefinger on center of the envelope, just before the left fingers squeeze the sides. This will curve both paper partitions down against the flap-side of the envelope, and the top compartment will bow open. The cards in the



middle and bottom compartments are trapped in place, and you can safely tip the top card from the envelope.

If you wish to release the card in the bottom (flap-side) compartment, first press the tip of your right second finger on the underside of the envelope, bowing it upward, before squeezing the sides with the left fingers. This forces both partitions to curve upward against the seam-side of the envelope, and the bottom compartment to gape open.



Should you experience any difficulty in opening the desired compartment, you can quickly remedy the problem by inserting your right thumb or forefinger into the envelope and pushing open the compartment required. And if you should find that the center compartment consistently refuses to bow open, separate the two partitions with your fingers, then give the sides of the envelope a sharp squeeze, putting a gentle crimp in each partition. This minor preparation before performance will assure that the center compartment opens properly when required. During performance, of course, you can look into the envelope to make sure that you have opened it to the correct section.

All this is much more difficult to describe than to do. Try it a few times and you will immediately see how simple the operation is.

Now that you understand the Kismet Envelope, let's return to our trick. Before performance, slip a red-backed card into each of the two outer compartments of the envelope. These two cards are duplicates of two ridged force cards contained in the blue-backed pack. These cards should be placed with their backs toward the seam-side of the envelope. The center compartment is left empty.

PERFORMANCE

As you introduce the effect, remove the red-backed duplicate of your third force card from the red deck and, without exposing its face to the audience, openly insert it into the envelope, slipping it into the center compartment. The construction of the envelope makes it possible to do this without fumbling.

Next have a spectator remove the blue-backed deck from its case, then discard the advertising card and jokers. As he does this, he will automatically observe that the deck appears quite normal. Therefore, no request to examine the pack is necessary.

This deck, of course, contains the three ridged force-cards, which you have placed near the top of the pack, with just a few cards between them. Have the spectator give the pack a couple of riffle shuffles. This disperses your ridged cards in the deck. Without staring at the cards, keep an eye on the shuffling to judge how thorough it is. If your helper releases the cards in large clumps that leave the force cards too close together, you may wish to let him perform a third shuffle before proceeding. Next ask that he give the pack a cut.

You now need only note which of the three force cards the spectator has cut to top of the deck. (Remember the marks?) With this information you can proceed to shake the corresponding card from the envelope. When you are removing the card, make certain that your spectators cannot see inside the envelope.

Psychologically, the trick is very strong, since the performer openly takes a card from the red deck and places it into an envelope. There is no way the spectators can know that this envelope has been previously loaded with two other cards, and this preparation is even further protected by the unsuspecting handling allowed by the Kismet Envelope.

You can present this effect either as a prediction or as an influencing of a spectator's actions. The choice is yours. There is one other presentational option you may wish to consider...

Two Decks with But a Single Thought

~~~~~FOR SOME time I have been performing a remarkably strong variation on the effect just explained. Indeed, I must admit that I deliberately withheld it from my *Kismet Connection* booklet in 1986, and again in 1992 when the German edition of the present work was published. From this you can understand in what high regard I hold the trick I am finally about to disclose. Since it is a variation of "The Kismet Connection", it can be rather quickly described. Please don't overlook it because the differences seem minor or because of the brevity of its explanation. It is a mystery that I greatly prize.

### EFFECT

Two spectators, preferably a couple, are invited to participate in a test of psychic compatibility. One of them selects a card

from a shuffled red-backed deck. This card is slipped, sight unseen, into an envelope, which is left in full view.

The second spectator is given a blue-backed deck and asked to shuffle, then cut it. She removes the random card cut to the top of the pack and displays it to everyone. Her partner's red-backed card is then shaken from its envelope. It is identical! Perfectly matched cards for a perfect couple.

### PERFORMANCE

As you have by now surmised, I have twisted the effect of "The Kismet Connection" slightly but significantly, so that it is no longer a prediction effect done by the performer, but rather a surprising coincidence effect that takes place between two spectators.

The blue-backed deck—which the second spectator shuffles and cuts—is prepared to deliver one of three different ridged cards to the top. A Kismet Envelope is responsible for providing the proper match for the selection. Two red-backed cards that match two of the blue-backed ridged cards are already loaded into the front and back compartments of the envelope. The center compartment is left empty to receive the third necessary duplicate. This card is provided by the first spectator. But how does he supply the correct card?

It is forced on him. Any clean, efficient force can be employed. I use an Al Baker style force deck, which consists of twenty-six duplicates and twenty-six mixed cards. The duplicates are together on top of the pack, allowing me to give the cards a casual overhand shuffle, mixing them face-up to display the faces of the indifferent cards as they are drawn off. I stop the shuffle before I reach the force bank and throw the unshuffled balance under the rest. I then simply turn the deck face-down and spread the top half for the spectator to make his selection.

Ask the spectator not to look at the face of his card, but to isolate it for the time being in an envelope. Here you aid him in slipping the forced card into the center compartment of the Kismet Envelope. Close the flap and stand the envelope against a glass on the table. You are now set to make one couple very happy about themselves, and an entire audience wonder where the limits of your powers lie.



*AT THE BMW AUTOMAGIC SHOW—1988*

# The More Frequent Miracle

~~~~~IN MAY of 1940 Tom Bowyer published a trick in the pages of *The Sphinx*<sup>5</sup> that would inspire several generations of two-deck coincidence effects, including Paul Curry's "The Power of Thought". Nevertheless, this trick, "The Frequent Miracle", is surprisingly little known today. Some years ago my friend, Stanton Carlisle, brought it to my attention, and I immediately saw the potential for a two-phase routine capable of producing an extraordinary impact. The first phase consists of Mr. Bowyer's excellent trick, with a couple of minor embellishments.

⁵Vol. 39, No. 3, p. 67.

FIRST PHASE

At the start of the experiment, the performer gives a spectator a deck of cards in a case that has been closed with several seals. Next two more spectators each receive a deck, which they shuffle. They then deal their cards in unison, face up and one at a time onto the table. Although it may sound unlikely, sometime during this dual dealing, two cards dealt face up at the same moment will match. This match is a genuine and uncontrived coincidence.

Next the sealed deck, given at the start of the effect to the first spectator, is opened and spread. It is seen that the performer had reversed one card in the deck, long before the beginning of the trick. As you might expect, this card is the same as the coincidence-matched pair!

PERFORMANCE

This trick depends on the coincidental match just mentioned, which it may surprise you to know can be relied on to happen at least sixty-three percent of the time on one deal through the decks. That figure increases to eighty-six percent given a second shuffle and deal.⁶ Hence Mr. Bowyer's title. I may just be lucky, but the percentage of coincidence has been much higher for me. However, given that this trick may require two spectators to deal through an entire deck twice to find a match, I would only use this effect for informal performances.

The sealed pack that acts as your prediction is, as you may have guessed, an Ultra-mental Deck. That is the whole secret!

SECOND PHASE

This next phase is particularly pleasing to perform, especially if there are fellow magicians in the audience. We build on the previous astonishing occurrence by performing an even

⁶These figures were provided by Tom Ransom in the book edition of *Ibidem*, Volume 1, p. 12.

stronger effect, the method of which cancels out any theories generated in the minds of the knowledgeable.

The two spectators are asked to reshuffle their decks. As they do this, the performer picks up the third deck and reverses a new card, letting no one see what it is. He places this deck in its case and has the spectator who guarded it earlier place it in his pocket for safekeeping.

Having finished shuffling their decks, the other two spectators give the cards a cut, each bringing a random card to the top.

The performer now has the third spectator bring out the deck in his pocket, remove it from the case and spread it, face toward the audience, so that the back of the reversed card can be seen. The other two spectators are each asked to remove the top card from their packs and show the faces of these cards to everyone. When they do so, it is seen that *the two cards are identical!* Another impossible coincidence. But then, pushing coincidence beyond all credible limits, the third spectator is told to display the face of the card the performer reversed in his pack—and it is seen to be another perfect match!

This sequence progresses nicely, as in the second phase you seem to increase the impossibility of your success by having the spectators merely cut their decks with the cards face down. There is no dealing and searching for matches.

PERFORMANCE

The decks given the spectators to shuffle and deal through in Phase One each contain a marked, matching, ridged card, say the Jack of Spades. Two additional marked and ridged duplicates are secretly added to each deck at the conclusion of the first phase. There are several ways to accomplish this. You can have the duplicates in your pocket and palm them onto the decks as you tidy things up for the next phase. Or you can have the duplicates in the card cases for the two packs. Here

you would put each deck into its case, secretly adding the gimmicks, then pretend to be struck by an inspiration and offer to try an even more demanding test. Whichever route you take, when you first gather the dealt decks, cut the original ridged card in each pack to the top before you add the other two. This places all three ridged duplicates on top of each pack as you begin the second phase of the routine.

Give the decks one riffle shuffle to place a few cards between each pair of duplicates. Then have each spectator shuffle his pack two or three times. All this is calculated to separate and distribute the ridged duplicates in the decks.

You must next switch the Ultra-mental Deck for a normal pack. To manage this, have the straight deck loose in your shirt pocket. You have reversed the match to the ridged force cards, the Jack of Spades, in the center of this pack. You may wish to push a few tissues into the bottom of the pocket, so that the deck sits high, positioned for a quick and unhesitant removal.

Pick up the Ultra-mental Deck, walk away from the table and explain that you will reverse another card in the pack. Turn so that no one can see you do this and pretend to reverse one. Instead, smoothly drop the Ultra-mental Pack into the inner left breast pocket of your jacket and remove the matching straight pack from your shirt pocket. Then, as you walk back to the table, ask the two spectators there to shuffle their packs. As they do this, place your deck into its case and give it to the person who held the Ultra-mental Pack for the first test. (Magicians in the audience now have a surprise awaiting them. At this point they will assume that an Ultra-mental Pack is in play. When in a few minutes you let the spectator spread the cards of that pack and display the reversed card, considerable confusion and astonishment will be experienced by these perceptive friends.)

You return to the other two spectators, who should by now have finished shuffling their decks. Have them square the cards in their hands, then cut them and complete the cut. As they do this, you openly exercise an intense concentration over their actions. This concentration is genuine, though you misrepresent its motive. The spectators should believe you are trying to influence their actions mentally. In fact, you are watching for a marked force card to appear on top of each deck. When this occurs, have them set their decks face down on the table and stand by.

Now ask the third spectator to bring the deck he has been carefully guarding from his pocket and remove it from its case. Next you tell him to hold the pack in front of himself, its face toward the other spectators, and spread the cards until the one you have reversed is exposed. Have him stop there, without revealing the face of the reversed card to the group.

Finally, have the two spectators at the table pick off the top cards of their decks and display them—a surprising match! Then have the third spectator remove the reversed card from the deck he holds and show its face. Match again!

If presented properly, this combination of principles will leave both the public and magicians totally mystified. In my experience, this routine always makes a lasting impression on an audience.

Medium in Your Pocket

~~~~~IN MARCH of 1994 I had to do several radio and television appearances to promote an upcoming theater engagement. Suitable material for these media—particularly radio—is hard to find. For this engagement, I had a happy brainstorm in which I borrowed an idea from Theodore Annemann's "Call Me Up Sometime"<sup>7</sup> and developed it into an on-the-air phenomenon. Here is what transpired.

### EFFECT

As soon as I arrived at the studio I produced a sealed envelope and told the interviewer that it contained the phone number of a friend of mine, who is a well-known medium in his city. I made it clear that this city was more than five hundred miles from the studio.

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<sup>7</sup>*Sh-h-h—! It's a Secret* (1934), pp. 5-6.

Next I gave the interviewer a sealed pack of cards and told him I didn't want to touch it again. At my instruction he broke the seal on the pack, opened the case and removed the deck. He then threw away the advertising cards and jokers.

I turned my back to him at this point and told him to shuffle the deck. When he finished he gave the deck a complete cut, after which he took the card he cut to and placed it, sight unseen, into one of his jacket pockets. He next hid the deck in another pocket to prevent me from gleaning the slightest clue to his actions. Only then did I turn to face him again.

I asked him to open the sealed envelope I had given him and dial the telephone number he found on the card inside. The medium I had mentioned earlier answered the phone and proceeded to "crawl" mentally into the interviewer's pocket, after which he slowly and certainly divined the freely chosen card he had seen there. I'm uncertain how well this may read, but I assure you, the effect on the interviewer and his listening audience was everything I hoped for!

## PERFORMANCE

Readers unfamiliar with the Annemann trick mentioned above will likely guess that I used a version of Hilliard's telephone test. The plot is certainly the same, but the method is greatly simplified, for there is no complicated code. The simple truth is, the card is forced. *The interviewer unknowingly forces the card on himself!*

Having read the preceding entries in this chapter, this information will provide a great part of the solution. The deck may have been sealed, but that hadn't stopped me from carefully opening the bottom of the cellophane wrapper and loosening the tax stamp with a steam kettle. I then prepared three cards in the deck with Jontay ridging and marked their backs for easy identification. Finally, I neatly resealed the deck in its case and cellophane, taking care to leave no signs of

tampering. I did all this shortly before the interview, so that the ridge work was fresh and, therefore, dependable. (If this proves not to be possible, I would recommend using Koornwinder gimmicks, which don't weaken with pressure.) You are by now familiar with the method of forcing one of these cards on an innocent assistant.

The next thing necessary was for me to learn which of the ridged cards had been taken. This I easily managed with another stratagem of Theodore Annemann's:<sup>8</sup> After I told the interviewer to cut the deck, I deceitfully asked, "Have you done that?" and turned my head around for an instant—just long enough to see that a ridged card was on top of the pack and which of the three it was.

After that the interviewer put the card into one of his pockets and the deck into another. I now had only to code the selected card to my "medium". During this particular test, my accomplice was a friend, Ulf Bolling-Borodin, who is also an accomplished mentalist. There are a number of methods available for coding over the phone. Ulf and I took advantage of his distinctive name. The three force cards were the Jack of Hearts, Queen of Spades and King of Clubs. If the Jack of Hearts was chosen, the interviewer was told to ask for "Herr Bolling". If the selection was the Queen of Spades, he called "Herr Ulf Bolling". And for the King of Clubs, my medium's name was "Herr Ulf Bolling-Borodin".

A similar name code can be worked out to fit your assistant. Or you can instruct the interviewer to put the chosen card in a specific place: e.g., shirt pocket, trousers pocket or wallet. It is understandable that the medium to wish to know which pocket he must crawl clairvoyantly into. You can easily think of other simple methods for coding three cards.

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<sup>8</sup>See his "Mystery of the Blackboard" in *Annemann's Practical Mental Effects* (1944), pp. 228-229.

I often leave the deck with the interviewer. I've never had one discover the ridge work in the cards. However, during such interviews, particularly ones in which listeners call in, many opportunities can be found to switch the pack for a normal one, if you think it necessary.

And that's the whole of it. Oh, I might mention that experience has shown this test to be effective on television interviews as well.

# Alpha

~~~~~WE NOW turn to a second possibility of employing ridged cards: the use of such a gimmick to force not just itself, but an entire bank of cards in a deck seemingly shuffled by spectators.

EFFECT

An alphabet deck is shuffled by spectators, then cut. The top six or seven cards cut randomly to the top of the pack are removed and one of the assisting spectators forms a word from these chance letters. Although the performer has not seen the cards and cannot know the letters in play, he is successful in mentally divining the word!

PREPARATION

As you will by now have surmised, the word is forced, although no hint of this is apparent to anyone in the audience, including the assisting spectator.

Let's assume that the word in question is QUICK. Remove the following seven letters from the pack—Q, U, I, C, K, I, X—and arrange them in a face-up pile on the table in the following order from face to back: X-I-C-K-U-I-Q. The Q is a ridged card with a marked back. You can use the Jontay method of preparation, using the outline of the Q to camouflage the embossment, or you can make the card a Koornwinder gimmick.

This prearranged packet is turned face down and placed onto the deck, the ridged Q-card on top. Slip the prepared deck into its case.

PERFORMANCE

Remove the alphabet deck from the case and cut off the top third. This packet must contain at least seven cards, your stock. Hand the remaining cards to a spectator and have her divide them between herself and someone else.

Ask the two spectators to shuffle their cards, demonstrating with those you hold. Your shuffling, however, must be false. This is not difficult with so few cards. Simply overhand shuffle, running the cards singly; then repeat this quick running shuffle to return the cards to their original order.

Place your packet on the table and have the spectators set their shuffled packets onto yours. Then ask the two spectators to cut the cards once each. The second spectator's cut will most often bring the ridged card to the top. If you don't see its marked back, have them give the pack one or two more cuts until it appears.

One of the two spectators is requested to "Deal some cards onto the table." When he has dealt six, say, "That's fine," timing this so that he feels comfortable dealing a seventh card if he desires. Next ask him to construct a meaningful word, at least four letters long, from the dealt cards. Also let him know that he doesn't have to use all of the letters. With the

cards you have provided, only one word can possibly be formed: QUICK. This word may be either predicted or telepathically divined.

Here is an additional idea: If you combine "Alpha" with a book test⁹, the result is extremely potent. You first have a spectator select a word from a random page in a book. This word is forced. Of course, the word you force from the book must be one consisting of letters that do not offer any possibilities for the formation of other words. Also, the force word should be a fairly obvious one, so that it isn't a challenge for the spectator to recognize it.

A second spectator is then given the alphabet deck, which he cuts in half. You take the upper half and false shuffle it, retaining the top stock. The spectator shuffles the rest of the cards. Next the cards are reassembled, his half pack on yours, and cut by the spectator, thereby restoring the stack to the top. Your unsuspecting assistant is now given the assignment of forming a word from the letters found on top of the shuffled deck. Those letters have been prearranged by you to form the word forced on the first spectator. The surprising result is that the word the second spectator forms is the identical word randomly chosen by the first spectator from the book!¹⁰

⁹See page 203-210.

¹⁰To the best of my knowledge, this plot synthesis was first suggested by T. A. Waters in his trick "Pointalism", published in *Grymwoyr* (1982), pp. 26-27; also see *Mind, Myth & Magick* (1993), pp. 274-276.

Nap on the Ridge

THE NAP Hand Deal, in a simple two-hand version, first appeared in print in Sachs' 1885 classic, *Sleight of Hand*¹¹. British magician Lionel King made a feature of it in his performances during the first half of this century. Mr. King, before his death in 1958, gave Al Koran and Billy McComb permission to use his routine. Those two gentlemen performed the experiment with great success, as have others since, including Ken Brooke. In my experience, the Nap Hand Deal is one of the strongest tricks possible for a mentalist when working private parties.

The game of Nap (short for Napoleon) unfortunately is only known in England. For that reason, British performers had an exclusive on it for many years. Billy McComb came up with the idea of adapting the presentation to the game of

¹¹Pp. 143-146 in the second edition, pp. 134-137 in the third.

Whist for his American performances. In Germany, I use the venerable and popular game of Sixty-six, which I played as a boy with my schoolmates, cousins and friends.

All previous versions of this trick with which I am familiar use a gimmicked pack containing three identical sets of fifteen cards, and I am aware of only one method using a deck that can be shuffled and cut. It was originated by John Derris and sold many years ago by Davenport's in London.¹²

For years I thought about adding a version of the Nap Hand Deal to my act, but I couldn't find a method that completely satisfied me. Finally the idea of using a ridged card struck me. The principle is applied in much the same manner as just explained in "Alpha". A ridged card made it possible for me to give the deck to the winning spectator at the end of the performance!

PREPARATION

You can use any fifteen-card setup for this trick you prefer. I personally use Al Koran's from *Al Koran's Professional Presentations* by Hugh Miller.¹³ Unfortunately, I know nothing about poker, but I'm certain this method can also be used for a poker demonstration. All that would be necessary is to replace the Whist setup with a poker stack.

The top card of the setup is ridged. I also mark its back with a subtle fingerprint or the blackout technique previously described (pp. 25-26). The prepared deck is in its case and on your table when the presentation begins.

PERFORMANCE

Ask those in your audience who play whist (or poker) to raise their hands. Invite three of these persons to come on stage,

¹²I have Stanton Carlisle to thank for bringing this version to my attention.

¹³Pp. 83-87.

and have them stand around your card table, one at the back and one at either side. Take the deck from the case and nonchalantly cut off about a third of it (at least fifteen cards: your setup). Ask one of the volunteers to cut off about half the remaining cards. Pass the balance of the deck to a second volunteer.

As in "Alpha", you demonstrate how you wish them to shuffle their packets, while you false shuffle yours, retaining the order of the fifteen-card stock. After this, place your packet on the table and ask the volunteers to place their shuffled packets on top of yours. Then ask the volunteers to cut the cards, taking turns as necessary. While they are doing this, you must keep up a constant line of commentary. Once you see that the marked card has arrived on top of the pack, leave the table and step into the audience. With proper attention given to presentational psychology, it will be forgotten that you ever touched the cards.

Now perform the trick as it has been described in many magic texts¹⁴, but with one important difference: The winner receives the deck that has been used in the routine as a prize! This is a cunning touch for intelligent spectators to ponder, and quite a shock for magical colleagues.

¹⁴For example, the Koran routine already referenced, or the *Ken Brooke Series, Volume 4*, published by The Ace Place, London, England.

The Out of Sorts Variations

~~~~~IN 1984, Phil Goldstein published a booklet titled *Thequal*. One of the tricks in it, "Out of Sorts", fascinated me. Phil has given me permission to describe his trick in this book, a favor for which I am most grateful.

The effect is presented as a demonstration of remote viewing. Apparently, the performer never sees the cards, yet he names a card a spectator is only thinking of! The effect could be the climax of a blindfold routine and, if the performer is a good showman, the audience will talk a long time about it.

### EFFECT

Someone removes eight cards from a shuffled deck and thinks of one. While this is done, the performer stands at a distance with his back to the person. Despite these precautions, he

manages to name the card thought of, without asking a single question!

### PERFORMANCE

Of course, there is a bit more to the story, quite a bit more. The mathematical principle on which this unusual experiment is based has been explored by such fine thinkers as Alex Elmsley and Bob Neale. However, the particular mathematical construction we will exploit is specifically Phil Goldstein's. The trick depends on an arrangement of just eight cards, which may be changed from show to show. The underlying principle is a binary sorting process, which is done without the spectator's knowledge, but with his unwitting help.

When Phil performs "Out of Sorts" in a close-up setting, he arranges the necessary setup under the noses of the audience, after the conclusion of another card experiment, while he "toys" with the cards. He then gives the deck a false shuffle, retaining the eight arranged cards on top, then forces them with either the cross-cut or riffle force. I prefer to stack the setup before the show and make the top card of the stack a ridged card, so that the deck can be shuffled by spectators, in the manner explained in "Alpha" and "Nap on the Ridge".

When the spectator counts the eight cards onto the table, he is instructed to deal the cards face up into a pile, and to think of one of them. Next he is told to deal these eight face-up cards alternately into two smaller piles of four each, just as one would if dealing two hands for a game of cards. The spectator now picks up the pile containing his chosen card, holding these cards face up, and places the other pile face up onto those in his hand.

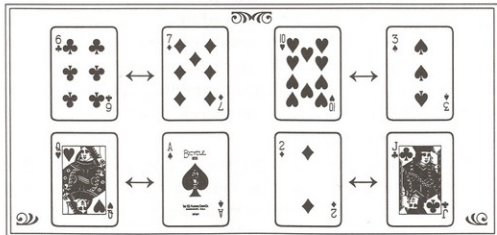
This simple if somewhat odd process is repeated twice, but is given a reasonable sounding explanation: The purpose of the repeated dealing is to give you several opportunities to tune in on his thoughts as you follow his actions telepathically.

Done without motivation, the three sorts might easily seem labored or suspiciously artificial, but through your patter they can be given a perfectly believable logic. Emphasize that the spectator must burn the image of the chosen card into his memory and concentrate on its location each time he deals it and assembles the cards. Stress that he must send you mental impressions of the cards, and strengthen those impressions through repetition. It should go without saying that you never use the term *sorting* in your instructions.

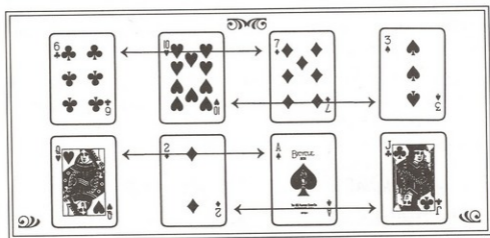
Now the packet is turned face down and the cards are dealt onto the table one at a time. Believe it or not, the third card dealt is the one thought of by the spectator! What is unbelievable and likewise fantastic is that you can name the selection, even though you have stood well away from the cards and spectator, with your back turned, throughout the entire process.

How? The eight cards that the spectator deals off the deck are stacked according to Joe Berg's system for his Ultra-mental Deck. That is, the cards are paired as follows: hearts with spades, and diamonds with clubs. In addition, the numerical values of each card pair always equal thirteen.

Through this simple method you are able to determine one card of a pair by learning the other one, all without complicated calculations. Here is an example of four such pairs:



Next the cards in each pair are alternated with the cards of the next pair. That is, the first and third cards of the stack constitute one pair; the second and fourth cards make another; the fifth and seventh cards form the third pair; and the sixth and eighth cards are the fourth. (*Important:* When choosing eight cards for this setup, make sure they provide a good mixture of colors and suits.) Arranging the four card-pairs given above into this pattern we get...



So, if on the spectator's third deal of the cards the Queen of Hearts is the first card dealt, you know that the mentally selected card is the Ace of Spades! Why? As we have already discovered, the third deal always delivers the selection to the third position. The third card is also the mate to the first. The first card is the Queen of Hearts, and its mate is the Ace of Spades (hearts are paired with spades, and  $13 - 12 = 1$ ). Therefore the Ace of Spades is the thought-of card.

Another example: If the first card dealt is the Six of Clubs, you would name its mate, the Seven of Diamonds. Diamonds are always paired with clubs. Each pair of cards has values adding to thirteen.  $13 - 6 = 7$ , so the mate (and thought-of card) is the Seven of Diamonds.

But how do you learn the first card of the pair, so that you can call out the name of the card the spectator thought of? You



employ Annemann's glance-back psychology: As the spectator separates the eight cards for the third time, you ask him to stop after he deals each card while you try to determine if it is his or not. He deals the first card face up onto the table and pauses. You concentrate for a moment, then say, "That isn't the one you have burnt into your thoughts." Pause for an instant, then turn your head nonchalantly in the direction of the spectator and ask, "Am I right?" At the same time, glimpse the card on the table and immediately turn away again. This action seems natural and without importance. Therefore, it is "psychologically invisible" to the audience.

Once you know the card lying on the table, you know the identity of the mental selection; *and* you know its position in the packet: third. Indeed, as far as your audience is concerned, you know all.

### *Out of Sorts: Variation One*

My two variations on Phil Goldstein's "Out of Sorts" make it possible to present the effect using two spectators, each making a mental selection.

#### PREPARATION

You will need a marked deck. (I suppose it goes without saying that I use my "Working Performer's Marked Deck"<sup>15</sup>.) You will also have to prepare two eight-card sets, arranged as explained above, and commit the second set of cards to memory.

Place the memorized second setup on top of the deck, and lay the other setup onto this. The top card of the upper setup is ridged and clearly marked; that is, it bears a special second mark besides the value and suit mark that all the cards have.

<sup>15</sup>Manufactured and sold exclusively by my Wonder Workshop in Berlin. Martin Breese in London, England, also supplies the special materials to mark your own deck.

## PERFORMANCE

Begin by inviting two spectators on stage and ask them to help you mix the cards. Cut off the top third of the pack and have the spectators each take half of the balance. The three of you then shuffle the cards and reassemble the pack as previously explained. This places the unaltered setups near the bottom of the pack. Have the deck cut by one or both spectators until the ridged card arrives on top. Then step away from the two spectators.

Have the first spectator deal eight cards from the top of the deck into a face-down pile on the table. He then passes the deck to the other spectator who likewise counts eight cards from the top of the deck.

Now instruct each spectator to pick up his pile, fan the cards and think of one. Then lead them through three sorts of the packets, as described in the Goldstein handling, and conclude by having the packets laid face down on the table.

After this has been done, ask the first spectator to pick up his face-down packet, look at the top card and concentrate on it. Act as if you have tuned in on his thoughts and name the ridged card. If you have named the card correctly (which happens quite often), simply act as if everything has gone according to plan. If your guess isn't correct, tell him that he was concentrating on more than one card at a time and ask him if the card you named is in the packet he is holding. Naturally, it is and he will affirm the fact. Then politely ask him to tell you the name of the top card of his packet. This is admittedly bold, but I assure you it is subtle enough to escape suspicion in this context. As soon as you know the top card, you know the first spectator's thought-of card as well.

You also know that this card is third from the top of the packet. Have him turn the cards over one at a time and lay them face up on the table. At the third card, you stop him,

convincingly feigning the receipt of a strong mental impression. You then name the first spectator's card in the most dramatic and entertaining way possible.

Stride over to the table, take the first spectator's card from his hand and display it to the audience. During this dramatic flourish, you also take the opportunity to read the marking on the top card of the second spectator's packet, which is lying face-down on the table. This card in turn imparts to you the identity of the second mental selection. But to name the card immediately would be a great error! Instead, walk away from the table, distancing yourself once more from your two assistants.

Ask the second spectator to pick up her packet, shuffle it and fan it, so that she can see the face of every card. She is then to concentrate on her card. Because you have memorized the entire packet, it is easy for you to announce the name of each card she holds! As you do this, have her remove each card named from the fan and show it to the audience. Naturally, you save the chosen card for last, building its revelation to the highest dramatic point you can reach.

### *Out of Sorts: Variation Two*

In this method, which I have frequently used with great success, you also use a marked deck. In addition you require a second deck with a contrasting back. Prearrange two eight-card sequences on top of the first deck, the second sequence being one you have memorized. Stack the identical eight cards from the second (memorized) sequence on top of the second deck. Place this deck on your table.

You now present the trick as described in Variation One, but with one important difference: When you have successfully identified the first spectator's card, and have secretly read the mark on top of the second spectator's packet, you swiftly calculate the identity of her selection, then pick up the

second deck, remove the matching card from the stack on top and place it face down on the table.

Continue as described in Variation One, calling off the names of the seven unchosen cards in the second spectator's packet. This leaves her holding her mental selection. Have her place this last remaining card face down on the table, next to the face-down card you put aside from the second deck. Then ask the spectator to pick up both of these cards and show them to the audience. An impeccable match!

If you prefer not to use playing cards for mental work, I recommend that you make up a deck of picture cards on blank-faced card stock. You will find the best deck for this purpose in Glenn Gravatt's *Treasure Trove of Tricks* on pages 209-211. The Gravatt deck consists of fifty cards bearing as many symbols, but these symbols are designed as twenty-five pairs that are logically associated and easy to remember. For example, one card shows a bow. It is paired with a card showing an arrow. Another card with a number four on it is paired with a card showing four rails. Therefore, if you know the symbol on one card, you immediately know the symbol on the second card of the pair. I have made up this Gravatt deck with symbols in four colors. The colors can be paired in the same manner as card suits: red with blue and yellow with green. Jontay ridgework can be subtly put into the top card by running a stylus over a portion of the outline of the symbol.

Naturally, you could also stack the entire deck using Gravatt's paired-designs principle, but you would then have to shuffle the full deck yourself to retain its order.

Before leaving the subject of ridged cards and symbol decks, I'd like to mention one more idea. If you wish to use duplicate ridged force cards in a symbol deck, you can better conceal their presence if the symbols are drawn in different colors. Then, if each duplicate symbol is done in a different color as well, they are much less noticeable when they lie near one another in the pack.

## Seer of the Trivial

~~~~~THIS EFFECT is based on the very popular game Trivial Pursuit. During the last decade, millions of copies have been sold in many languages, and this game has enjoyed tremendous popularity. Since so many people are familiar with it, or at least know of it, it struck me as a good premise for a mental test. You are about to read the results of that idea. I am aware of only one other colleague who performs an effect based on this game: Ross Johnson of Chicago, who demonstrated his routine in early 1988, on the occasion of Bob Haines' Invitational gathering. Ross's method is quite different from mine.

Trivial Pursuit is an elaboration of an old question-and-answer game. It comes with a large number of cards, on each of which are six questions. The questions cover different fields of knowledge and call for a well-rounded and rather comprehensive education. Here is what I do with it as a mentalist.

EFFECT

The performer shows a large padded mailing envelope, which he places in full view of the audience. The envelope is clearly marked with the word "Prediction".

He next brings out a Trivial Pursuit box containing more than four hundred cards, each of which has six questions on it. A spectator removes a packet of them from the box, then shuffles and cuts them. She then takes the top card, and the audience freely selects one of the six questions printed on it. The spectator reads this question—chosen randomly from over twenty-four hundred possibilities—to the group.

The performer opens the envelope and a smaller envelope falls out of it. Someone from the audience opens this envelope. It contains a sheet of paper with something printed on it in large letters: *the correct answer to the chosen question!*

PREPARATION

You will require a complete general edition of Trivial Pursuit (currently, in the United States, these sets as called Master Editions) and additional cards from one of the special-topic editions that are available, like Music or Sports. For this trick three duplicate special editions are necessary. These games are available in the toy departments of most large department stores. The Master Editions come with approximately eight hundred question cards, and the special editions contain four hundred. With the cards from these two sets you should have an ample stock from which selections can be made.

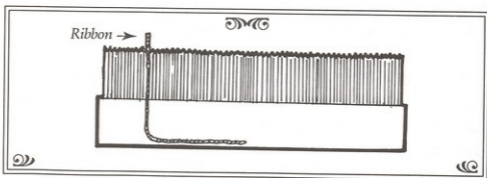
The three duplicate sets of special cards are needed to provide you with three identical Trivial Pursuit question cards, each of which you must make into a ridged card. The ridges are raised on the question sides of these cards. Because all of the cards have a colored frame, I apply Jontay ridging to these borders. My friend Bill Palmer prefers to use the Koornwinder

preparation, placing the tiny bumps of glue at the decorative corners of the cards.

Having three duplicate sets of these cards also allows you to change the force questions when doing repeat shows. It would certainly attract undesirable attention if spectators witnessing different performances were to hear the same question being chosen.

Distribute these three ridged duplicates in a group of about forty-five normal question cards, with the duplicates lying reversed (question-side up) in the stack. When the spectator later cuts the packet, the reversed condition of the duplicates provide a clear signal to you, visible from a great distance, that a force card has been brought to the top.

You carry these cards in the box manufactured for that purpose, which comes with the game. However, this box is also slightly prepared. Securely tape or glue one end of a piece of red ribbon, about six inches long, to the inside bottom of the box, near center. Insert a few cards into the front end of the box, answer sides turned forward, and run the free end of the ribbon over these cards. Then set your forty-five-card force bank into the box and on top of the ribbon, trapping it between the two group of cards. The answer sides of the non-duplicates in this bank should also be turned forward in the box. The end of the ribbon should project from between the cards at their top edge for about half an inch. Fill the rest of the box with more cards, facing the same direction as the rest.



If you now pull on the end of the ribbon, it will raise the prepared stack of cards and a few more behind it from the box, making them easy to remove.

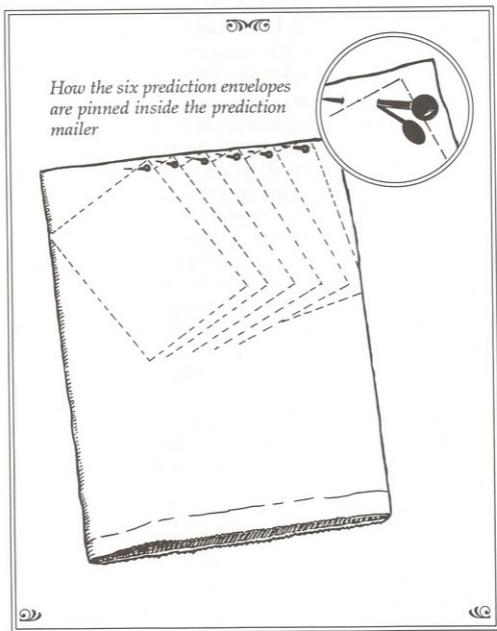
You will also need:

- ◆ A large padded mailer, approximately nine inches by twelve, preferably one with a self-sealing flap.
- ◆ Six normal letter envelopes, either Baronial or No. 6 size.
- ◆ Six straight pins with black bead heads. Such pins can be found in stationers and sewing supply shops. With a permanent marker, blacken the metal portions of the pins.
- ◆ Six letter-size sheets of paper, on which you prepare six different predictions, each prediction being an answer to one of the six questions on your force cards. Write these predictions in the largest letters you can fit on the sheets, using either a felt-tip marker or a computer printer. Then fold each sheet in sixths, place it into one of the letter envelopes and seal the envelope. Subtly mark the envelopes with a pencil, so that you can tell which envelope contains which answer. I use the colors of the subject categories for this purpose. (Each of the six questions on a Trivial Pursuit card is printed beside a colored oval, each color representing a different subject category.) These marks help to ensure against mix-ups as you complete the preparation.

Now put the six smaller envelopes—in the same color sequence used on the question cards—into the bottom of the padded mailer and pin each in place with one of the black straight pins.

This pinning is accomplished by slipping the first prediction envelope into the mailer, end first, until its far right corner is near the corresponding corner at the bottom of the mailer. Hold the envelope in place as you push the pin through the back of the mailer, then out again, piercing the far right corner of the smaller envelope as well. This fixes the envelope

in place, so that it can't drop out. Insert the second envelope into the mailer, so that it overlaps the first envelope, but lies a bit to the left, and pin it in place. Fix each of the four remaining envelopes similarly in the mailer. Near each of the six pins place a colored dot on the envelope. These dots match the color of the subject category for each sealed answer held in place by that pin. The drawing makes this arrangement clear.



Important: Take care as you pin the envelopes inside the mailer, to assure that you don't accidentally run a pin through two envelopes at once.

PERFORMANCE

Coming as late in the chapter as this trick does, little else needs to be explained concerning procedure. You invite a spectator, preferably one who is familiar with the game of Trivial Pursuit, to join you on stage. Ask her to remove a stack of roughly forty-five to fifty question cards from the box. To aid her in this, you point to the end of the ribbon and indicate by gesture (not speech) that she should pull it. When she does, the force bank is raised for her to take. Your helper is the only one really aware of the ribbon, and to her, or any one else who might be close enough to notice it, it will seem nothing more than a thoughtful courtesy, provided for her convenience.

Once you have the prepared stack of cards in the spectator's hands, you proceed to have her mix the cards, then cut them, forcing one of the three identical question cards on herself.

During the mixing and cutting, you step well away from her, across the stage to a table where you have placed your prediction mailer. Pick it up and hold it with the pins toward you, one hand near them. When you see that she has cut one of the reversed force cards to the top of the stack, point out to her that there are six questions on the card she has randomly cut to, and that each question has a colored oval beside it indicating category. Have her call out the six colors and point to anyone she likes in the audience. That person then names any one of the colors. When you hear the choice, you secretly pull the corresponding pin from the mailer and let the pin drop to the floor where, because it is completely black, it becomes invisible. (The reason I blacken the pins is to eliminate any silver glint in the stage lights as the pin drops.) This action releases the correct envelope inside the mailer.

You next ask the spectator to read aloud the question signified by the chosen color. Ask her if she knows the answer. Chances are she will not, in which case you ask if anyone in the audience has the answer. As you indulge in this by-play, which can often be made amusing, open the flap of the mailer and let the loose envelope drop out of the mailer. While the method of releasing the proper envelope is something I am rather proud of, its merit should not cause you to place undue attention on the actions of removing the envelope from the mailer. Instead, place the mailer aside in a careless seeming manner and focus all attention on the prediction envelope. (You can at this point also check your pencil mark on the envelope, as a double-check that you are holding the right prediction.)

In the event that no one knows the answer to the question, have your helper read it to the group from the back of the card. Then proclaim, "Now everyone knows the answer, but I knew it many hours before you freely selected that question out of thousands. Look!" Neatly open the envelope you hold and dramatically display its contents.

A HANDLING IMPROVEMENT

For the last few years I have used an embellishment to the method just described, which makes the handling of the prediction a bit more logical. This refinement allows you to write the prediction in front of the audience and seal it in an envelope, which is then placed in a padded mailer, further protecting it from tampering.

Since you openly write this prediction with a felt-tip marker, all six previously prepared prediction sheets must be written in matching marker. These are sealed in envelopes and pinned inside a padded mailer exactly as taught.

You need a matching seventh letter envelope, which you prepare in a very simple way: Spray the entire address side

of the envelope, excluding the flap, with 3M Spray-mount cement. For performance you will also need a felt-tip marker and a note pad or clipboard with several sheets of paper on it.

To begin the presentation, take the notepad or clipboard and write something on the top sheet. The spectators must not see what you have written. Immediately fold up this piece of paper and insert it into the glue-coated envelope. Seal this and place it into the padded mailer as follows:

With your left hand, hold the mailer horizontally and back up, like a tray, using your hand to conceal the pins from the audience. With your right hand, open the flap of the mailer and insert the glue-coated envelope into it, adhesive side up. As you insert it, press it firmly to the upper wall of the mailer from the inside, sticking it close to the opening. Close the flap of the mailer and press on the outside of it to assure that the glue-coated envelope adheres to the inner wall.

Important: The glued surface of the envelope must not come in contact with the other envelopes. Be careful!

After closing the flap of the mailer, grasp the flap end in your right hand and shake the mailer sharply, as if to send the envelope you have just put into it down to the bottom. This psychological touch will register with the audience.

Place the mailer in full view and continue as described above. The extra envelope, glued to the inside of the mailer, will not affect the dropping of the correct prediction envelope.

With a bit of care, the affixed envelope can be removed from the inside of the mailer, permitting you to reuse the mailer several times.

To avoid any possibility of having the glued-coated envelope stick to the prediction envelopes, you could install a separating wall in the mailer. This, however, isn't necessary. Once you have rehearsed the handling a few times, you will see how easily the envelope can be stuck to the inner wall of the mailer without interfering with the other envelopes.

If you have difficulty pinning the six envelopes into the bottom of the mailer, try using the next larger size of mailer. Also, try to find a brand of mailer with a smooth inner lining. You don't want the released prediction envelope to hang up or snag on anything at the time it is supposed to fall out. If you find the released envelope isn't falling out freely, glue a dime or penny in a bottom corner of each of the envelopes. This extra weight assures that the envelope will drop from the mailer without a hitch. This, by the way, is a useful trick anytime you must depend on an envelope dropping out of a larger one.

With this last tip you have all the details you need to perform a novel, entertaining and extremely mystifying piece of mental magic. It has served me very well, and I hope it does the same for you.

Princess of the Opera

~~~~~IN JUNE of 1994 I was hired by the Italian branch of the Schering pharmaceutical company to entertain their clients while on cruises of Berlin's lakes and rivers. Since the spectators were Italian and did not speak German, I found myself working in English, which a translator then conveyed to the audience in Italian for me. The timing of my patter and jokes was seriously hindered, as you can imagine. Consequently, I wanted a showpiece that would connect strongly with my Italian audiences, despite the language problem, and I hit on the idea of using music, a universal language. The result was so successful, I want to share it with you.

### EFFECT

The performer tells the audience about his grandmother, who had a lifelong love for the opera. She traveled widely to visit

the famous opera houses of the world and to hear at least one performance in each; and she kept all the opera tickets as mementos of her touring. The performer shared her passion for opera, and as a result, his grandmother left him her collection of opera tickets. From his attaché case he brings a stack of roughly fifty tickets, each from a different opera house and opera. These are mixed by a member of the audience, then five spectators are each given a random batch of tickets.

These spectators are asked to stand in the audience, mentally choose any one of the operas they hold and imagine that they are actually experiencing the opera themselves. While doing that, each is requested to think of a prominent melody from that work.

The performer next explains that through hypnotic suggestion he has been able to amplify the psychic faculties of the pianist for the house orchestra, and that she will attempt to sense telepathically the melodies being concentrated on by the five spectators. If any of the five hear their melodies played, they are asked to take their seats.

The performer gives the pianist a post-hypnotic suggestion that puts her into a psychic trance. Then he commands her to play whatever melody comes into her head. Hesitantly at first, she begins to play some notes and chords. She then becomes more certain of herself as the melody develops under her fingers, until it becomes recognizable. One of the five spectators sits down.

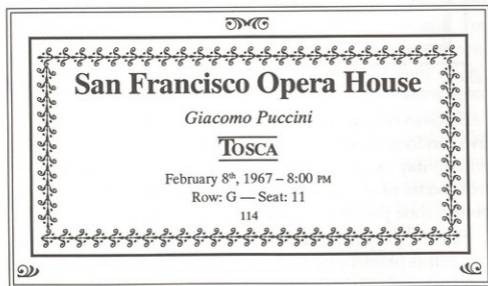
The pianist stops briefly, then begins to play another song. Another of the five takes his seat. This occurs twice more, until only one spectator remains standing. The performer turns to her and asks her to concentrate on her mentally chosen ticket—upon which the performer slowly and dramatically reveals first the opera house on the ticket, then the date, the row and the seat number. Finally he says, "It's not an *opera* that was performed there, was it. You saw 'Pavarotti in Concert'

and you liked this particular melody most!" Suddenly the pianist plays the popular Neapolitan tune, "O Sole Mio"—and the last spectator takes her seat!

Admittedly, this routine is only practicable with a group familiar with opera, which my Italian audiences all were; and for them the effect was sensational. However, with some thought, the premise can be altered to suit the backgrounds and interests of other groups. What I think is particularly instructional here is that the plot of an effect like the Princess Card Trick, and other plots as well, can be successfully adapted to things other than playing cards.

#### PREPARATION

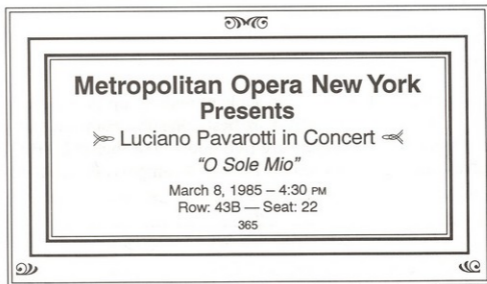
You will have to go to the trouble of making up fifty concert tickets for this effect, which are best done on a computer and laser printer. My tickets are two-and-a-half inches by five, done on different colored card stocks. A sample is shown here:



Twenty-five of these tickets are for various well-known operas. The remaining twenty-five tickets are more particular in their make-up. They consist of five five-ticket sets. In each of these sets you include one famous opera—like Giuseppe



Verdi's *Aida* or *Rigoletto*, or Giacomo Puccini's *La Bohème* or *Tosca*—and four relatively unknown ones, such as Paul Hindemith's *Cardillac*, Igor Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*, Hans Werner Henze's *Il re Cervo* and Claudio Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea*. A little time spent with an opera handbook from the public library will supply you with all the composers and works you need. For the fifth set of tickets I use "Luciano Pavarotti in Concert" as the popular choice, with "O Sole Mio" listed under the concert title.



Stack the five arranged sets of tickets on top of the twenty-five random tickets. Also prepare the top ticket of the stack with Jontay ridging or Koornwinder bumps. You should also treat some of the tickets that bear older dates with a bit of brown shoe polish, so that they look their age.

Before performance, you will need to provide the orchestra's pianist with piano scores for the five popular songs used in your set of tickets. She should learn a few bars of each so that she needn't refer obviously to the sheet music. Since the melodies are very familiar, this should present no problem for an experienced pianist. She must also be instructed on how to turn in a believable simulation of a hypnotic trance.

## PERFORMANCE

After telling the story of how you came into possession of the opera tickets, ask someone in the front row to help you mix them. Cut off at least half the tickets for yourself (twenty-five or more) and hand the bottom half of the stack to the spectator. Shuffle the tickets you hold as he does the same. Your shuffle, however, is false and keeps the sets of five intact. You can use a Charlier false-haymow shuffle, or simply push off groups of five tickets at a time, each group onto the last.

When you complete your shuffle, cut the ridged ticket back to the top of the stack, if it is not already there. Then have the spectator place his shuffled tickets onto yours. Hand him the whole stack and invite him to give it a cut. Chances are good that he will cut the ridged ticket (and your stack) to the top. If you don't see the prepared ticket on top after his cut, have him give the stack another cut, then retrieve the tickets and cut them at the ridged ticket yourself.

Next, casually thumb off five groups of five tickets each, handing them to five spectators, whom you ask to stand. You will now proceed to force the five songs known to your pianist, using a extremely subtle principle. I first came on this concept in a trick of Finn Jon's, the brilliant Norwegian magician,<sup>16</sup> and this was my source of inspiration. However, while preparing this book for press I became aware that Phil Goldstein, thinking along musical lines as well, applied this principle to songs roughly eight years ago.<sup>17</sup> The idea is this: Each person is asked to think of an opera from which he or she can recall a prominent melody. Since they each hold five tickets, four of which bear the names of relatively obscure works, they will naturally choose the one opera with which they are most familiar!<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup>"Pick Up an Object" from the *Finn Jon: Mentalism* video tape.

<sup>17</sup>See "Humthing" in his *Mix '86* lecture notes.

<sup>18</sup>Mr. Goldstein, in his trick, eliminates the slightest chance of another song

All that remains is for you and your pianacomplice to reveal the songs and the information on the last spectator's ticket in as dramatic a manner as possible.

It is worth mentioning that, for return engagements, you can replace the force tickets in the five-ticket sets with other well-known operas from the stock of twenty-five random tickets that make up the bottom half of the stack.

### A THEATER VERSION

I devised the method just explained for the audiences on the Schering company cruises. These groups never exceeded a hundred in number. However, if I were to do this routine for larger audiences, in which the assisting spectators were far enough apart to ensure that they wouldn't later compare notes, I would adopt the principle exploited by Ross Johnson and Peter Tappan in their excellent effect, "Princess A-hoy".<sup>19</sup> Four of the five-ticket sets handed out would contain the same five opera titles. Four of these titles would be well-known works, and the fifth title an obscure opera. The fifth set of tickets would be made just the reverse, as in the previous method: that is, four obscure works and one popular one.

Having given out these five sets, you ask each spectator to think of an opera with a prominent melody he can recall. Then have your hypnotized pianist play the leading melody from each of the four well-known operas represented in the first four sets of tickets. When he is done, ask any spectator who recognized the opera he or she was thinking of to sit down. Four do, leaving one person standing. He can only be thinking of the one recognizable opera he holds, and you proceed to

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than that intended being picked. Instead of obscure tunes, he provides titles for nonexistent songs that, nevertheless, sound as if they should be familiar. I have yet to experience a problem using obscure operas, but the idea of inventing plausible-sounding titles for known composers has merit.

<sup>19</sup>Tappan's *The Impostress Princess* (1986), pp. 104-114.

reveal the various information details on the ticket, and conclude by having the spectator sit down when he hears the pianist play the correct melody.



Ridged cards can be used for many purposes. I believe that the applications and ideas explained in this chapter are only the beginning. If the reader gives these gimmicks some thought, other possibilities for their use will surely be discovered.

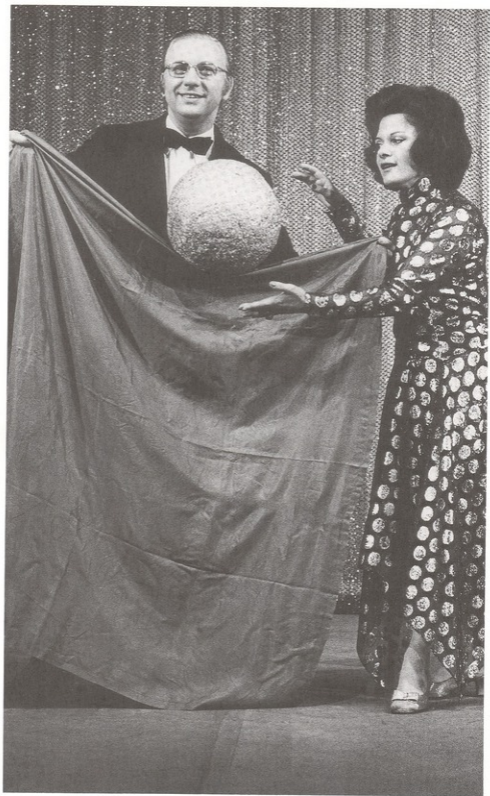


# Chapter Two



## Paperworks





*...and friends*

## *Boris Bossi and Eschi*

BORIS BOSSI, who later became the president of the I. A. L. (International Artists Lodge), provided me with my first professional engagement. Around 1968, at the Berlin Academy of Arts, he organized many magic shows and during this period presented me as a close-up performer. I also met him at the Red Rose, where he did a talking act, and as a second turn presented a fascinating mental routine that to this day remains inexplicable to me.

It is thanks to Boris and Eschi Bossi's mental program that I turned again to this fascinating branch of conjuring. Without this continuing study of mentalism, this book would probably never have been possible.



# Thoughts Untouched

~~~~~ THIS PIECE was developed from a trick by the South African mentalist, Basil Horwitz.<sup>1</sup> In his routine, designed for performance before small groups, cards are used with small printed symbols on them. Mr. Horwitz had these symbols printed near one end of the cards, which strikes me as a rather illogical positioning for which no presentational motivation is given. In addition, during performance an envelope is given to the assisting spectator with the card inserted partially into it. The spectator is asked to write her thoughts on this card, but she must not remove it from the envelope, or a force symbol on the back of the card will be exposed. This procedure is surely unnatural.

¹"Challenge Thought: Version II" in *The Mental Magick of Basil Horwitz, Volume 2*, pp. 65-76.

In the version I'm about to explain, these artificial elements have been removed.

EFFECT

One member of the audience is asked to think of someone close to her and write that person's name and city of residence on a business card. Another spectator chooses a symbol, sight unseen, from a pack of symbol cards. Both spectators seal their cards in heavy envelopes.

The performer has the two envelopes mixed and one chosen. Without touching it, he draws something on a large sheet of paper. When the card in the selected envelope is removed, it is seen to be the second spectator's chosen symbol—and the performer's drawing is shown to be a close match!

A spectator now burns the remaining envelope, again without the performer touching it. As the first spectator stares at the flame and concentrates on her friend, the performer divines the friend's name, place of residence and other personal information he couldn't possibly know!

PREPARATION

You will need:

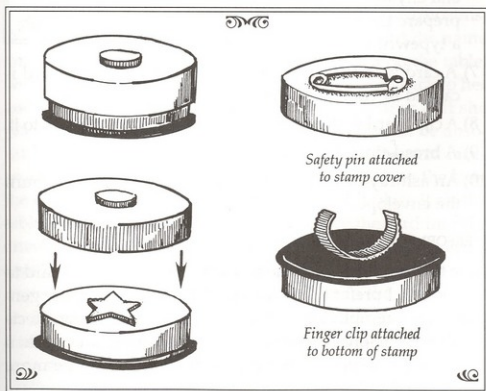
- 1) Twenty to twenty-five cards cut from thick cardboard, about the size of business cards. These must be opaque. The cards are stamped with different symbols.
- 2) Two coin envelopes, also opaque, which should be at least five-eighths of an inch longer and wider than the cards used. These envelopes have gummed flaps. Trim off a portion of the flap on one of the envelopes, so that you can quickly and easily recognize it at a distance. This preparation is quite subtle and has yet to be noticed by anyone. Your assisting spectator will later place the symbol card into this envelope.

- 3) A set of rubber stamps carrying different symbols. In toy stores you can often find rubber-stamp sets made for children. The stamps are treated with a permanent ink that cannot dry out because the stamp fits into a holder. These sets are perfect for our purposes when performing for small groups. They are too small, though, for stage use, as the symbols must be easily recognizable to the audience from a distance.

Use these stamps to place a different symbol on each card. *Do not stamp the symbols exactly in the centers of the cards.*

- 4) One rubber-stamp symbol from the set, to which you have attached a finger clip. This stamp bears the symbol you will force during performance. *Do not use this symbol when stamping the packet of cards.*

First glue a safety pin to the bottom of the stamp holder, using epoxy cement or some other preparation that forms



a very strong bond. Then, with a knife or file, remove the handle from the stamp itself and in its place cement a crescent-shaped finger clip fashioned from metal.

Pin the holder, with the stamp in it, inside your right-front trousers pocket near the top.

- 5) A pair of scissors. Place these in the right-front trousers pocket with your secret stamp. By the way, choose scissors with rounded ends, so that they don't accidentally pierce the pocket—and your leg!
- 6) A blank card made from the same opaque stock previously mentioned. This is for the spectator to write her thoughts on. You provide spaces for a name and city to be written. I prepare these cards on a typewriter.

☞

NAME _____

CITY _____

☞

- 7) A card with the force symbol stamped on it. This card is carried in your right-side jacket pocket.
- 8) A clipboard with a large blank piece of paper clipped to it.
- 9) A broad-tipped marking pen.
- 10) An ashtray or metal bowl in which you can safely burn the envelope.

PERFORMANCE

Give the unprepared envelope and the blank business card to a spectator. I prefer to use a woman for this, as they are generally more receptive to participating in mind-reading effects involving personal elements. I've also found women, when they are involved in such personalized tests, to be more dependable agents for word-of-mouth advertising.

Ask your assistant to write down the name and city of residence for someone with whom she is closely connected, but who is not present. While she is doing this, pick up the packet of cards and approach someone else at some distance from her. Show this person the various symbols or pictures stamped on the cards. As you do this, name some of them—including the force symbol, although it is not in the packet. Please don't overlook this ruse. The miscalling of the symbol is a bit of psychology that significantly strengthens the effect!

Now instruct the spectator to mix the packet of cards, symbol sides down, then to remove one at random, without looking at its symbol. Hand him the envelope with the trimmed flap and ask that he insert the card he has chosen into it, after which he seals it inside. Remain next to the spectator, if possible, until the card is safely in the envelope. You can then be sure that the spectator has not looked at the selected symbol.

By the time this spectator is completing your instructions, the first spectator should have finished filling out the name and city on her card. Ask her to place the card on the table, writing side down. When she has done this, walk back to her and give her the unprepared envelope, requesting that she place her card into it. Watch her closely; you must be absolutely certain of which way the blank side of the card faces as it is slipped into the envelope. I do this by giving the lady the envelope with the address side down. If I place it on the table this way, the lady will naturally place the card into the envelope with the blank side upward. However, it poses no problem to you if she ignores the obvious procedure, so long as you know which way the writing faces in the envelope.

A third spectator is asked to collect the two envelopes, mix them, then hand you one. Now, you must somehow manage to receive the unprepared envelope first. I manage this by asking the spectator to take one envelope in each hand. I then

ask him to extend one hand toward me. If he extends the hand containing the unprepared envelope, I take it from him. If, however, he extends the hand with the prepared envelope, I immediately say, "Place this envelope on the table. We will start with *yours*." The trimmed flap, of course, defines which envelope is which for you. If by chance the spectator holds the envelopes in a way that doesn't allow you to see the flaps, simply ask him to make sure nothing can be read through the envelopes. As he checks this, he will have to expose the flap-sides to you.

Pick up your clipboard and marker, then draw the force symbol large and bold on the sheet of paper. Set the clipboard writing side down on the table, without exposing your drawing. Next take the unprepared envelope (either from the table or from the spectator, as circumstances dictate) into your left hand. Next remove the pair of scissors from your right trousers pocket. At the same time steal the force-symbol stamp from its holder, slipping your right second finger into the clip and taking the stamp into a sort of secured finger palm.

Snip off the top of the envelope and set the scissors on the table. Then slip your right fingers into the envelope to remove the card, *writing side toward you*. (Recall, you noted the orientation of the card when the spectator placed it in the envelope.) As your fingers enter the envelope, secretly stamp the force symbol onto the blank side of the card before it is brought into view. This is the reason you took pains to use envelopes that are larger than the cards. The extra room permits your fingers to fit inside and apply the stamp before taking out the card. The stamp impression should be made approximately in the center of the card. Because you have not stamped the other symbol cards precisely in the middle, the newly applied off-center symbol on this card will match.

Now hold up the card, so that the spectators assisting you can easily see the symbol, and ask the spectator who chose it

to name the symbol for the rest of the audience. As this is being done, read the back of the card, secretly learning the name and city that the first spectator has written. Now ask the second spectator to pick up your clipboard and turn it around, displaying to everyone the large symbol you have drawn. A match!

While the spectator is exhibiting the symbol on the clipboard, lay the card onto the envelope, taking both into your right hand. Pick up the scissors in this same hand and place them in your right-side jacket pocket. While your hand is in the pocket, leave behind the spectator's card with the scissors, and pick up the card with the force symbol that is waiting there for you. Bring your hand immediately from the pocket—there must be no hesitation or fumbling—holding the envelope and switched card. This exchange should take place the instant the applause starts in response to the spectator showing your clairvoyant drawing.

As the applause subsides, take the clipboard from the spectator and give him the envelope and "chosen" card as souvenirs.

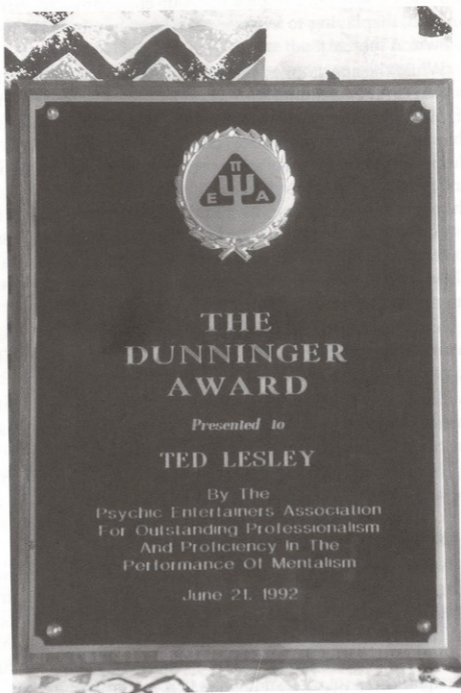
You can omit the switch if you like, simply leaving the card and envelope in your pocket with the scissors. This is a matter of preference that each performer must decide.

Have the third spectator toss the remaining envelope into the ashtray or metal bowl and burn it. Stand as far away as you can from the flame, so that no one can think that you could see the name and city as the envelope burns.

You are now absolutely clean! As the envelope and card are being consumed, ask the first spectator to gaze into the flame while she concentrates on her friend. Conclude the demonstration by divining the name and city, amplifying this revelation of information effectively with a bit of cold reading.

This routine plays well on stage and in parlor. I am also delighted to say that, when I performed it, just as described,

at the 1988 P.E.A. Convention in Edison, none of the experts present surmised the method, even though many of them were familiar with the Horwitz trick on which it was based.



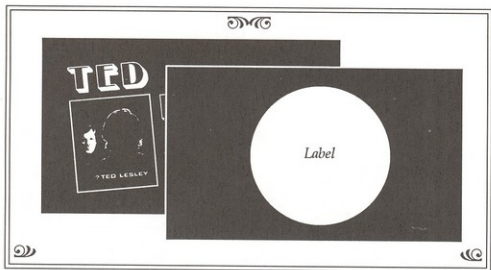
Black Magic

I PUBLISHED this method for secretly gaining written information many years ago in *Magische Welt*². Over the years this method has proven extremely valuable to me for learning thought-of words, numbers, names and questions. However, as far as I know, no one else has ever adopted it. I would like to offer it again, this time to my English-language readers, from the bottom of my heart; more so, because the handling has changed a bit since then.

PREPARATION

First, you will need business cards printed on glossy, black stock. I've had mine printed with silver ink. These cards must

²Vol. 27, No. 1, Jan./Feb. 1978, pp. 27.

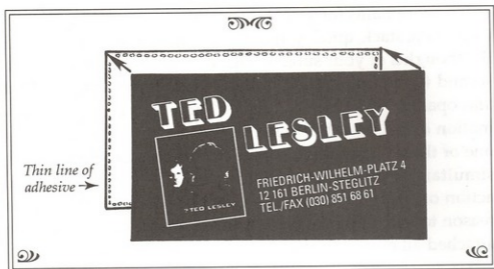


be black on both sides, making it impossible for writing to be seen on them.

You must now prepare one of these cards by attaching a second one to it in a special way: A *very thin* border of Chap Stick lip balm³ is applied to the face of one of your black business cards, along all four edges. The treated area should be no more than a sixteenth of an inch wide. Position a second card, also face up, onto the prepared card, so that all edges align perfectly and adhere to each other. The two joined cards should now look exactly like a single business card. Place this prepared card on top of a packet of twenty to twenty-five unprepared matching cards.

You will also need a supply of white, round or rectangular, self-adhesive stickers of a size that fits neatly on the back of your black cards. These stickers provide a writing space as well as a white field that forms a "concentration point" on which a spectator can fix his or her thoughts. (When I use a round sticker, I refer to it as my "portable crystal ball".)

³In Britain a similar skincare product called Melrose works well. I've also found that certain non-permanent photo-mount sprays do a good job. With these, you must use a template of cardboard that leaves only the very edges of the business card exposed. I'm sure other substances, fixatives and cements can be discovered that will do the required duty.



PERFORMANCE

Remove the top (prepared) business card from the stack and, as the audience watches, apply a white sticker to its back, approximately centered. Then hand this card to someone, a lady if possible (for reasons I mentioned on page 84), along with a felt-tip or ball-point pen, and ask her to write a word or two that express her thoughts on the white sticker. (Since your cards are black, the reason for the sticker is obvious to everyone.) As she writes, you naturally turn away. The white area on which she is writing, you explain, forms a "clear, pure field" on which she can concentrate her thoughts.

Next have your subject place the card, writing side down, back onto the stack of business cards. You, the great mind reader, now spring into action. Set an *opaque* envelope on the table; then take the stack of cards and thumb the top card onto the table. Here I really mean the *top* card. When pushing the card off the stack, apply moderate press with your thumb, breaking loose the upper card of the glued pair. This leaves the card with the sticker still on top of your packet!

Either your helper or you slips the tabled card into the envelope, seemingly protecting her thought from prying eyes. The envelope and card can now be burned if you like.

It now remains for you to learn the information on the top card of the stack, quickly and unnoticed, so that you can read the thoughts of your subject. This is very simple: You have a second type of self-adhesive sticker, one larger than the first and opaque. You pick the top card off your stack (the information card), turn the back of it toward yourself and apply one of these larger stickers over the informative first sticker, simultaneously reading what the subject has written! The action of applying the sticker gives you a perfectly natural reason to look at the back of the card, and once the sticker is attached all evidence of trickery is securely concealed.

Jot down a few random impressions on the sticker as you concentrate, gathering your helper's thoughts piecemeal from her mind as you work toward an effective revelation.

One last note: It can sometimes be difficult to find large white stickers that are opaque enough to conceal the smaller sticker beneath. If you find this to be the case, use red or green "day-glo" labels instead. These hide the evidence quite nicely.

Dissertation on the Center Tear

~~~~~MANY METHODS for the center tear have appeared in magical publications, but few authors have made the effort to consider the correct "sell". One of the few is Punx. In a recent booklet, Punx concerned himself with the center tear, developing such a thoroughly new approach,<sup>4</sup> it makes one feel trivial and unperceptive as a mentalist. His technical refinements leave even an intelligent spectator without a hint that the center of the billet plays a role during the tearing of the paper. I have mentioned this work at such length because it contains the correct way to present the center tear, the topic we are about to discuss, and Punx's work on this subject is invaluable and will prove worth every second of the reader's study.

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<sup>4</sup>This work appears in Punx's *Fourth Dimensional Mysteries* (1990). See "The Oracle, or 'The Three Wishes'", pp. 159-177.

The greatest mistake one can make when doing the center tear is to reveal the information obtained from the center section immediately after reading it. This practice reduces a possible miracle to a simple trick. The presentation *must* be correctly constructed! The best center-tear handling is useless, even if it is perfectly undetectable, if you fail to reveal your information effectively, feeding it back in a well-considered and convincing manner.

We are about to discuss secrets that will make you a performer people will talk about. I owe more than I can reckon to the center tear. Please, though, do not adhere slavishly to what I present here. You are not me, so you must tailor your presentation to fit *your* personality. Then you will be successful with it.

The center tear is at its most effective when performed impromptu, when you must seemingly improvise the entire test. Let's assume you are sitting in a bar with some business acquaintances who know you are a magician; or perhaps you have been invited to a party. Calmly wait for someone to invite you to do a trick. "Unfortunately," you explain, "I didn't come prepared to do anything." However, after a bit of thought you have an inspiration. You pick up a menu or a piece of paper found lying on a table and tear out a billet of the correct size for the center tear. Next you borrow a ball-point pen from someone and draw a circle in the center of the billet. "Since I don't have my crystal ball with me, I may be able to make this circle serve as a point of concentration."

Ask a woman at the table<sup>5</sup> to write the first name of a person with whom she has some connection, and the city where

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<sup>5</sup>By now I think my reasons for using female spectators in this type of effect have been made clear. However, for the center-tear routine, let me elaborate on the choice of spectator. When I'm doing corporate or banquet-show work, I always pay special attention to the head tables, and I'll make it a point to work with the most prominent woman at each one. She might be the general manager for the firm that hired me, or the wife of the manager, a prominent

this person lives. (The individual shouldn't be present.) Afterward the paper is folded twice by your subject, so that the writing is concealed inside. Take the billet at your fingertips, and have the subject and, if possible, another spectator as well, place some identifying mark on it. Each person puts a mark on one side of the folded billet, so that both outer sides are marked.<sup>6</sup>

Look at your subject and start to tear up the billet in a playful fashion as you say something of this sort: "Miss, when you write something down, that imprints it more firmly in your memory. Perhaps you already knew that. I am not revealing any great secret if I tell you that, for example, a poem is much more easily remembered once you have written it down."

By the time you have said this, the billet must be completely torn up. Timing is very important here. Now ask someone to light a cigarette lighter. At this moment, use your thumb to pull the center of the billet back on the fingers, away from the other pieces. Take these remaining pieces into your other hand, so that you can ignite them. Do this over an ashtray. Hold the pieces over the flame of the lighter and, once they are lit, drop them into the ashtray. Call attention to the spectators' marks on the burning pieces.

Pick up the balance of the menu or paper from which you've torn your billet, using the same hand that contains the folded center. Then address your subject: "I must now ask you

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celebrity or the companion of one. She might be an actress, an author or simply well-connected in society. I want to do my personal reading for such a woman, for when she informs her friends of the wonderful things I told her, I find myself hired for more shows, thanks to connections I often could not otherwise have made. Of course, if there is no lady seated at a particular table, I will choose the best assistant available from the gentlemen present.

<sup>6</sup>If you perform straight mentalism, you will probably want to eliminate the marking of the billet. However, I perform magic in my shows before I do my mental tests. This raises thoughts in the minds of my spectators of "fast fingers". Consequently, I find that having the billet initialed is necessary, to avoid any suspicions of switches.

several questions, to which I wish you to answer me with a simple yes or no; nothing more." You have not yet opened the billet and read its contents as you start to ask questions. As the subject replies, you take up a pen and begin making notes on the menu or paper you hold. This question-and-answer procedure is the best misdirection you could desire for covering the opening of the billet.

What you ask is important, and this is the secret, the *real* secret, that makes you appear to be a mental phenomenon. The sequence that follows is an example of this questioning system, which once its technique is understood should be varied to fit each set of performing circumstances. When you understand the psychology of this questioning, you will be able to transform an effect found in children's books into a small miracle.

QUESTION ONE: "Is the person you are thinking of related to you?"

ANSWER: "Yes."

QUESTION TWO: "Are you familiar with this person's home?"

ANSWER: "Yes."

QUESTION THREE: "Have you ever looked out the window there?"

ANSWER: "Yes."

QUESTION FOUR: "Can you see trees there?"

ANSWER: "Yes."

By the time you have asked these questions you have opened the center piece behind the large paper you hold and read it, under cover of making notes about the subject's answers. Let's say you read, "Karen, Hamburg".

QUESTION FIVE: "Does this concern a younger person?"

ANSWER: "Yes."

QUESTION SIX: "I see a young lady—is that correct?"

ANSWER: "Yes."

QUESTION SEVEN: "Are you thinking of your daughter?"

ANSWER: "Yes."

Now is the time to touch the subject; that is, to ask her to give you her hand. Touch the surface of her hand with your fingertips and act as if you are concentrating. If you can manage to tremble slightly, that's fantastic! But don't overact. Look at the subject, breathe deeply. Then let a bright smile pass over your features. "When you return to Hamburg, please say hello to your daughter Karen for me. She is really an enchanting young lady!"

If you hear a loud *thump*, the subject has fallen out of her chair.

The previous series of questions and answers represent a set of perfect circumstances, in which every question you pose draws a positive response. In a few moments we will consider several examples that present you with a harder task.

But first you are probably wondering how I knew that the topic of my subject's thoughts was her daughter. The woman I was working with here was about thirty-five to forty years of age. The name she had written down is a currently fashionable one. This name caused me to ask Question Seven because, given her response to Question Five, I could hardly come to any other conclusion. Also, it has been my experience that women of this age generally write down the names of either their children or their parents. If you read the names Violet or Ralph, eighty-five times out of a hundred it will be the subject's mother or father. The name Violet is less modern, so the probability is great that she is not thinking of her daughter. You make certain of this by asking Question Five differently: "Does this concern an older person?" Naturally, if you get a hit, you must change Questions Six and Seven to suit the situation.



Older women who write down currently popular names are almost always thinking of their grandchildren. When you encounter out-of-fashion male names with elderly women, the target is almost always a husband.

Pay attention! Look closely at the hands of older ladies. If she is, for example, widowed, you can often deduce this, as she will be wearing two wedding rings. Turn this silent information to your best advantage.

Ninety-five percent of all men, up to about the age of forty-five, will usually write the name of their mother. If a man is alone at a party, but wearing a wedding band, he will quite often think of his wife. Such men will also write down the name of a son, but a well-considered question or two will quickly ascertain the relationship of a male name. A man accompanied by his wife will often think of a former girl friend instead. If he answers Questions One and Two negatively, it is wise to abandon Questions Three and Four. You can assume that the name must be that of a former girl friend. After all, would you, if you were sitting with your spouse, write down the name of your *present* girl friend?

When performing these experiments, always try to choose intelligent individuals for your subjects. They are usually cooperative, polite and appreciative of this sort of work. Be on your guard with people who are constantly disruptive. If you have just given a show and you are demonstrating your mental abilities afterward, either for an impromptu gathering or at a scheduled close-up performance, these sorts, if you haven't already silenced them with verbal pyrotechnics, will be gunning for you. (I recall one fellow who wrote down the name of Günter Grass, the famous author, on a billet for me. After I had secretly read the name, I revealed the information appropriately and concluded by saying, "I would never have believed that you can read!" The other guests rewarded this quip with laughter and applause, and my troublemaker stopped interfering with my performance.)

An early indicator of trouble is when someone refuses to follow instructions. If possible, finish such customers off with some other trick (especially if you are a green performer). A nailwriter in excellent here. Have him think of a number from one to a hundred. When he calls it out, show that you have previously written it down, proving to him that you have influenced his thoughts. This most often takes care of the problem.

If I have received negative answers to Questions One and Two, and I still haven't read the billet, I use an added ploy in the form of an extra question. QUESTION TWO-A: "Do you know the phone number of the person you are thinking of?" If the answer is yes, you continue, "Is there a seven in this number?" If this is also reaps a yes, your subject will swear that you even knew the telephone number of the person!

On the other hand, if Question Two-A is answered by "No," move on to QUESTION TWO-B: "Did you at first think of another person?" Seventy percent of the time the answer will be yes. When you hear this, immediately hit them with QUESTION TWO-C: "Does *this* person have a seven in his phone number?" If your subject turns pale, you will know you are right, and your audience will know it too. You can insert this sort of additional question anywhere, when you need time to think and contrive new questioning strategies.

Since I have broached the topic of telephone numbers: If you are engaged several times by the same chain of hotels, make every attempt to learn the names of all the directors and the telephone numbers of the individual hotels. This rule holds true as well for other clients by whom you are often engaged! Additionally, make an effort to know something about the leading employees of these firms. Sooner or later you will certainly come into contact with them. It may take months or years before such an opportunity presents itself, but when it happens you will be armed and able to tell these persons surprising things about themselves, things that they

will never, I repeat *never*, forget you revealed about them! Let me give you an example, one from early in my professional career:

The leading employees of a well-known hotel chain were relaxing and having a good time in a bar after a business meeting. Coincidentally, I walked into the same bar and, since I was known to most of the group, they called me over to their table to join them. During the ensuing conversation I steered the topic eventually to clairvoyants, setting up the gathering for my center tear presentation. Although I asked one woman to write the name of a person she was closely associated with, she instead wrote down the name of someone else. However, because I had memorized certain things about this woman, including the specific hotel in the chain at which she worked, I was able to do a successful reading with the name. After she answered "No" to Question One of my list, I knew that Questions Three and Four were superfluous. I still asked Question Two, though, and it also received a "No". I then began to concentrate deeply, which gave me time to read the billet, providing me with the first name and the city of residence. These bits of information matched the name of the director of the hotel and its location, things I had made a point of memorizing. However, just to play it safe, I asked this woman to think of the person's phone number, which I also knew. I proceeded to reveal it number by number. After she had recovered from the shock, I told her that she was thinking of the director of her hotel, but I identified him by his last name, rather than his first, which mystified the woman even more. To draw as many yes responses as possible from her, I fed her the rest of what I knew piece by piece. The response from this woman, and the group, was indescribable, and worth far in excess of the time I spent memorizing the necessary data!

While we are talking about problems that can arise in center tear and billet reading presentations, here is another: What

do you do if some skeptical spectator decides to write his thought in an unfamiliar alphabet like Cyrillic, Hebrew, Arabic or Japanese? This happened to me once some years ago, and I had to figure out a method on the spot. I concentrated like crazy, because the whole trick had gone beautifully until I reached Question Five. At that point I had the center piece opened and looked down to read it. He had written in Cyrillic—and I could only recognize several letter A's, a character shared by both alphabets. One A was at the end of the name. From this I deduced the name was most likely a woman's, because many more Russian women's names end with an A than do men's. So I continued on to Questions Six and Seven, to which I received two yeses. I then talked about foreign countries, verbally maneuvering myself as close as possible to Russia. A mentalist must be very inventive and have a good memory as well. I took the menu from the table, asked the man in question to think of the name while he grasped the wrist of the hand in which I held my pen. Slowly I began to draw, letter by letter, what I had seen on the billet. This was easier than it sounds, as pure shock had imprinted the foreign letters indelibly in my memory. Then, as I saw the whole name take shape under my hand, I read the letters—don't ask me how—*Tatiana*. His reaction left no doubt in anyone's mind that I had hit the name exactly! This was one time that I was as astonished as my audience. There have been a few others.

Now a related problem: What do you do if you find the handwriting on the billet unreadable? Because you are working swiftly, you can't afford to stare at the billet, trying to decipher the script. All is not lost! In Corinda's *Thirteen Steps to Mentalism* I found an invaluable stratagem: Innocently ask if your subject has printed the name or written it in longhand. Since it is his miserable handwriting that is giving you trouble, he must answer that he wrote in longhand. "Oh, that may be

the problem. You must concentrate clearly on the name, and to do that you must form a clear impression of it in your mind. Please write the name again, but print it in block letters this time." Hand him a new billet and turn away while he writes. Now, during the twenty or thirty seconds it takes him to write the name and fold up the billet, you can study the stolen center at your leisure, your back turned to everyone! If you need still more time, ask the subject tear up the new billet and burn it. This by-play gives you ample opportunity to decode the handwriting or memorize its pattern, so that you can at least duplicate it, treating it like another foreign alphabet!

Yet another problem that can arise: What if the billet doesn't burn completely, and skeptical spectators afterward go to work on the remains in the ashtray? Punx recommends the use of his famous "astral fluid" (perfumed lighter fluid with a few drops of food coloring). A clever and professional solution; but if your performance is impromptu you probably won't have a vial of astral fluid on you, and even if you did, producing it would shatter the extemporaneous appearance of your performance. Here is a better answer for these circumstances:

With the experiment over and the spectators' attention relaxed, secretly tear up the center section and sneak the pieces into the ashtray as you move it aside. If later someone thinks to examine the remains of the billet, what they find should leave them even more astonished.

It occasionally happens that certain incorrigible persons will reach immediately for the ashtray. Thankfully, I have had the foresight to have the billet marked, as you may remember. When I see trouble arising, I quickly tear up the stolen center. I then point to the partially burnt pieces, and pour the remains into my hand to look for the marks that prove my innocence—and in doing so I secretly add the torn pieces. Finally, I toss everything back into the ashtray. Suspicious

spectators nearly always think of a switch before anything else, and the marks are evidence against this solution.

One final tip: It is wise to learn several methods of billet reading, so that if you are requested to repeat the effect, you will be able to obscure your trickery further by employing a different method each time.

After you have done the center tear or any other billet reading method several hundred times, you will reach a point where you feel you can really crawl into the minds of your subjects. You will learn to draw the correct conclusions from the smallest reactions you observe in the person across from you; and you will react automatically in such a way that you will sometimes wonder, yourself, at the accuracy of your answers. It will often happen that you reveal things that your spectators will never forget. After a while, you will make some startling statements about persons you have never met. From time to time you may find yourself believing that you really *can* read minds. When you have gone that far, you will one day ask yourself, after a particularly successful experience, "Was that psychology, or was it intuition, or...?"

Well, most excellent reader, you will have to decide *that* for yourself!



# Chapter Three



Arsenal





Mr. & Mrs. J. W. ...



*...and friends*

## *Raxon*

WHEN I was young I got to know my friend and colleague Raxon at the variety club Kaiserhof in Cologne, where I sometimes supplemented my income with a part-time job, permitting me to obtain new tricks at the magic shop. I saw Raxon again later in Berlin, when he appeared on the "Variety Afternoons" at the Urania. Raxon is—as are many other professional magicians, myself included—in his heart of hearts still a passionate amateur, who must obtain absolutely every new and interesting trick. When I met him again in Berlin, before I started my career, I was on short rations: a fact he seemed to know telepathically, for he always invited me to eat with him after his show. Later he recommended me to a well-connected booking agency and nothing any longer stood in the way of my entry into the ranks of the professionals. In 1974 I was, thanks to Raxon's help, contracted to work at the Hanover Fair, which was a very successful engagement for me. Once more to you, Raxon, go my heartfelt thanks for everything you have done for me!



## Spare Change

~~~~~WHAT I propose to describe here is one of my most guarded "little" secrets, a ploy that creates a surprising (and thoroughly calculated) turn of events, long remembered by audiences. I use it in my presentation of Alan Shaxon's "Confabulation"<sup>1</sup>. It can be employed with any effect in which the change in a spectator's pocket is divined or predicted, but it plays best as part of the final element in a series of predictions or divinations.

The idea is quickly explained. At the point in the presentation when I reveal my prediction of the amount of change in an audience member's pocket, the amount is *wrong*! My prediction is for a penny or dime more than the spectator finds. I pretend to be quite surprised by this small discrepancy,

¹Marketed some years ago by Ken Brooke.


and ask the gentleman to count his change again—which only results in his confirming the previous count.

At this point I act as if I am rather confused, but eventually I regain my composure enough to recognize the problem. "Sir, your dry cleaner must be an honest one, because they put back the change they found in your jacket pockets. Please, check all of your pockets." When he does he eventually finds a coin in the outside breast pocket—a coin that brings the total of his change to precisely the amount you foresaw!

The secret lies in a small amount of pre-show work. During the buffet or cocktail hour that precedes my show, I circulate among the guests and take the opportunity to load a penny or dime into the opportune breast pocket of a gentleman. Actually, I ensure against problems by loading the pockets of at least three men in the group. Thus, if one of my "loaded pockets" walks off and can't be found during my performance, I have several others to fall back on. And on those occasions where I prefer not to mingle with the group before the show, I have my partner, Bernd, do the loading for me.

I urge that you try this little "bit of business". Just one performance will convince you of its power. It may be just a presentational touch, but it is a hair-raising one that guarantees a tremendous hand.

The Working Performer's Switch Pad

 THIS GIMMICK, if you want to call it that, has nothing in common with existing number-switching pads aside from their basic function. But it has, as you will discover in performance, enormous advantages, since the preparation can be accomplished within seconds, and the operation is easy and completely natural in handling. The pad I use is a common one that can be found in any stationery or school supplies department. It has a multicolored cardboard cover, measures three inches by four-and-a-quarter inches and contains sheets of cheap, unlined, opaque paper, bound at the top. I'm sure similar pads can be easily found in your area.

PREPARATION

Cut away the lower right corner from the first sheet of note paper. Then, using a black felt-tip marker, camouflage this cut by drawing a thick line along its edge. Draw an identical line on the second sheet as well.

Next, with an X-acto blade and a metal ruler, carefully cut a perforated line at the top of the second sheet, so that it can be removed more easily than the one above it. Slip a piece of cardboard under the sheet when you do this to protect the underlying pages. If the pad you have is already perforated, use the X-acto blade to exaggerate the existing perforation. In either case you particularly want to weaken the end of the line from which you will start tearing.

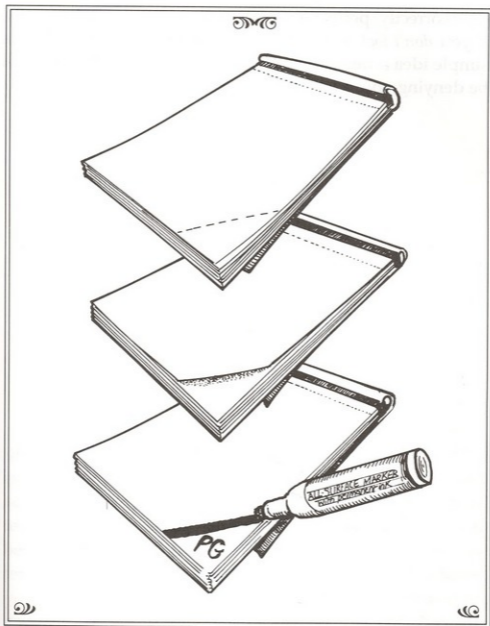
Several years ago Michael Weber gave me a tool specially manufactured for perforating paper. These can be found at stationers and dress-makers' supply shops. Such a tool can be very handy for preparing the pads, especially when the sheets are not already perforated at the top.

You write your force numbers on the prepared second sheet of the pad. I usually prepare every other page in this manner at one sitting. Then the pad is ready for fifty or more performances.

PERFORMANCE

Ask for the assistance of someone in your audience who is facile at addition or who has a pocket calculator. Jot this person's initials in the lower right corner of the pad; that is, on the exposed corner of the second sheet.² Then have several others in the audience write numbers on the top sheet of the pad (the one with the cut corner). I generally draw three


²This clipped corner idea dates back to the 1800s, when it was used with slates and flaps. See "The Interrupted Flap" in William Robinson's *Spirit Slate Writing and Kindred Phenomena* (1898), p. 47-48.




or four lines on the page to guide the positioning of the numbers. (This, of course, is also done on the force page.)

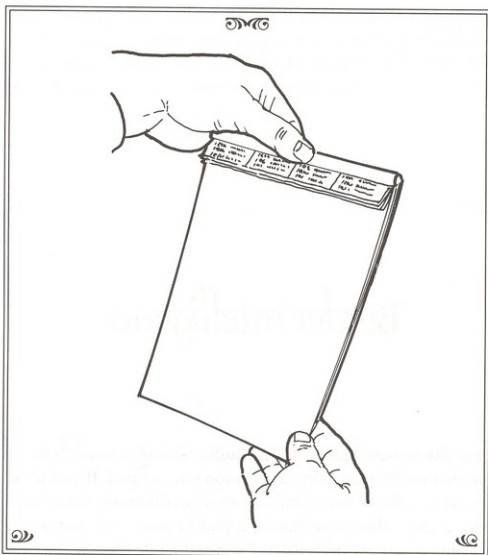
Once the numbers have been written down, lay your thumb on the exposed corner of the second sheet and tear the force page swiftly and casually from the pad. Simultaneously, use the fingers of your other hand to flip the front cover closed on the pad and pocket it. This looks (or it should look, if you

do it correctly) perfectly natural and unsuspecting. Especially, if you *don't look* at the pad as you remove the page. It is a simple idea—deceptively simple. If you pass it by, you will be denying yourself a wonderful utility prop.



Border Intelligence

 HERE IS another utility idea using a common writing pad. If you need access to a list of secret information (a crib sheet) for a book test or any other experiment, a pad of *perforated* paper can become a very natural place of concealment. Tear off the first ten pages from the pad along the perforated lines. This leaves you with a small narrow "booklet" at the upper edge of the pad, directly above the perforation. This "booklet" becomes your secret index. Starting on the second "page", note down the words and their page numbers (or whatever information you require) for your test. You can now hold the pad with one hand at the top, and use your thumb to flick secretly through the "pages", thus acquiring the necessary information. Later you use the pad to make notes of your impressions, or to write them down for display.



Important: This index is most practical for shorter cue lists, as it can be difficult to riffle accurately through a large number of page stubs.

Dream Decks

IT WAS many years ago, as a subscriber to Harry Stanley's wonderful magazine, *The Gen*, that I first read of a special pack of cards, which has since become known as the Al Koran Force Deck. While Al Koran did use this style of force deck, it was not his invention. Edward Bagshawe, the English magic dealer, seems to have been the first to suggest a force pack that used duplicate banks of cards arranged in rotation.³ Fourteen years later Audley Walsh reinvented the concept and added a pumping sequence to determine which card had been selected. He called this "The Magician's Dream"⁴. Then, in the mid-1950s Gene Grant (Phantini), taking his inspiration from

³See "A Spirit Divination Mystery" in his book *Exclusive Problems in Magic* (1924), p. 42.

⁴*The Jinx*, No. 43, April 1938, pp. 298 and 297; also Hilliard's *Greater Magic* (1938), pp. 346-347.

Walsh's work, marketed "The Mental Deck", which reduced the number of force cards required from twelve to ten.⁵ In 1959, Corinda released Al Koran's revision of Walsh's "Magician's Dream" deck, calling it "The Koran Deck", and from this sprang the misunderstanding over the origin of this force pack.⁶ Let me explain the principle behind Koran's version on the Bagshawe force deck, and its basic function; then I'll give you several new ideas using it.

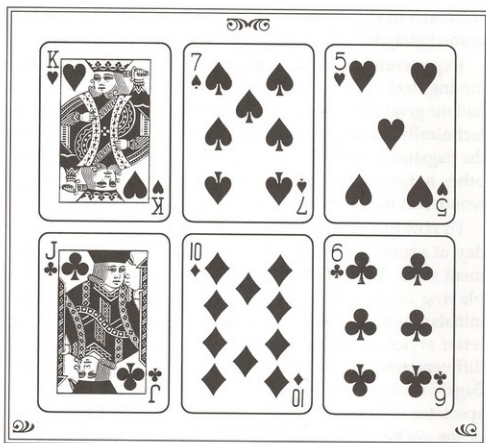
The concept is simple. The deck consists of six different cards that are repeated nine times to make a pack of fifty-four. (Some previous versions of the Bagshawe deck, such as the Walsh's "Magician's Dream", contained forty-eight cards, but as Stanton Carlisle once pointed out to me, a good card player, handling a deck of forty-eight cards, will often notice that the deck is short. Yet, that same experienced player will not notice two extra cards in the pack, the discrepancy being smaller and cards having different manufactured thicknesses. Consequently, I recommend you use a fifty-four-card force deck. If you are concerned about the extra thickness, mention that the deck contains two jokers.)

Numerous six-card combinations can be used for this trick. The sample set shown on the facing page leads to a reasonably succinct pumping scheme.

To use such a deck, begin by casually fanning it and turn the face of the fan toward the audience. Keep it in unhurried but continual motion as you make a sweeping display from one side to the other. This may seem bold with so many duplicates in the pack, but when the deck is kept in gentle motion as described, all one can perceive is a somewhat blurred impression of mixed cards.

⁵See *Phantini's Incredible Mental Secrets*, pp. 36-38, for full details.

⁶Several years later Harry Stanley released a streamlined version of Koran's deck, which contained six force cards, in a routine sold as Al Koran's "Direct Mind Control".



Close the fan and hand the deck face down to someone to shuffle. When he has done this, you ask him to look at the random card that has been shuffled to the top, remember it and place the deck into its case. Although you are standing quite a distance from the spectator, with your back turned, you can nevertheless reveal the card that has just been thought of, thanks to a structured system of pumping! I strongly recommend that before you consider using a Bagshawe deck you read, first, Gene Grant's "Psychorama" pumping system in *Phantini's Mental Key*⁷, then carefully study T.A. Waters' insightful comments on pumping in his *Trionic* monograph⁸. I will illustrate the basic concept of the Waters

⁷1956, pp. 15-16.

⁸Pp. 8-11. This can also be found in his book *Mind, Myth & Magick*, pp. 76-80.

approach in the explanation of my Symbolico deck, which immediately follows this article.

Experience has shown me how little known this type of forcing deck is, even among well-versed magicians. I have had the great pleasure of fooling a number of professional and technically accomplished conjurers with my routines using the Bagshawe Deck. This is one further reason, added to their other natural advantages, why I urge you to adopt these wonderful forcing decks in your own work.

I'd now like to mention a wonderful discovery I made one day, at a souvenir stand in London's famous Harrods department store. At this stand they offered personalized decks of playing cards, on the backs of which they imprinted the initials of the purchaser, while you waited! There were several letter styles available, so I had decks imprinted with six different monograms. When I got them home I assembled my Bagshawe deck from them. I can now stand far away from the spectator with the deck, yet I immediately know which card of the six he is thinking of. The different monogram styles stand out like neon signs to me, but go unnoticed by the audience! I always use a spectator seated in the first row and ask him to hold up the top card of the deck, after he has cut the pack, so that the rest of the audience can follow the proceedings. During this time I stand with my back to the audience, but I use Annemann's glance-back subterfuge (page 44) at just the right moment, to read the back of the selected card. All that's left is the showmanship.

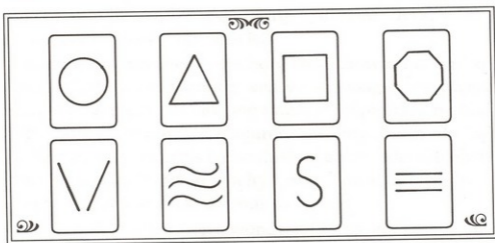


Symbolico

~~~~~LET'S TAKE a look at a totally new forcing deck—based on the principles of the Bagshawe forcing pack—that I use with great success in my stage act. The deck is described here for the first time.

For about seven years, I have used as a forcing device a jumbo deck that is printed with symbols instead of card faces. It contains two groups of eight symbols, for a total of sixteen cards. One set from this symbol deck consists the eight symbols shown on the next page.

You will need two sets of these eight symbols. The order of the symbols in each set is unimportant, but the two sets of symbols should be arranged in the same sequence, and one set placed over the other to distance the duplicates in the packet. While there are in reality only eight *different* symbols, in performance you always speak of them as *sixteen symbols*.



In studying the eight designs above you will note that the top row consists of four geometrical symbols. This we will call *Group One*. The symbols in the bottom row are nongeometrical. This is *Group Two*.

Our special deck is used as follows: After you casually display the jumbo symbol cards, you have a spectator mix them, remove one and note the symbol on it. He is then instructed to place the card face down on the table, while he keeps the rest of the deck in his possession. Your back is turned throughout this procedure, so that you can see absolutely nothing. Despite all this, you can successfully name the selected card! Here is the pumping system that let's you do that:

STATEMENT ONE: "You're thinking of a geometrical shape."

If the answer is *yes*, you know the symbol must be one of those in *Group One*.

STATEMENT TWO: "The symbol has corners." If the answer is *no*, the chosen symbol is the *circle*. If the answer is *yes*, you continue...

STATEMENT THREE: "More than three." If the answer is *no*, the chosen symbol is the *triangle*. If *yes*, you say...

STATEMENT FOUR: "Yes, I see four..." Watch the subject. If you see him begin to say *yes*, finish your statement first with: "...It is a *square*, isn't it!" However, if you see the

subject hesitate or begin to say *no*, you again elaborate before he can answer: "...five, six, seven, eight. Eight corners. That would be an *octagon*, wouldn't it?"

Now let's return to Statement One.

STATEMENT ONE: "You're thinking of a geometrical shape..." If you see the subject hesitate or begin to say *no*, the symbol must be in *Group Two*. You continue before he can contradict you: "No, the lines just flew apart on me!" You then go to...

STATEMENT TWO: "I see several lines, though..." If you see a negative response looming, you finish the statement with: "...curving together to form a sort of curlicue, like an *S shape*." But should the spectator agree that there are several lines, you go to...

STATEMENT THREE: "There are two..." If this receives a *yes*, the symbol is the *broken V*. If the subject starts to say *no*, you finish your statement with: "...three of them," as if you are counting the lines in your mind.

STATEMENT FOUR: "They seem to be straight..." If this gets a *yes*, the symbol is the *three horizontal lines*. If you see the subject ready to disagree, you immediately conclude with: "...sort of parallel—if *three wavy lines* can be said to be parallel."

Notice how the structure and delivery of these statements avoid or minimize all negative responses, and seem to flow toward a virtually unerring divination. The psychology on which this style of pumping has been modeled is that suggested by T.A. Waters.<sup>9</sup> The logic behind the system makes it easy to learn, but the pumping statements must be convincingly delivered. How you phrase your statements is all important. You must try to impart a very slight undercurrent

<sup>9</sup>*Trionic*, pp. 8-11; or *Mind, Myth & Magick*, pp. 76-80.



of undecidedness in your voice, as if you are straining to tune into the thoughts of the spectator.

I never use these cards as a stand-alone effect, but rather as an element in a one-ahead routine. To make the divination "play bigger", you can have the spectator draw his mentally chosen symbol as large as he can on a giant sketch pad or piece of cardboard. You keep your back turned while this is done. Then, after having delivered your pumping statements, thereby determining the spectator's symbol, you draw it on another large pad or card. To conclude the test, expose both drawings to the audience, revealing your psychic "artistry".



It is worth noting that the Bagshawe and Symbolico decks have one decided advantage over the ridged force packs detailed in Chapter One: With a pack containing three different ridged and marked cards, it is necessary for you to stand near the spectator to read the marks on the backs after he has finished cutting the cards. But forcing packs based on the Bagshawe concept permit you to maintain a considerable distance from your assistant throughout the test.

In magic's literature there are dozens of effects that can benefit from the addition or substitution of the Bagshawe Deck or the Symbolico pack. You will be amazed at the impact these ingenious yet simple tools can bring to your work—providing you have a proper understanding of their presentation.

## Effects for an Invisible Author

~~~~~**T**O THE best of my knowledge it was Larry Becker who first published an application for a special set of invisible ink markers that appeared a few years back in toy, hobby and stationery shops.<sup>10</sup> In Germany a company named Pelikan manufactures a wallet containing five "Magic Signal Markers" and a "Magic Pen". If you draw with the "Magic Pen" over the inks of the other markers, the colors change. Conversely, if you write or draw with the "Magic Pen", the ink is invisible on the paper until it is developed by drawing over it with one of the other

¹⁰"\$5,000.00 Challenge Prediction" in *Larry Becker's World of Super Mentalism, Book Two*, pp. 263-272, which is a clever updating of an old U.F. Grant trick, "The Baseball Prediction", that can be found in his compilation, *Secrets*.

markers. In the United States, similar "magic marker" sets are produced under the names "Marvey Color Tricks" and "Yes & Know". In considering the special properties of these pens, I've come up with some new mental magic ideas that I think have merit.

THE BOOK TEST

A spectator thinks of a word from a book. (The word is forced.) You hand him a piece of paper that you tear from a pad. (The slip has been prepared before the performance. It bears the forced word written invisibly with the "Magic Pen".) Ask the spectator to concentrate on his word and to burn his thoughts mentally into the paper. You then hand him a developing marker and have him color the slip with it. When he does, his burned-in thought becomes visible to everyone! If the force is deceptive and the presentation convincing, this trick can have a surprisingly strong effect.

LIVING AND DEAD

You can also use this principle for the well-known Living and Dead Test. Five spectators are each given a piece of paper. Four of them are asked to write down the name of a living person. The fifth spectator writes the name of a dead person on his slip. All papers are folded twice and mixed. Even the performer doesn't know which paper contains the name of the dead person. However, when the performer or a spectator moves a marker over the backs of the folded papers, the word "DEAD" or a skull appears on one. The performer takes this slip, still folded, tears it up and burns the pieces. (A center tear is executed.) He then concentrates and eventually names the dead person!

PSEUDO-PSYCHOMETRY

You can also use these pens for Pseudo-psychometry. Number the envelopes from one to five in a specific spot, using the

"Magic Pen". In performance, these envelopes are handed in order to five spectators, who are asked to seal some personal item in them and mix them. When they are returned to you, you concentrate on each, and jot down your impressions on the envelopes as they come to your mind. Actually, while pretending to make these notes, you go over the prepared spots with the developer marker and read the code numbers as they become visible. You now know the owners of the envelopes and can proceed with your psychometric readings.

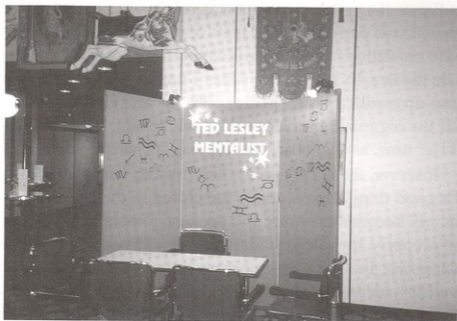
The Mentalist's Close-up Corner

~~~~~ YOU CANNOT perform mentalism successfully or effectively while you try to compete with an orchestra and dancing couples at a candle-light dinner, working on tables strewn with used plates and glasses. The only thing you can be assured of after such a job is a sore throat from shouting to be heard all evening. In such cases I refuse to do table-hopping. Perhaps one can do magic from table to table, but close-up mentalism in such circumstances is next to impossible. Instead I suggest that a close-up corner be installed just outside the function room. Then, instead of having to introduce yourself at each table over the hubbub, your audience comes to you and can enjoy your show under optimum conditions.

My close-up corner is more than just a table and a few chairs in the foyer. For entertaining at such events I have bought a set of collapsible room dividers that I use to construct a miniature theater room. The specially designed metal frameworks unfold to make three skeleton walls, similar in function to a three-fold screen. (A friend, Claus Fleischhauer, specially designed and built the ones I use.) They fold down into a surprisingly small space and are transported in custom-fitted canvas bags with zippers.

I cover the unfolded frames with cloth panels, which I've had a decorator paint with astrological and ESP symbols. There is also a banner, proclaiming "Ted Lesley's Close-up Corner", that is hung over the entrance to the performance area. Then, to illuminate the "theater", inside and out, I clip portable spotlights to the raised panels.

Having such a portable theater made is unquestionably a costly affair, but if you are a working professional, everything you use should display obvious quality and taste. Please don't think you can achieve the same success with a cardboard sign stuck on the wall behind a table.



I use this structure when I expect to entertain a hundred and fifty or more guests at a time. For smaller groups I bring a decorated tent to serve the same function. A rectangular table with a white tablecloth and some comfortable chairs for the spectators are arranged either near the front of the three-sided screen assembly or inside the tent. The screen theater and the tent are designed to be eye-catching, and attract the party goers when they first enter the foyer. For that reason, I make sure it is fully installed before the group arrives. I also try to pick a location that is prominently situated, but quiet.

I recommend that you set a small fishbowl on one end of your performing table to collect business cards from the guests. Have several cards already in the bowl, so that everyone understands what it is for without your having to say anything. These cards can provide valuable business leads. Also have a stack of your business cards lying conveniently but discreetly on the table.

Generally, I will be engaged to perform a short platform or stage set for the group, between dinner and dessert, and before the band starts. At the end of this performance I tell the audience that after just a short break I will be in the lobby, where I will perform further feats of mind reading under intimate conditions. This announcement never fails to fill my little theater. In fact, many times I have more people in my close-up corner than are in the ballroom, and I have frequently had the organizer of the event ask me to stop performing for a brief time, as the band was playing for empty tables.

However, there are times when this can become too much of a good thing. Occasionally the crowd in the Close-up Corner will become too large, and because people in back cannot see properly, they begin to talk and things become noisy and distracting. For such times, I carry a sign with a clock face on it, which reads "Next Show at...!" I bring my performance to a pleasant conclusion, thank the audience and disperse

them, setting up this clock sign on the table. After a fifteen to twenty minute break I'll begin again, with a smaller crowd.

I've had such tremendous success over the years with my Close-up Corner idea, I wanted to explain the concept for your consideration. This setup can transform a mentalist's nightmare into a triumph, and lend your entire performance an extra measure of professionalism.



## The Mentalist's Tablecloth

THIS IS another utility item of great potential. I always use it in my Close-up Corner and in many other circumstances where I am called on to perform mentalism for audiences of modest size. It is not, however, an item that can be employed for table-hopping. As you will see, its uses and the effects it makes possible are extremely impressive.

To construct a Mentalist's Tablecloth you will require two square pieces of velvet, one blue, the other black, each a yard square. I have had the twelve signs of the zodiac embroidered in a circle on the blue velvet. You could also cut them from felt and sew them on. This is an optional idea, but these symbols can be useful for various presentations (for example, see

"Guiding Star", pp. 251-254). If you decide to put zodiac signs on your cloth, be sure to use clear, recognizable renditions of these astrological symbols, as you will desire to have spectators identify the signs correctly during performance. As a further precaution, I've had the names of the signs embroidered next to them.

You will hem the blue and black squares together, but before you do this, we will install several secret devices on the black velvet panel. These devices include a couple of plate lifters and a few rope magnets or flexible rubber magnets.

With a black felt-tip marker, blacken the tube and squeeze bulb of the plate lifters. Then, with double-sided tape, fix the small inflatable balloon end (the palpator) of one of these gimmicks near a corner of the black square. Since the tablecloth is always laid diagonally on the table, with its corners draped over the four edges, you want to position the balloon near the corner lying *opposite* the side of the table where you will be seated. The balloon should rest on the table top, lying somewhere in the vicinity of a spectator seated at the table. You must be able to locate the position of the balloon by some detail in the embroidery of the blue velvet top square. Stitch the tube *loosely* to the opposite corner of the square. You may have to lengthen the tube, for the end carrying the squeeze bulb must be taped to the floor where your foot can operate it. If you find you must extend the tube, this is not difficult. Obtain a slightly larger gauge of tubing, then cut the balloon and squeeze bulb off the gimmick, leaving about an inch of original tubing on each. Force the original tubing into the ends of the new tubing and blacken all with a felt-tip marker.

In the same manner, attach the balloon end of the second plate lifter to the *center* of the velvet square. Shorten the tube so that the squeeze bulb of this plate lifter hangs two to three inches past the near (performer's) corner of the square. Once more stitch the tube loosely to the cloth.

I tape the magnets strategically on the square in positions to affect a magnetic pendulum and other gimmicks that I use. This pendulum is a marketed item, so it isn't my place to detail its use here; but effects with it and other props can be found in magic's literature and on shop shelves. I just wanted to alert the reader to the enticing possibility of concealing small magnets for various tricks in the tablecloth.

When you have the plate lifters and magnets fixed in place, neatly hem all four edges of the black square to the embroidered blue square. You may wish to decorate these hems with an attractive fringe.

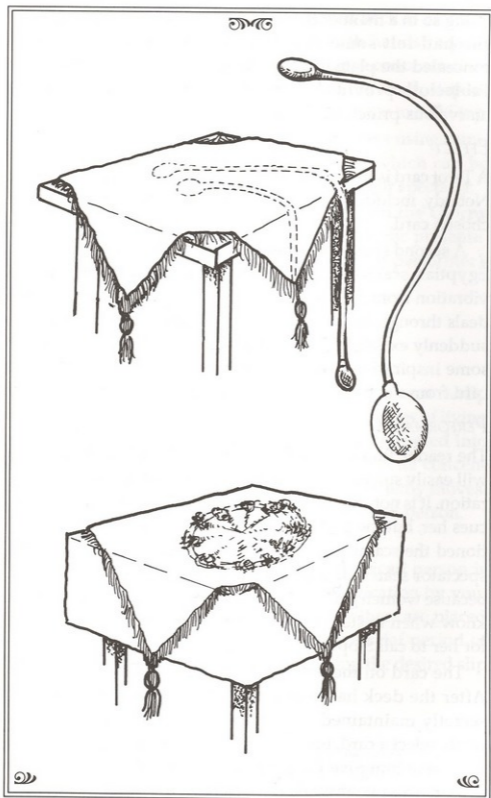
Finally, sew a decorative tassel, roughly seven to eight inches in length, to each corner of the cloth. The tassel sewn to your corner of the tablecloth must be altered to conceal the hanging squeeze bulb from the center plate lifter. The illustrations to the right help to clarify the arrangement of the plate lifters in the cloth.

This special cloth is draped attractively over your white-cloth covered table. The corner plate lifter can be activated by pressing its squeeze bulb with your foot under the table. The squeeze bulb for the center palpator can be operated either between your knees or by one hand in your lap.

I don't know who to credit with the idea of using a plate lifter under a tablecloth or in a close-up pad to create a magical animation. The idea reappears periodically in magic's literature, and quite likely was independently conceived by more than one clever mind. The plate lifter has been used to create Bizarre and telekinetic effects for years. Here are three applications that I think demonstrate the potential of this special cloth:

### *The Dung Beetle Revelations*

It was probably Dunninger (or David Lustig, his man behind the scenes) who first used a plate lifter to cue a spectator,



doing so in a manner that left the person believing that he or she had felt some supernormal vibration. Dunninger concealed the plate lifter in a length of rope. The Mentalist's Tablecloth provides an even subtler application of this marvelous principle. For example...

#### *EFFECT*

A Tarot card is freely selected, noted and lost back in the deck. Nobody, including the performer, knows the position of the chosen card.

A second spectator is asked to place her hand on top of an Egyptian scarab and to call "Stop" whenever she senses a vibration from the small stone icon. The first spectator then deals through the face-down deck until the second spectator suddenly exclaims, "Stop!", having quite obviously received some inspiration from the scarab under her hand. The next card from the pack is dealt face up and—it is the selection!

#### *PERFORMANCE*

The reader, knowing that the Mentalist's Tablecloth is in use, will easily surmise the source of the second spectator's inspiration. It is not, as she believes, the scarab under her hand that cues her, but the plate lifter under the scarab. You have positioned the scarab over the palpitator that lies in front of the spectator seated directly opposite you (preferably a woman, because women generally react more openly). But how do you know when to step on the squeeze bulb and send the signal for her to call Stop?

The card on the bottom of the pack has a marked back. After the deck has been shuffled (the marked card being secretly maintained on the bottom), you have a spectator freely select a card, note it and place it on top of the pack. You next have him give the cards several straight cuts, unknowingly placing your marked locator directly over his selection.

You then have only to watch for the marked back as he deals the cards face down into a pile. Place both hands to your temples during the dealing, feigning intense concentration. When you see that he has the selection in his hand, step on the squeeze bulb, signaling the second spectator to call Stop.

This effect is capable of interesting variations using numbers, names, colors, objects or cities, all of which can be transmitted in an offbeat manner to an innocent spectator.

Plate lifters, along with jumping disks<sup>11</sup> and the Glorpy handkerchief<sup>12</sup>, can also be used for psychokinetic presentations where objects seem to move without the performer's intervention. Three examples:

### *The Living Dead*

#### *EFFECT*

Someone is asked to write the name of a dead person on a slip of paper. Several of his companions write the names of living persons on other slips of paper. All slips are crumpled into little balls and placed on the table, and everyone concentrates—until one of the crumpled slips unexpectedly moves. When it is checked, it bears the name of the dead person.

#### *PERFORMANCE*

The slip of paper on which the name of the dead person is written has been secretly marked for identification by you. This slip is placed over the plate lifter. The others are placed in other locations on the tablecloth. After a brief period of concentration you operate the pump, making the desired slip move in an uncanny fashion.

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<sup>11</sup>See U.F. Grant's "The Cracking Crystal" (the second marketed version) and Phil Goldstein's "Chaos" in his *Blue Book of Mentalism*, pp. 27-28.

<sup>12</sup>See "The Spirit is Willing (to Write)", *ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

## Greased Ghost

### EFFECT

After shuffling a deck of cards, a spectator freely chooses one and replaces it in the middle of the pack. Then, while the deck sits isolated on the table, it eerily cuts itself precisely at the chosen card!

### PERFORMANCE

This version of the Self-cutting Deck or Haunted Pack is a favorite trick of mine. The secret is a clever combination of Herbert Milton's salt location with a concealed plate lifter in the tablecloth. The wonderful advantage of this method is that the deck is entirely ungimmicked. I first saw Dany Ray perform this trick more than thirty years ago. I don't believe he ever published it, and I'm not sure if the idea was original with him. In November of 1978, Edward Marlo conceived the same idea, calling it "Undercover Haunted Deck".<sup>13</sup> T.A. Waters also describes the idea under the title "HCI" in his *Mind, Myth & Magick*<sup>14</sup>.

For those readers who aren't familiar with the salt location, it is quickly explained. After the spectator has shuffled the deck and picked a card from it, you cut off approximately half the pack and ask him to replace his card on the bottom portion. In making this request, you point to the bottom packet with your forefinger and secretly deposit a small quantity of salt. It is the salt and a very slight tip of the pack, provided by the hidden plate lifter, that cause the deck to split at the chosen card. For further details, see the sources cited above.

Patrick Page suggested a small but valuable improvement to this method. Instead of salt, use a product called Reflex-pearls or Reflection Pearls. These are used by manufacturers of reflective street signs and can be purchased through them.

<sup>13</sup>See Jon Racherbaumer's book, *At the Table* (1984), pp. 144-145.

<sup>14</sup>Pp. 584-586.

Reflex-pearls are virtually invisible in small quantities and act like microscopic ball bearings. For our purposes, we need very small quantities. Reflex-pearls create a much "slicker" or more "sensitive" surface than salt granules, and thus require less motion to cause the upper block of cards to move; and they can be cleanly and easily brushed off the cards at the end of the effect.

## Grand Mal Geller

### EFFECT

A silver spoon is placed inside a simple silk bag and laid on the table. The performer concentrates on it and, after a few moments, the spoon is seen to be *moving* in the bag! When someone takes it from the bag, the spoon is found to have been twisted like a corkscrew by the performer's powers of thought!

### PREPARATION AND PERFORMANCE

The spoon is actually twisted, not by mental exertion, but by a vice, long before the performance. The sturdier the spoon, the better. This spoon is already secretly in the bag. A duplicate, straight spoon is displayed and seemingly placed in the bag. However, in reality it is stolen out again and concealed in your sleeve through means of a pull or holdout. If you wish to have the spoon examined before you place it in the bag, you will need to attach it surreptitiously to the pull without a hint of hesitation or fidgeting. Various attachment devices can be designed, using spring clips or strong magnets. I prefer to have the spoon attached to the pull from the start. I'm not concerned with having the spoon examined at the beginning of the trick. There is more than enough time for examinations after the spoon has been bent.

Since I've raised the subject of pulls and holdouts, let me describe the one I use, which is a combined pull and holdout



device. I created this extremely simple and handy tool after reading of more far more elaborate mechanisms in Ed Mishell's *Hold-out Miracles* booklet.<sup>15</sup> In 1989 I contributed a description of my design to *Magische Welt*.<sup>16</sup>

The gimmick is made from lengths of silk cord and transparent fishing line, two safety pins, an elastic wrist band, three small plastic curtain rings and a couple of rubber bands. The rubber bands are each about two inches in length. Begin by linking them together with a simple hitch, as shown in the illustration, bottom right. Then tie the length of silk cord to the free end of one of the joined bands. This cord must be long enough to travel from your left wrist, up the arm, across your shoulders and down the right upper arm for a couple of inches. To the free end of this line attach the elastic wrist band.

Thread one of the curtain rings onto the piece of fishing line and tie it in a loop, the length of which is much shorter than the silk cord: a little less than the length of your right forearm from elbow to wrist. Thread the other two curtain rings onto the silk cord; then hitch the loop of fishing line to the free end of the second rubber band. These hitches make it quick and easy to replace the bands and line when necessary.

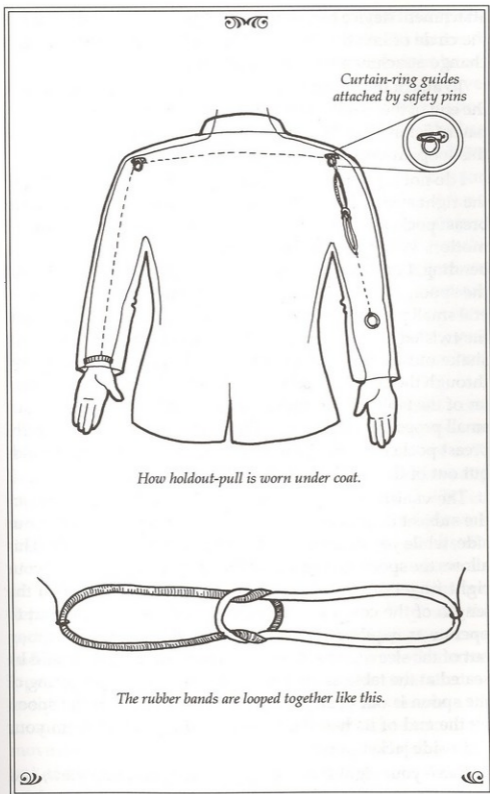
Link a safety pin through each of the two rings on the cord and pin them to the lining of your coat, one at each shoulder near the sleeve openings. Slip the elastic band over your left wrist and don the coat while grasping the ring on the fishing line in your right hand. The holdout should now pass up your left sleeve, across the shoulders and down the right sleeve, as shown in the illustration. Silk cord is used for the holdout because it will slide smoothly through the rings with almost no drag, assuring a dependable give and take action.

You can now connect whatever sort of attachment you wish to the ring on the end of the gimmick. By first tying the

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<sup>15</sup>1976.

<sup>16</sup>See "Meine Version des 'Hold-Out'" in Vol. 38, No. 3, Sept. 1989, p. 211.



attachment device to a short loop of fishing line, then linking the circle of line through the ring with a girth knot, you can change attachments quickly and easily.

To attach the spoon to the holdout, first drill a tiny hole in the end of the handle, then thread a short length of thin, transparent fishing line through the hole and tie it into a loop. Hitch this loop around the ring of the holdout with a girth knot.

I do not begin my performance with the spoon hanging in the right sleeve. Instead, I prefer to store it in the inner right breast pocket of my jacket. This allows me perfect freedom of motion. When I'm ready to perform the animated spoon-bending, I casually pick up the silk bag into which I will put the spoon. My bag has a drawstring; and inside I store several small props I use in my show, like Tarot cards, dice—and the twisted spoon. I pick up the bag by its bottom edge and shake out all the props while secretly pinching the spoon through the cloth to hold it back. I then set the bag in the center of the table, its mouth toward me, and gather the various small props I've spilled out. These I deposit in my inner right breast pocket. While doing this I take the spoon on the holdout out of the pocket and drop it down my right sleeve.

The vanish of the spoon is not difficult. As you introduce the subject of psychokinesis, drop your right hand to your side, while you bring your left arm in against your body. This allows the spoon to drop out of the sleeve just enough for your right fingers to grasp it. (Some experimentation with the length of the cords will be necessary to get the holdout to operate as required.) Your right hand then draws the spoon out of the sleeve, stretching the rubber bands. You should be seated at the table as all this is done, so that the procuring of the spoon is out of sight. Once you have grasped the spoon by the end of its handle, you pretend to bring it from your right-side jacket pocket.

Raise your right hand, bringing the spoon into view, and show it to be solid and normal. Then, with your left hand, lift

the mouth of the bag open and pretend to put the spoon inside. Reaching forward with both hands to do this increases tension on the rubber bands, so that, when the right hand, inside the bag, releases the spoon, it flies up the sleeve. Remove your obviously empty right hand from the bag and pull the drawstring, closing the bag. Then gently lay the bag back on the center of the tablecloth, over the central plate lifter.

All you need now accomplish is to make the twisted spoon in the bag move as you pretend to concentrate on it. After a few twitches, pick up the bag at the very tips of your fingers and lay it in front of the spectator opposite you (and over the other plate lifter). Concentrate a bit more, making the spoon move in the new location. Then ask the spectator to remove the spoon from the bag. The movement of the spoon is eerie enough, but when its twisted condition is seen, I assure you, the result will be audible gasps, screams of surprise and genuine shivers.

Having described this holdout-pull, I might mention one other use I put it to in the genre of mentalism: I employ it to steal billets in a Dunninger-style question and answer act. To the working end of the holdout I attach a small alligator clip capable of gripping roughly half a dozen billets. The billets are slips of paper three inches square, which are folded twice, once in each direction. A number of these billets are distributed in the audience for people to write brief questions on; after which they are gathered in several large envelopes and deposited in a transparent container on stage. I help with the gathering of the billets, taking them from those around me and putting them into one of the envelopes. (The other envelopes are circulated by the spectators through the audience.) In this activity, I let the clip drop out of my sleeve when the moment is right, and I secretly push a few billets into it as I move from place to place. These then go up into the sleeve and out of sight. I manage to do this several times, in different parts of the audience.

After all the billets have been collected in envelopes and placed prominently in view on stage, I stand at another table, talking and casually gesturing, letting my hands be seen empty. On the table rests a large bowl from which the blank billets were originally distributed, and there are a number of blanks still in it. I reach in and seem to take several. Actually, I let the holdout clip drop from my sleeve and I retrieve the stolen billets from it, pretending to bring them from the bowl.

The clip goes back up the sleeve as the hand comes from the bowl. I then pick up a clip board with my free hand and drop the folded billets onto it.

Opening one of the billets, apparently to jot down thoughts as they come to me, I read what is written on it and begin the question readings. As I finish this first reading, I crumple the billet, toss it back into the bowl and continue to the next billet, until all have been dealt with. This method may seem rather bold, but it is subtler than Dunninger's, who used to palm the stolen billets from the envelope and put them into his trousers pocket while in the audience, then palm them out of the pocket to read behind the cover of a three-sided hood on his clipboard. This obviously worked for him. With my holdout idea, your hands never have to go into your pockets and the stealing of the billets and their retrieval for reading is undetectable when done properly. This procedure is, I believe, much cleaner and less suspicious—unless you are a master showman of the stature of Dunninger. If you do this sort of work, consider my holdout method. It has proven extremely successful for me.



I trust these few examples will illustrate the possibilities the Mentalist's Tablecloth opens for weird and unusual effects. It has made it possible for me to perform quite a few sensational feats at the close-up table.



# Chapter Four



## Pro-monition





**BIALLA**

the LIVING TARGET  
la CIBLE VIVANTE  
die LEBENDE ZIELSCHEIBE

*...and friends*

## *Ralf and Inge Bialla*

THESE ARTISTS traveled all over the globe with their masterful nightclub illusion show. Most readers will not know that Ralf Bialla started his career as a billiard-ball manipulator. He has always been supported by his exciting wife, Inge. When I met him at the Red Rose, he was doing small illusions with livestock—but how he did them! I will never forget that he was the first conjurer to receive a standing ovation in this nightclub. I would like to be as successful as him, just one time! His ideas for trick techniques were unique and uncopiable. My favorite item in his show was the vanishing radio, which has to be the most perfect version ever performed. I have since obtained it and all performing rights to it from his wife Inge.

Unfortunately, Ralf Bialla suffered a fatal accident. He left a void that will be very difficult to fill. He was a true master of his craft.





## Pro-monition

~~~~~MENTAL EFFECTS are often technically easy to do, but demand excellent presentational ability to make them believable to the audience. Thus, it is *presentation* that can make almost any trick into a mental or "bizarre" effect. Even props decorated with glitter can be introduced into a mental performance if they can be given some believable identity other than that of a piece of magic apparatus; for example, as some sort of occult apparatus. If you declare the prop to be an "inheritance from a past master of illusion", and perform a strange, wild effect with it, the object will take on a new believability. I will also assert that almost any trick can be presented as "paranormal", if only it is done correctly and logically. Properly performed, tricks with the Bagshawe Force Deck can seem absolute miracles, which leave the impression that the performer *can* read the spectator's thoughts. Many card readers who advertise as

psychics in the newspapers work with normal playing cards. None of their many clients would think of calling them magicians! Here is the faith that moves mountains.

My version of Eddie Joseph's "New Premonition" affords no explanation other than that the performer is endowed with supernormal abilities. The presentation contains so many diabolical mind-traps, neither layman nor well-versed expert will find a logical explanation for it.

Before I explain this presentation, I think a little background will be helpful. More than twenty-five years ago I bought Eddie Joseph's "New Premonition" from Harry Stanley in England.¹ The trick came with a large manuscript, containing both the old and "new" versions of this miracle of mental magic.² I have been refining my interpretation of "Premonition" for more than eighteen years. It has long been a part of my standard repertoire for intelligent audiences, and the effect is, with correct presentation, enormous.

I clearly remember my first experiences with Eddie Joseph's "New Premonition". I performed it once many, many years ago for the Magic Circle of Berlin. The effect created a tremendous impression, and the only solution the gentlemen of that group could suggest was that I had used a stooge. I took this

¹Rights to this and many Harry Stanley publications are now owned by Supreme Magic Co., Ltd.

²The basis for "Premonition" can be clearly seen in "The Prize Winner" by William H. McCaffrey, an effect marketed by Thayer and later included in Hilliard's *Greater Magic* (1938), p. 564. I might mention that there was, around the time of its release, an air of controversy surrounding "Premonition". In 1949, less than a year after Eddie Joseph's manuscript was published by Abbott's Magic Co., George Armstrong, the well-respected editor of *The Magic Wand*, published the almost identical trick under the title *George Armstrong's Premonition*. Mr. Armstrong contended as forcefully as did Mr. Joseph that the trick was his invention. From the evidence he provides, the situation would appear to be one of parallel invention. Armstrong cited McCaffrey's "Prize Winner" as his inspiration, a thing that, to the best of my knowledge, Eddie Joseph unfortunately never did.

as a great compliment. After having had such flattering success with an audience of magicians, I put the trick into my professional night-club act at the time, but I quickly learned that my initial success was difficult to repeat. My night-club audiences didn't accept the effect. Consequently, I retired it and almost forgot about it.

Then, one day I took a repeat booking for a client in the candy industry, who hired me to perform for a select foreign audience he desired to please. Having been booked by this gentleman for several years in a row, he and many of those he wished me to entertain had seen my act, so he asked me to change my program. Of course I accommodated him. Having recently reconsidered the Premonition effect, I had devised a re-worked version of it, and I decided to use it as the second trick in my show. This particular audience was both intelligent and difficult to please, so you will readily understand my joy when the new presentation earned me my first standing ovation!

After numerous performances of the *original* Eddie Joseph routine before the public, I decided that it isn't really usable for professional performances, at least not for mine. Over the years I have constantly changed this trick to make it so, and today am confident that it is as close to perfect as I can bring it. In recent years I have been able to effect considerable improvements on the presentation; but one thing has remained unchanged: It is fully appreciated only by an intelligent audience that will give you its full attention. With such a group the impact is extraordinary.



Several years ago my English friend Stanton Carlisle and I wrote a substantial manuscript on this trick, which was earmarked for publication by Supreme Magic. However, the manuscript was lost somewhere in the Supreme offices and

never reached press. Since that time I have revised my handling of the effect. It is that revised handling that you are about to read. On the occasion of one of our last telephone conversations, Edwin Hooper, founder of Supreme Magic, gave me permission to describe Eddie Joseph's "New Premotion" method with my personal routine. The following description is rather lengthy, but if you give it the study and practice it deserves, the resultant effect will repay your efforts many, many times over.

EFFECT

Someone thinks of any card in a deck of fifty-two. He then names that card out loud. The performer directs him to a deck of cards resting in a bucket, which the spectator is asked to remove from its case and count through while he looks for his card. To everyone's surprise he discovers that the deck contains only *fifty-one* cards, and *his thought-of card is missing!* The performer then produces the missing card from his pocket!

THE PRINCIPLE

Three decks are used: One is in a card index. Each of the other two, which we will call "A" and "B", consist of twenty-five pairs of duplicate cards plus one more card, totaling fifty-one cards per deck. Since each deck contains only twenty-six cards of the fifty-two available in a normal pack, they are constructed so that Deck A contains no card found in Deck B, and vice versa.

When a spectator names a card, the performer, through means of a simple mathematical formula, can figure out which of the two decks *does not* contain the card. The spectator receives this deck and finds that his card is missing. As this is being determined, the performer has ample time and misdirection to find the named card in his card index, located in his trousers pocket, and transport it to his outer jacket

pocket. Later, a second spectator can remove the card from this otherwise empty pocket.

THE SPECIAL DECKS

First we will concern ourselves with the structure of the two fifty-one-card decks. The following table lists the contents of each:

| Deck A | Key No. | Deck B | Key No. |
|---|---------|---|---------|
| Ace of Clubs | 4 | Two of Clubs | 7 |
| Four of Clubs | 3 | Three of Clubs | 0 |
| Seven of Clubs | 2 | Five of Clubs | 6 |
| Eight of Clubs | 5 | Six of Clubs | 9 |
| Ten of Clubs | 1 | Nine of Clubs | 8 |
| Jack of Clubs | 4 | Queen of Clubs | 7 |
| Ace of Diamonds | 5 | King of Clubs | 0 |
| Three of Diamonds | 1 | Two of Diamonds | 8 |
| Four of Diamonds | 4 | Five of Diamonds | 7 |
| Seven of Diamonds | 3 | Six of Diamonds | 0 |
| Ten of Diamonds | 2 | Eight of Diamonds | 6 |
| Jack of Diamonds | 5 | Nine of Diamonds | 9 |
| King of Diamonds | 1 | Queen of Diamonds | 8 |
| Three of Hearts | 2 | Ace of Hearts | 6 |
| Four of Hearts | 5 | Two of Hearts | 9 |
| Six of Hearts | 1 | Five of Hearts | 8 |
| Seven of Hearts | 4 | Eight of Hearts | 7 |
| Ten of Hearts | 3 | Nine of Hearts | 0 |
| King of Hearts | 2 | Jack of Hearts | 6 |
| Two of Spades | 1 | Queen of Hearts | 9 |
| Three of Spades | 4 | Ace of Spades | 8 |
| Six of Spades | 3 | Four of Spades | 7 |
| Nine of Spades | 2 | Five of Spades | 0 |
| Ten of Spades | 5 | Seven of Spades | 6 |
| Queen of Spades | 1 | Eight of Spades | 9 |
| King of Spades | 4 | Jack of Spades | 8 |
| + 25 Duplicates
<i>less</i>
the Ace of Diamonds
= 51 cards | | + 25 Duplicates
<i>less</i>
the Ace of Spades
= 51 cards | |

Each of these decks is assembled as follows. Take one card of each duplicate pair and shuffle these twenty-five cards. Then arrange the twenty-five duplicates in identical order to the shuffled set and sandwich the fifty-first card (that without a duplicate) between the sets. That is, if the first shuffled set of twenty-five cards is ordered A-B-C-D...V-W-X-Y, and the unduplicated single card is Z, your arrangement should run A-B-C-D...V-W-X-Y—Z—A-B-C-D...V-W-X-Y. Arranged in this manner, each card and its duplicate rest twenty-six cards apart in the pack. I would also strongly recommend that you choose an inconspicuous card, like the Seven or Eight of Clubs, to rest on the face of the deck.

THE FORMULA

Now let's discuss the mathematical formula:

First consider the suits to have the following values:

CLUBS = 1 DIAMONDS = 2 HEARTS = 3 SPADES = 5

You can now calculate which of the two prepared packs contains the card named by a spectator. Merely multiply the numerical value of the card by three.

The numerical value of a Jack = (1)1

The numerical value of a Queen = (1)2

The numerical value of a King = (1)3

(The numbers in brackets—those in the "tens" place—are ignored in our calculations.)

Then to this product add the suit value shown above. Several examples should make this simple process clear:

Which deck contains the Nine of Spades?

Numerical value times three: $9 \times 3 = 27$.

Add the suit value (Spades = 5): $27 + 5 = 32$.

Again, we drop the "tens" digit, using only the number in the "units" position: (3)2. This gives us a key number, in this example, 2.

Now take a look at the key numbers of both decks in the table on page 153. Do you notice anything? Yes! Deck A contains only the key numbers from 1 through 5, and Deck B the key numbers 6 through 0. According to this, which deck contains the Nine of Spades? That's right! Deck A.

Which deck contains the King of Hearts?

King = 13. The "tens" digit isn't used, so the value is 3.

$3 \times 3 = 9$.

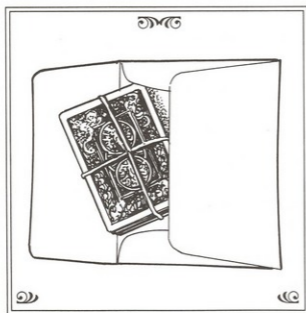
Add the value of the suit (Hearts), 3, and our total is 12.

The number in the unit position is 2, so the King of Hearts is also located in Deck A.

Which deck contains the Ace of Spades?

$1 \times 3 = 3$; $3 + 5 = 8$. So the Ace of Spades is in Deck B.

If the spectator is not to find the card he has just named, obviously he must be given the deck that is missing his card. The mental calculation just explained tells you which deck *contains* the card. So you must give the spectator the *other* deck. In other words, if your calculations tell you that the named card lies in Deck B, the spectator is given Deck A.



PREPARATION

- 1) Wrap a rubber band once in each direction around Deck A. Then put the bound deck into a white envelope and seal it.
- 2) Similarly bind Deck B and place it into a red coin-purse. This purse should have a

snap clasp. At one time I used a zippered purse, but the zipper occasionally jammed or caused an awkward pause as the spectator operated it. A snap clasp, on the other hand, is trouble free.

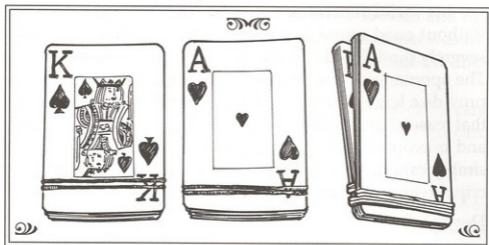
- 3) The sealed envelope and coin purse are placed into a champagne pail, which must be clearly visible to the audience. I set the pail on a chair.
- 4) The normal third deck of cards must first be arranged in two card-indexes. These are carried in the left- and right-front trousers pockets.

Until recently I have avoided the use of card indexes, because I found them too bulky for trousers pockets, at least of the modern cut. However, I now offer a solution to this problem that completely satisfies my needs:

First separate the cards into their four suits. Stack the separate red suits in ascending order from the face of the packet back; that is, the Ace lies on the face, followed by the Two, Three, Four...to King. Next set the separated black suits in descending order from the face: King, Queen, Jack, Ten...to Ace.

Wrap a rubber band tightly around the bottom end of each of these four packets. Now place the heart packet with the spade packet, hearts in front of spades; and the diamond packet with the club, diamonds in front of clubs. Bind each of these combined packets together using another rubber band around the already banded ends. The tension of this last rubber band causes the two packets of our improvised card index to separate in the middle, forming a break that is easy to find by touch.

Place the heart-spade packet in your right-front trousers pocket; and the diamond-club packet in your left-front pocket. The faces of the cards in both indexes should be



turned toward your body. Using this simple arrangement, it is possible to find any of the fifty-two cards very quickly and with absolute certainty.

Before I explain my presentation for "Premonition", a few notes about stage setting should be mentioned. This effect can be performed for audiences of as many as five hundred, if a platform or riser is available. If there is a dance floor in front of the riser, perform from the dance floor instead.

You must have a small, undraped table convenient on stage, and a microphone. If it is a standing mic, have it installed in front of the table. A table microphone can be used as well, but it must be of the best quality. This microphone will be used by the assisting spectator. You will also need a mic, and I recommend that every mentalist or magician use a wireless microphone wherever possible, as this permits the greatest freedom of movement.

Finally, your lighting conditions must be good. For work in front of a large audience, it is essential to have one or two floodlights. Why am I so adamant about such things as microphones and lights? During the most crucial portion of this presentation you are relying on the reactions of the spectator on stage to put over the effect. The entire audience *must* be able to hear this person as he counts the cards, and

see his facial reactions when he finds his card missing. Without good sound and lights, these vital elements will be severely diminished and the overall effect will suffer greatly. The spontaneous and immediate reactions of the spectator provide a large portion of the impact and entertainment. For that reason I urge you, if you can't arrange for proper lighting and microphones, forgo this trick and do something else. It simply cannot have its proper effect, and to do it under such crippling circumstances would be a shame.

PERFORMANCE

"Ladies and gentlemen, not only dexterity, but psychology as well plays a great role in our art. Some of you may even associate the following experiment with parapsychological procedures.

"At this point in such a procedure, a magician would say, 'Take a card.' However, in a few minutes I will ask that some lady or gentleman merely *think* of a card! But before I do this, just one more thing: Pay attention to the champagne pail over there, which I have not touched up to this point, and which I *will not touch* throughout the following demonstration."

You now approach some gentleman, someone who has made it clear during the show that he is skeptical. As you walk over near him, say:

"Sir, you look like a very critical person who will not allow himself to be easily influenced. Will you verify that we have never met before, nor have we discussed anything previously. Is that correct?" The spectator confirms this.

"I also assume that you are familiar with a standard deck of playing cards. Such decks contain fifty-two cards and two Jokers. The Jokers will not come into play during our experiment, because there are twice as many of them. So completely forget the Jokers.

"In a few moments I am going to ask you to think of a card quickly. Wait until I say, '*Now.*' I would request that you do

not think of one of the Aces, as they are too obvious and our intelligent companions would think this experiment was too easy or would explain it away as coincidence. Make it difficult for me, for my sake—*very* difficult.

"Please, sir, look at me for a moment and think of a card right *now*! So the audience can follow along, name your card loudly and clearly!"

The spectator names, say, the Four of Spades.

"Sir, I will now ask you three times if you would like to keep this card or think of another! So, would you like to stay with the Four of Spades or choose another card?"

"I'll keep the Four."

"Do you really want the Four of Spades, or another one?"

"The Four."

"Do you *actually* want the Four of Spades, or would you like to change your mind?"

"I want the Four."

These three questions give you time to make your mental calculations.

In this instance the calculations are:

The card value is Four. $4 \times 3 = (1)2$. Add the value of the suit, a Spade being Five. $2 + 5 = (1)7$. So the Four of Spades lies in Deck B. The spectator must then receive Deck A (in the sealed white envelope), which does *not* contain the mentally selected card.

You continue:

"May I now ask, sir, if you would stand and walk over to the champagne pail, which you will verify I have not touched.³ A sealed envelope is in it. Would you please open the envelope and tell us what you find?"

³This reëmphasis of your obvious lack of contact with the pail is important. I always make this point two or three times during the presentation. Don't overlook it. Stressing your distance from the pail adds significantly to the drama of the effect.

The spectator does so and answers, "A deck of cards."

By the way, it makes absolutely no difference if the spectator changes his card as you ask him your three questions. On the contrary, it dramatically increases the effect. However, you must go through the necessary calculations each time he changes his mind. In these circumstances, take advantage of the time used by the spectator to walk over to the champagne pail to make your final calculations. Simply wait until the spectator arrives at the pail before instructing him to remove either the envelope or the purse.

"Would you now be so kind as to go over to the table there and remove the rubber band from the deck? Now please count every card, *one at a time, one on top of one another, face up*, on the table. As you count each card, please do so out loud. When you come to the card you thought of, hold it up so that the audience will be able to see it clearly."

On the table, you can have the bottom half of a clear plastic card box, into which the spectator can be directed to deal the cards while he is counting. This keeps everything neat and in control.

While the spectator is counting through the pack, you have more than sufficient time to find the Four of Spades in your card index and palm it out of the pocket. As a safety measure, rest your hand momentarily in front of your stomach and glimpse the face of the palmed card. Having ascertained that you have the right one, move your hand casually to the top of the empty side-pocket of your jacket and let the palmed card drop unnoticed into it.

The counting of the cards out loud by the spectator builds a tremendous amount of suspense, particularly since the spectators are waiting for the mentally selected card, which the assistant has been instructed to hold up. My experience has been that by the time the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth card

is counted, most members of the audience will begin to laugh and giggle, having anticipated that the spectator's card will be missing from the pack. As the rest of the cards are counted, that anticipation and amazement grows, culminating in the realization that the deck the assistant is using has only fifty-one cards instead of fifty-two, and that, indeed, his mental selection is missing! As I've previously mentioned, there *must* be a microphone near the table, so that the audience can easily follow the spectator's counting.

Obviously you have no chance to alter the outcome, since you are in the audience the entire time. At this point the assisting spectator alone is the audience's center of interest.

The real climax of the trick is still to come. After the spectator has concluded his counting on the stage, you approach another spectator and ask him to reach into your jacket pocket. Tell him to pull out whatever object he finds there. The spectator's hand comes out of the pocket holding *a single card*, which he then shows to the entire audience. In our example, this would be the Four of Spades!

An intelligent audience will only be able to draw one conclusion from all that has happened: You must have removed the card from the deck before the performance began! This conclusion is further supported by the fact that you take the single card from the spectator in the audience and give it to the assistant on stage, as you make the following request:

"Please place the Four of Spades that you thought of back into the deck, so that it will be complete again!"

If you have "colleagues" in the audience, you can switch the prepared deck for a normal one and present it to the assisting spectator as a memento. This will rock your confreres in their seats!

Some readers may be concerned that your helper might say something about the purse or envelope left behind in the pail.

I have never had a problem with this, but a solution is easily had. Simply place a couple of small objects, like a pencil and a felt-tip marker, in the pail with the purse and envelope. You may or may not use these items during your performance, but their presence in the pail makes it look like a convenient receptacle for your incidental props, and the unused purse or envelope becomes one of these.

This is a presentation that must be thoroughly rehearsed, as it requires showmanship and perfect timing. Should you desire to perform it, I strongly recommend that you take my script as a framework only, building on it and altering it until it fits you. The effect rises or falls on the strength of your personality. It took many years before I could perform it successfully. Therefore, I recommend that each mentalist who would perform this, approach it with total sincerity and dedication; for only then will you achieve the success you seek.

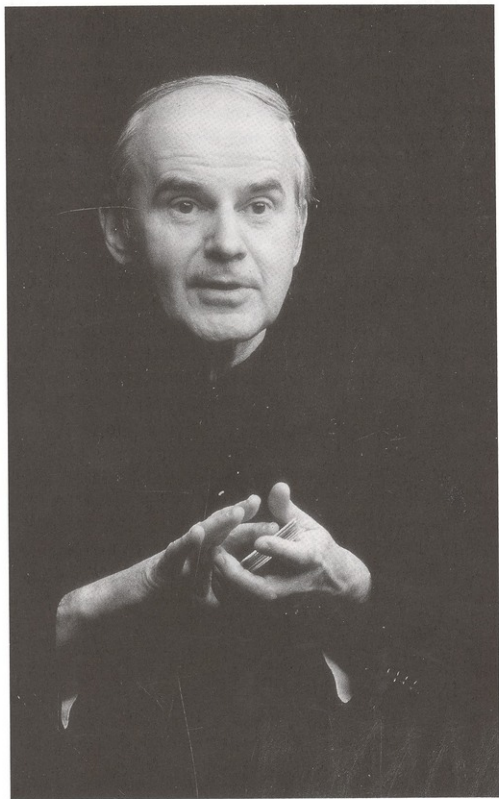


Chapter Five



New Pseudo-psychometric Exercises





...and friends

Alexander Adrion

IN MY YOUTH, when I was still an apprentice tax-account in Cologne, every day I passed by a well-known bookstore on my way to the railway station. One evening I found a poster hanging in the shop's window, announcing a performance of the famous German magician, Alexander Adrion, in the theater of the Belgian House. I immediately bought a ticket and, as I returned home I wrote a letter to Herr Adrion, asking if we could meet after his show. A week later I got a generous reply, telling me that he would like to see me. On this occasion I had the pleasure to meet, for the first time in my life, a professional magician, who answered all my questions with friendliness and great patience.

Herr Adrion's show was an evening of wonders for me. I saw for the first time, a master magician who, with a minimum of props, entertained the audience wonderfully. He was appreciated by the spectators not just for his tricks, but also for his poetic, beautifully constructed patter. The show lasted nearly two hours and Herr Adrion received thunderous ovations at its end.

This was more than forty years ago, but I still remember in particular two tricks Alexander Adrion performed: his version of Pseudo-psychometry, and a trick with a rope, in which he used to fish a selected card out of a receptacle. Both tricks were a great inspiration to me, and different versions found their way into my own repertoire.

At the beginning of my career our paths crossed again in Berlin, and I still remember his kind advice after my first close-up show. Just last year we met once more, during my engagement at a trade-show in Cologne. Later, in my hotel, we had a wonderful conversation that lasted for hours.

Alexander Adrion has toured with his "Kammerspiele des Scheins" show throughout Europe, performing his very special kind of chamber magic. He is also a noted author of books on the history of magic, which are enjoyed by both the public and magicians. In private life he is a renowned collector of magic as well.

The weekly magazine of the prominent German newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine* once wrote this about him: "Alexander Adrion is a magician who has the highest standard of professionalism." I agree with this statement wholeheartedly, to which I would add that he is an exceedingly kind gentleman and an outstanding fellow performer.

Herr Adrion, I salute you, for being such an inspiration for me during the many years we have known each other!



~~~~~PSEUDO-PSYCHOMETRY  
is an effect popularized by Theodore Annemann, who presented it with great success in his shows. Through the years many magicians and mentalists have explored the possibilities inherent in this effect. Dozens of versions are available on the market, hundreds are in the literature.

The effect, as I'm sure you know, is that several spectators receive an envelope (or some other type of container) from the mentalist. They are asked to put a personal object into it. The envelopes are mixed by another spectator and returned to the performer. As he removes the objects from the envelopes one by one, the performer senses the personal vibrations of the owner and returns the objects to the correct person.

The secret is simple and functional: The envelopes are secretly marked and are distributed in a known order. Thus, their markings automatically identify the owners of their contents.

This effect has become a classic, but as far as I'm concerned it's no longer suitable for today's audiences. Let me explain. If Pseudo-psychometry is presented as a genuine feat of psychometry, in which you give each lender of an object a cold

reading, the effect becomes too long-winded for modern audiences seeking entertainment (which mine are). And if the presentation is stripped down to a simple test of what belongs to whom, it becomes a mere puzzle with a solution that is not terribly difficult to guess.

There is another flaw, as I see it, in the idea of using Pseudo-psychometry as a platform for cold readings: In the context of theater, corporate and banquet shows it is seldom believable. In these venues you do not receive many family heirlooms and long-held personal items. Instead you get lipsticks, combs, mascaras, purse mirrors, pills, lighters, coins and other incidental items. (I have even received condoms and tampons, and if you perform Pseudo-psychometry for long, you will too. Be prepared to deal with them.) Few thinking persons will actually believe that such transitory items can carry meaningful psychometric vibrations that could provide you with deep insights into the lender's history and personality. Of course, if a truly interesting item comes my way, I will certainly capitalize on it—but most of the time the objects are going to be trivial.

Over the years I have developed a presentation based on one by Tony Griffith,<sup>1</sup> which discards cold reading while it dresses up—and therefore conceals—the identification of the owners of the lent objects. I have five objects collected. More would make the routine repetitious. For the first test I take one of the objects and pass it before each of the five lenders, watching their expressions. From "tiny subconscious responses" I determine the owner of the object. For the second test, I have each of the four remaining subjects say the name of the object. Subtle inflections in their voices tell me the owner of this item. For the third test, I have each of the remaining lenders say "No", after which I detect the individual who has lied. This brings me to the last two items.

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<sup>1</sup>See "Pseudo Psychometry" in *Griff on Close-up* (1967), pp. 35-40.

To avoid the pitfall of having the last item become anti-climactic, I take the remaining objects, one in each hand, and ask their owners to look at them. Then, from their gazes I am able to divine which object belongs to whom.

This series of varied presentation premises keep things interesting and entertaining—as long as the pace is brisk and a bit of humor is applied. While I feel that this flurry of presentation ploys misdirects strongly from the simple method behind it all, over the years I have sought for better ways to conceal the identification method, making it impossible for even a critical audience to discover the secret. Spectators know more about magic and are much shrewder than they once were. Many intelligent people who take the time after the performance to think about the Pseudo-psychometry effect can arrive at the correct solution—and that's a pity. Here I offer three easy, yet very deceptive methods that have worked extremely well for me.

# Technicolor Graphology

~~~~~**H**ERE WE employ a presentational plot by L. Vosburgh Lyons, in which graphology rather than psychometry is represented as the operative phenomenon.<sup>2</sup>

EFFECT

The performer holds a small basket (like a simple bread-basket), which contains at least fifty correspondence cards and envelopes. These are not neatly arranged, but lie scattered in the basket. Five felt-tip pens are attached by their clips to the outer rim of the basket.

Five spectators, preferably women, are each asked to remove from the basket a card, a pen and an envelope. (The envelopes are of the self-sealing type, for considerations of

²See *The Jinx*, No. 74, Jan. 6, 1940, p. 493.

hygiene and convenience.) The performer humorously compares the selections to a lottery, emphasizing that the spectators can remove *any* card, *any* envelope and *any* pen they wish; and he holds the basket in a way that makes it easy for them to do so.

Each of the five spectators is asked to write a few words on her card, then insert the card into the envelope and seal it. Another spectator is recruited to collect the envelopes and bring them to the performer on stage. Once there he is asked to mix them.

The performer now opens one envelope after another, studies the different handwritings and, through his graphological knowledge, dramatically reveals various characteristics about each of the five persons, eventually identifying each individual from her handwriting!

PREPARATION AND PERFORMANCE

This handling would seem to leave no possibility for identification through secret marks on the cards or envelopes, and has been designed to deceive well-posted magicians as well as the public. The method is uncomplicated and utterly simple: Neither the cards nor the envelopes are prepared—but the pens are.

They look identical, but each has a different color of ink! Certain brands of felt-tip pens can be found whose caps and cartridge tips alone indicate the color of ink they contain. The bodies of the pens are identical. With a black permanent marker, color the caps and cartridge tips to match. There is now only one way to tell the pens apart: by writing with them. Fasten these prepared pens around the mouth of the basket in a known order, such as red, green, blue, purple and black.

As you will quickly understand, this method is suitable only for a large group, as the spectators you use must be widely separated. This prevents the secret of the different

colored inks from being accidentally discovered. Of course the spectators can select *any* pen, since you know the order of the pens and can mentally link the colors with the spectators. Such memory work is not difficult, but if it seems so, you can hold the pens in a known order against the side of the basket, and hand them to the spectators in that order. That may seem a bit bold, but I assure you, no one will think a thing about it.

Of course the cards must not be returned to the spectators afterward. Instead, casually pocket them after you have done each psychometric reading.

Variant presentations are possible using this method. For instance, one can use Gene Gloye's Doodles theme,³ having the spectators draw simple pictures or scribbles on the cards, which you then relate to the proper spectator. You cannot, of course, display the doodles as you analyze them, for reasons of both size and secret. However, you can duplicate them on a large sketch pad as you talk about them.

³Published in *Linking Ring*, Vol. 36, No. 11, Jan. 1957, p. 76.

Cimmerian Psychometry

~~~~~ IN THIS version we return to the principle of marked envelopes—but even the best-informed onlooker will swear that marks could not account for what they have seen. The result is a method that will convince any audience that you are truly gifted.

## EFFECT

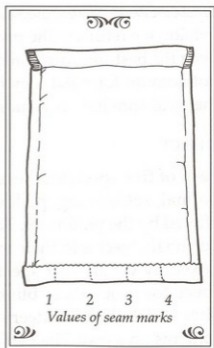
Each of five spectators seated in the audience freely takes a normal, self-sealing, padded mailer from the ten to fifteen offered by the performer. They are then asked to insert some personal object into their mailer and seal it. The mailers are mixed by yet another spectator and brought on stage. This spectator proceeds to blindfold the performer thoroughly, after which the volunteer opens the mailers and puts their contents on a tray. The performer does not touch the objects.

Nevertheless, as he passes his fingertips over each item, sensing the vibrations it emits, he describes the object and its owner!

### PERFORMANCE

The mailers are unmarked, so it doesn't matter which of them are selected. However, I have forgotten to mention one detail of the procedure, a detail that the audience fails to remember as well: *You* helpfully gather the mailers from the spectators in the audience and hand them to the sixth spectator for mixing. It is crucial that this be done with an air of innocent helpfulness; that is, in an entirely unsuspecting fashion—for it is this polite gesture on your part that provides the cover under which you mark the mailers, after the fact. On your thumb you have a thumb tip to which you have securely glued the tip from a darning needle. This piece of needle should be less than a quarter of an inch long.

In collecting the mailers you take them from left to right, thinking of them as one through five. Remember as many details as possible about each spectator as you take his or her sealed mailer, and use the thumb tip to mark the mailers with an invisible line at their bottom ends, which are quite thick due to the folded and glued end seam. Each mark is placed in a different location along the bottom, and must be heavy enough to allow you to identify it by touch. You need



mark only four of the five mailers. The absence of a mark identifies the fifth one for you.

The blindfold the spectator places on you is faked to permit you to see. Whatever type you use, it should be convincing. I use and recommend Richard Osterlind's Apex Solid Steel Blindfold<sup>4</sup> in combination with the Band-Aid preparation explained in the instructions that accompany this prop.

As has been remarked by several professionals, Pseudo-psychometry presentations often suffer from one weakness: When you reach the last object, the identification of the final spectator is too obvious, creating an anticlimax when you wish to intensify the effect. Here is how I have conquered the problem in this context:

After you have been blindfolded, pick up the first of the mixed mailers and hand it to your helper. It is at this instant that you feel the mark and identify the spectator to whom the sealed object belongs. Have your helper open the mailer and place its contents on a tray. You should try to be some distance from him at this time, yet close enough to recognize the object and remember as many details about it as possible. You must manage this *in an instant*. (One reason I use the Osterlind blindfold is that it enables you to glimpse the object with a sidewise glance, without turning your head.) Immediately upon recognizing the object, turn your back to your helper. Next extend one hand behind you and hold it over the object, pretending to sense its vibrational pattern. Then proceed to describe the item and its owner. When you have gone as far as you can with your reading, have your helper return the object to its lender.

Hand your helper the next mailer and have him open it and place its contents on the tray. As this is done, secretly read the mark on the mailer and glimpse the object. Pretend to strain

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<sup>4</sup>Distributed by Jeff Busby in the United States.

for some sense of the item, but after an apparent effort admit that the aura of the object is too strong and confused for you to get anything meaningful from it. Ask your helper to replace the item in its mailer, seal it shut and put it aside for the moment.

Continue with the remaining three items, having the spectator place each on the tray for you to read it, then returning it to its owner. One mailer remains: that with which you experienced difficulty. Ask your helper to take this last mailer (which is still closed) to its owner in the audience, then to take his seat again with your thanks. You, now alone on stage, ask the person to concentrate on his object without taking it from the mailer—and you proceed to describe the person and the object correctly. Removing your blindfold, request that the spectator take the object from the mailer and hold it high in the air, so that everyone can see that you have successfully solved this difficult final challenge!

So much has occurred between the time the second object was placed on the tray and the time you correctly identify it, the audience will most often forget that it was ever out of the mailer, or that the mailer was in your hands.

If you practice this experiment well and present it correctly, I promise you that it can be one of the strongest effects in your program.

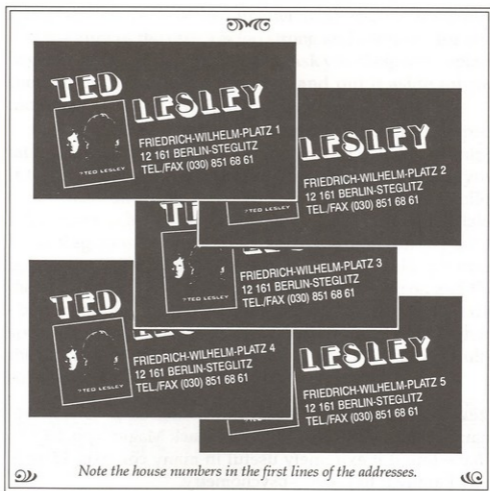
# Black Magic<sup>2</sup>

~~~~~OVER THE many years since I came up with "Black Magic" (pp. 89-92), I have found it extremely useful in many contexts. Here is how I apply it to Pseudo-psychometry.

People are always fascinated by the ancient mathematical curiosity known as magic squares—if they are presented quickly and smoothly. Intelligent audiences are particularly impressed by the rapid construction of one of these number squares that adds in all directions to a total freely stipulated by a spectator. In all the methods I have found in my extensive library, the number is revealed prior to the construction of the square. Imagine the impact this experiment could have if the spectator only *thinks* of the number!

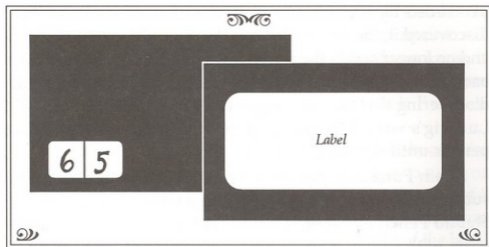
I have had my business cards specially printed in five versions, each with a different house number.⁵

⁵This coding idea first surfaced years ago, applied to the zip code in the address. The idea seems to have been independently conceived by several



I arrange these cards in sets of five, each set having house numbers running from one through five in ascending order. The first four cards in the set each have a large white rectangular label on the back. Card Five carries a similar but smaller label in the lower left corner. I have divided this label with a vertical line into two squares. The fifth spectator is asked to write the two digits of a number between thirty-four and one hundred in these squares. This is the number I will use to construct the magic square. But how do I learn this number?

magicians, including Joseph White, David Ward, David Robbins and Larry Becker. I have been using the subtler positioning of the code number as a house number for years. Recently I discovered that James Randi has had the same idea. See *Waters' Mind, Myth & Magick*, p. 142.



I demonstrate to the spectators how they are to put their cards into envelopes, and I use the fifth spectator's card (the one with the number on it) for this demonstration.

You know the "Super Punx Test", don't you?

In the last chapter of Punx's *Fourth Dimensional Mysteries*⁶ the reader will find Punx's extraordinary "Super Punx Test". It is based on a wonderful secret, first published by Irv Weiner.⁷ However, Punx's refinements make the principle more practical and take it into new realms of possibility. I would like to thank *Meister Punx* for allowing me to describe his diabolically clever idea to my readers.

After a long and intensive search, Punx found a special eyebrow pencil that had a specific and very useful characteristic: When you wrote on a piece of cardboard or paper, you were able to take an imprint of the writing with your moistened thumb and transfer it onto another piece of paper. The thumb became an impromptu *stamp*! This pencil was

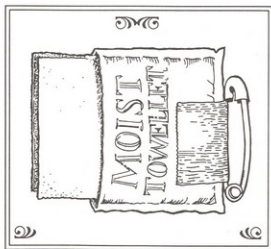
⁶Pp. 211-231.

⁷See his 1948 manuscript, *Impromptu Impression*. Five years later Milbourne Christopher would claim independent discovery of the same transfer principle in his book *Varied Deceptions*, pp. 9-12. This principle, though applied in an entirely different manner, was probably first employed in the old "Potsherd Trick", commonly known in the Western world as "The Sugar Cube Trick".

produced by a company in Berlin, but since Punx first discovered it, the composition of the pencil has been changed and no longer serves the purpose we require of it. (A few years back I bought hundreds of these pencils for Punx, only later discovering that they no longer worked. But all was not lost: Ludwig's wife, Dagmar, is now equipped with eyebrow pencils until the year 2350!)

Again Punx searched and experimented until he found a substitute for the lost pencil. He found what he needed in the Stabilo Pencil No. 8046, though with this pencil one has to write with a thick point to get a good imprint. In the United States one can use the felt-tip pens by the Flair company that contain a water-soluble ink, although this ink will smudge when the impression is taken. Soft lead pencils will also work. I recommend that the reader also experiment with various eyebrow and grease pencils. You are bound to find certain ones with the attribute needed to make clear transferable impressions.

To avoid openly licking his thumbtip during performance, or coughing to conceal this action, both of which can be perceived as inelegant, Punx came up with another idea: Drugstores and cosmetic counters carry small damp napkins for the hands and face, which are individually sealed in convenient packets. Prepare one of these by tearing off an end of the packet. Next use a piece of adhesive tape to attach a safety pin to intact end of the packet. Pin this "thumb moistener" under your lapel and, just prior to performance, pull the folded napkin partially out of the packet.



You now have only to touch the napkin casually under the lapel and your thumb will be ready to take the imprint.

Please don't skim over this principle, even if you know it. Try instead to imagine the possibilities! Punx has demonstrated some sensational uses, and the trick I'm now describing is only one of many applications.

In devising a new use for the principle, my main concern was to have a logical reason to require a spectator to write on a surface small enough to enable me to take an imprint of it with my thumb. My black business cards gave me that reason. They force the spectator to write on the white field of the label.

We now turn to the composition of the magic square:

If you create a magic square on a blackboard or large sketch pad, it always has an impact on the audience. Unfortunately, many mentalists avoid the effect, thinking it far too complicated. Composing a magic square with a number given by a member of the audience looks like a miracle to any reasonably intelligent spectator. Can you imagine the impact of this experiment when the volunteer only *thinks* of the number!

The following version, created by Royal V. Heath⁸, is not at all difficult to learn. It is possible to construct squares totaling from twenty-three to ninety-nine without resorting to negative numbers, but totals from twenty-three to thirty-three necessitate the use of duplicate numbers in the square, making it slightly less impressive.

The illustration on the next page shows cells that always contain the same numbers. They never change:

You must remember the positions A, B, C and D. Later, you enter calculated numbers into these fields.

Let's say the spectator thinks of the number sixty-five. To complete the square, a little calculation is necessary. Regardless of which number is selected, you always subtract *twenty-one* from it. In our example that would mean: $65 - 21 = 44$.

⁸Hilliard's *Greater Magic*, pp. 923-924.

This number is entered into Cell A (second row, third column). This basic number is increased by one and the result (45) is entered in Cell B (top left). Add one again and enter this result (46) in Cell C (fourth row, second column). Finally, add one once more and enter the result (47) in Cell D (third row, fourth column).

| | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <i>B</i> | 1 | 12 | 7 |
| 11 | 8 | <i>A</i> | 2 |
| 5 | 10 | 3 | <i>D</i> |
| 4 | <i>C</i> | 6 | 9 |

Lettered squares are left unfilled.

The completed square will look like this:

To facilitate the quick filling of the square in front of an audience, you can use a sketch pad with an empty magic square drawn on it and the constant numbers secretly filled in with a *white* crayon. The white writing is visible to you, but invisible to the audience from just a short distance. Light pencil can also be used.

| | | | |
|----|----|----|----|
| 45 | 1 | 12 | 7 |
| 11 | 8 | 44 | 2 |
| 5 | 10 | 3 | 47 |
| 4 | 46 | 6 | 9 |

Result = 65.

If you are feeling bold, have the pad writing side down on your table, with the constant numbers already filled in by marker. When you are ready to construct the square, take up the pad and hold it between your abdomen and one hand while with the other hand you enter the missing numbers. But don't forget to act as though you are filling in all the numbers (scratch on the pad with your fingertip). To the spectators it

appears as if you completed the magic square in seconds! If you take this course, you can use an erasable marker and suitably laminated board.

In recent years I have modified a very clever idea of Roy Johnson's⁹ for this demonstration:

To a standard clipboard, attach a large piece of cardstock on which you have boldly drawn or printed the cells for your magic square. The card should be bright yellow, for maximum visibility, and just a bit smaller than the clipboard itself. Use a few dabs of non-permanent dry-mount fixative, rubber cement or some similar product that allows you to fix the card to the clipboard, yet remove it and attach a fresh one after each performance. Fill in the constant numbers on this square, leaving the four key cells blank.

Clip a duplicate yellow card over the first. This card bears an identical magic square, but all the cells are empty. Align this second card perfectly over the first to conceal it. In performance you display the empty magic square on the clipboard and, as you handle it, you press the clip, letting the top card slip down and free of it. Lay the clipboard, with the (loose) card, face down on your table while you pick up a stopwatch and hand it to an audience member. Show him how to operate the watch, then return to the stage and pick up the clipboard, leaving the card behind on the table. Of course, you must now keep the partially filled magic square on the board concealed from the audience.

Have the spectator who thought of a number concentrate on it as you try to receive her thoughts. After a few moments of mutual meditation, during which you can make the necessary mental calculations, you pick up a felt-tip marker and ask the person with the stopwatch to time you as you fill in the square. Fill in the four empty cells and pretend to fill in

⁹"Flash Square" on his *Roy Johnson: The Voice of Experience, Volume One* audio tape (1977).

the others; then call out, "Stop!" to the timekeeper. Reveal the completed magic square and ask for the time elapsed while you filled it in. From this dramatic foundation you can now build to a truly stunning climax as you ask the spectator to announce the number she was thinking of, then show that the square adds to that number in all directions!

For those not familiar with Heath's magic square, I should point out that not only do all the rows and columns add to the correct number, but so do the diagonals, the four numbers in the corner cells and every square of four numbers as well!

Having explained the coding of the cards, Punx's secret and the working of the instant magic square, the balance of the method is quickly told. Having stolen the imprint of the number from the card as you show the spectators how they are to insert their cards into the envelopes, you have someone mix the five envelopes and return them to you. You are able to identify the envelope containing the number as you have had the foresight to trim its flap slightly but (to you) noticeably shorter. Pick up one of the other envelopes, tear it open and remove the card inside. In doing so, leave an imprint from your thumb on the torn-off end piece and secretly note the number as you tuck the piece safely away in your pocket.

Now note the code number on the front of the card and begin your psychometric reading. Continue to "read" three more cards, leaving the number card for last. Hand this envelope back to its owner and ask him to concentrate on his number. Then proceed with the construction of the magic square, building to a powerful climax that produces the mentally selected number in a most extraordinary manner!



Chapter Six



The Teleport Envelope





...and friends

Milo and Roger

I SAW THESE two remarkable comics for the first time at the Lido in Paris near the end of the Sixties. Their show was so hilarious, they and it have been indelibly imprinted in my memory. In 1986, during the planning sessions for the revue *Zauber-Zauber*, I recommended them to its producer, who engaged them immediately. They instantly became favorites with the audiences and were the hit of the revue. They sometimes carried on their comic roles backstage as well, entertaining the entire ensemble for hours with their clumsy seeming but wonderfully artful gags. I got to meet them during this time and we became friends.

Milo and Roger are and remain the world's greatest comedy illusionists, and you can see that they still enjoy working on the world's stages, even at their age. They are living proof that magic keeps you young. To count them as my friends is not only a joy but also an honor!



THIS, LIKE many of the items in Chapter Three, is a utility prop. Baldly stated, it is a special two-compartment switching envelope, but it has some remarkable features. I have given it its own chapter because I wish to highlight the wide range of possibilities it opens and the genuinely startling effects it can produce. Many years ago I described an early version of this envelope in the periodical *Magische Welt*,¹ but I've never seen or heard of another mentalist using it. This once again proves the old magical adage that the best way to hide a good idea is to publish it.

The Teleport Envelope belongs to the family of double envelopes that have a secret second compartment.² However, the Teleport Envelope has two distinct advantages over other double-compartment envelopes. First, in the simple act of sealing the Teleport Envelope, the compartments and their contents are automatically switched, one for the other. The really remarkable aspect of this envelope is that the performer

¹See "Neuer Teleportations-Umschlag" in Vol. 30, No. 6, Nov./Dec. 1981, p. 307.

²See, for example, *The Tarbell Course in Magic, Volume 5*, pp. 198-199 and 239-240.

need never touch it to effect the switch. The spectator unwittingly does all the work himself!

And second, when the spectator opens the envelope, he does so at the top, not the bottom or sides. If an envelope is opened by a mentalist, such odd points of entry might go unquestioned; but, as George Sanderson has commented, such practices are odd for normal persons.

The Teleport Envelope combines *two* established principles: the secret compartment and the "Clippo" principle. Over the years I've improved the construction of the envelope, and it has become my favorite utility gimmick. I've used it in effects for close-up, stage and television, and along the way I've used it to fool not only the public, but also some very astute magicians. If you would like to switch flat objects or make them appear in the hands of spectators, this envelope is ideal. Hundreds of effects are possible with it, and I'm sure that, after a little thought, every reader will develop his own personal routines using this device. Before I detail the construction and operation of the Teleport Envelope, let me whet your appetite and get your creative juices flowing with several of my favorite applications.

Serial Killer

~~~~~EFFECT:  
The performer requests the assistance of someone from the audience, who joins him on stage. He next asks for everyone in the first few rows of the audience who has any paper currency on them to bring out a bill and hold it high in the air. The assisting spectator freely points to anyone with a bill and is sent out to that person with an envelope. The bill is sealed in the envelope and left with its owner, all while the performer remains on stage. Nevertheless, he proceeds to divine the serial number on the sealed bill.

It is important to note that, with this method, the performer never touches the bill or approaches its owner until after the divination has been accomplished. This seems to me to fulfill the requirements of the perfect serial-number divination.

## PREPARATION

The secret compartment of the Teleport Envelope contains a bill carrying a serial number known to you, and the Teleport Envelope automatically switches the spectator's bill for yours! However, you must be prepared to handle bills in varying conditions—crisp, moderately worn, very worn—and of various denominations. Therefore, you should have a Teleport Envelope prepared for each possible bill and condition. You must then index these envelopes for quick access. They can be filed in a wallet (consider the features of a Hember-style wallet for this), or be indexed in your pockets or attaché case.

You will also have to know the serial numbers on each bill. These can be secretly recorded for your reference on a writing pad (see "Border Intelligence", pp. 115-116) or on the barrel of the felt-tip marker (*à la* Syl Reilly's "Brain Echo") with which you jot down your impressions.

## PERFORMANCE

Ask a member of the audience to assist you briefly with the next test and have her join you on stage. Next ask those spectators in the first few rows to dig into their pockets for a bill and hold it high in the air. Have your assistant on stage point to anyone holding up a bill. The other spectators are told to relax and put their money away.

While the owner of the chosen bill is holding it in the air, you note its value and condition. You then bring forth an envelope loaded with a similar bill. Give this and a pair of scissors to your on-stage helper and have her take them out to the owner of the designated bill.

Have your assistant take the bill, fold it in half widthwise, green-side outward, and slip it folded end first into the envelope (thus matching the orientation of your bill in the secret compartment). Then have the spectator seal the envelope and

leave it with its owner, along with the scissors. Thank your helper and have her return to her seat in the audience. Throughout this procedure it is clear that you never come near the bill.

From stage you now proceed to divine the serial number on the bill, writing it large on your pad. The spectator in the audience is asked to snip the end off the envelope, remove his bill and verify your clairvoyant impressions, all of which he does. After the applause that results from this, you stride into the audience to shake the spectator's hand, retrieve your scissors and helpfully relieve him of the remains of the Teleport Envelope.



# Sign Onboard

~~~~~EFFECT:  
A manila pay envelope is opened and shown empty. Without a false move, the envelope is given to a spectator, who seals it. From this point on the envelope is *never touched again by the performer*.

A playing card is selected in the audience and signed. The performer then proceeds to teleport the signed card from the deck and into the sealed envelope, which the spectator has been holding the entire time!

PERFORMANCE

The chosen card is forced. The secret compartment of the Teleport Envelope contains a duplicate of this card, which carries a nondescript signature across its face. The envelope is shown to be empty, then is handed to a spectator, whom you have had join you on stage. He is asked to seal the empty envelope and guard it.

The performer forces the unsigned duplicate of this card on someone in the audience, and has her sign its face. This signed card is returned to the deck, then made to vanish. This vanish can be accomplished through a number of methods, from palming to the use of a card with a waxed back. Whatever the method used, secretly maneuver the signed card to the top of the deck.

You now ask the spectator on stage to open the envelope. Inside he finds the signed card. Because he hasn't clearly seen the second spectator's signature, and the card is identical to hers, he assumes it to be the signed selection. And since the audience and second spectator are too far from the card to determine the legitimacy of the signature, they make the same logical assumption. While the spectator is opening the envelope, you rejoin him on stage. You take the signed duplicate from him and display it, keeping it gently in motion to prevent anyone from focusing too closely on the signature. You then walk down into the audience again and hand the card to the second spectator. However, by the time she gets it, you have executed a top change, so that she receives her actual selection. I recommend that you use a court card for the duplicates, as the busy design of these cards further obscures the signature.

Herald from the Invisible Realms

~~~~~EFFECT:  
Someone is asked to think of a card. He is then handed an "invisible deck", a purely imaginary pack, which he is encouraged to look through and remove his card. He is next given an "invisible yellow label", which he is told to affix to the back of his invisible selection. Following this he is given an "invisible pencil", with which he is asked to think of any number from one to a hundred and write it on the label.

After handling all these imaginary objects, the spectator is finally handed something tangible: an envelope. He checks it to make sure it is empty, then seals his invisible card inside.

The performer recaps the events leading up to this moment: A mentally selected number has been written on an

imaginary label stuck to the back of an imaginary card, which has also been mentally chosen. He then hands the spectator a pair of scissors and asks him to snip off the end of the envelope. On doing this he discovers that the envelope is no longer empty. Inside it a real playing card has materialized—the same card mentally selected by the spectator! And on the back of the card is a yellow label—and on that label is written the number thought-of by the spectator!

After the applause has subsided, and as the spectator leaves the stage to return to his seat, the performer reminds him that he still has his invisible pencil. He is asked to toss it up to the performer, who pretends to catch it—and a long, yellow pencil suddenly appears at his fingertips!

#### PERFORMANCE

This is my interpretation of an unpublished routine by Maurice Fogel, to which I've added several enhancements: One, the card thought of is not announced until after the spectator is holding the envelope. Second, thanks to the Teleport Envelope, the second envelope used by Fogel (and later by Alan Shaxon in his streamlining of the trick<sup>3</sup>) is eliminated. And third, the card appears in the envelope while the spectator holds it!

Purists will object that this routine transgresses the bounds of mentalism and strays into the domain of magic. That is so, but the elements of mentalism are pronounced enough in the presentation that it fits comfortably within the context of a mental act, just as the Linking Finger Rings and other chosen magical effects have been effectively employed in the programs of some of mentalism's finest performers. This transgression of genres didn't seem to bother Mr. Fogel or his audiences, and it certainly doesn't mine. If this theoretical

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<sup>3</sup>"The Invisible Card and Envelopes" in Shaxon's *Practical Sorcery* (1976), pp. 12-15.



objection is not too great a hurdle for the reader to surmount, let's proceed to the discussion of a routine that provokes gasps of genuine disbelief.

The initial preparation is unquestionably intensive, and that will probably keep many from using this routine; however, once done, the reset necessary for each performance is a matter of five minutes, and the effect is worth every ounce of effort. You will need to construct fifty-three Teleport Envelopes, each containing a card with a yellow label stuck to the center of its back. These fifty-three envelopes cover every card in a standard pack, including the Joker, and are organized for quick access on an index board mounted in the lid of your attaché case. I inconspicuously pencil the initials of the concealed card on the outside of each envelope, and recommend that you do too. This serves as a check during performance, or if the envelopes should become mixed while in transit.

You will also need a new pencil, a nail writer and a pair of scissors. Use a bright yellow pencil for good visibility, and carry it in your right-front trousers pocket, eraser end down. The scissors and nail writer are also kept on your person, where they can be readily had.

The first challenge of the routine is to learn the identity of the mentally chosen card. There are many methods available in the literature. You might consider "Black Magic" in this volume (pp. 89-92) or some form of one-ahead system in which you learn the name of the card in the course of revealing the contents of several pieces of written information. If you do pre-show work, you can learn the card beforehand via an impression device or center tear. Clearly, there are many approaches one can take here.

Once you have learned the identity of the mental selection, take the corresponding Teleport Envelope from your index and place it in your inner breast pocket. You can do this before the show, if you have used a pre-show method, or during

performance, as you go to your attaché case to get a prop or put something away. There is no need to hide the action. Just take the envelope from the index and put it in your pocket.

When you are ready to perform the routine, bring the person who has "thought" of a card on stage and toss him an "invisible deck". Here, if well-worn material doesn't put you off, you can use some of the classic Don Alan gags from his comedy "Invisible Deck" presentation. In any event, have the spectator go through the pantomime of fanning the deck and removing his mental selection. Next hand him the invisible yellow label and have him stick it to the back of his invisible card. Then hand him an invisible pencil and have him pretend to write any number from one to one hundred that pops into his mind.

Having run him through this dumb show in an amusing and entertaining fashion, bring the Teleport Envelope from your pocket and bow it open. Let him see it is empty and hand it to him, telling him to seal his invisible card inside.

Here you pause in the action to recap the events that have brought you to this point: Any card was thought of, a mentally selected number was written on a label attached to the back of the imaginary card, etc. During this review you should have ample opportunity to don your nail writer, if you have not already done so.

When, after your summary of events you have reconnected with the present moment, ask the spectator to announce the identity of his mentally selected card for the first time. Then hand him the scissors and request that he open the envelope. Take them back from him and ask that he look inside.

"Is there a card in there?" He will affirm that there is, and the look on his face will have quite an effect on the rest of the audience.

"Please reach inside and draw the card out of the envelope for just an inch—just enough for you to see if it is the card you

thought of." Stay near him at this point, ready to stop him should he begin to pull the card too far from the envelope.

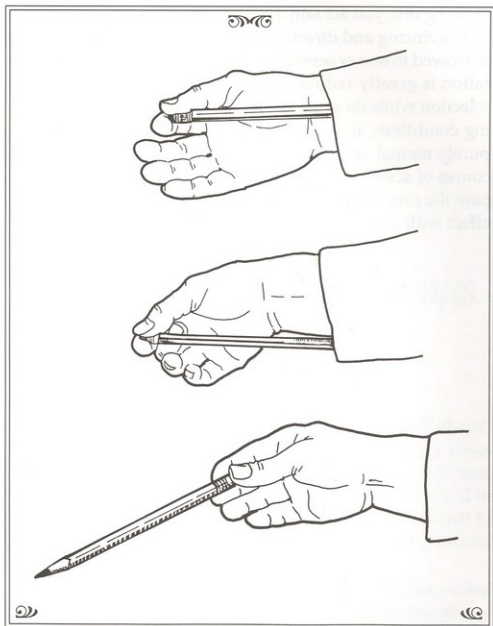
"Is it your card?" When he declares that it is, take the partially visible card from him and draw it completely from the envelope. As you display the card in one hand (that wearing the nail writer), with your other safely discard the envelope in a pocket.

"And do you remember sticking a yellow label to the back of your card and writing a number on it? What was that number?" As he reveals the thought-of number, you stride downstage to the first row of the audience, nail writing the number on the label as you go, and say, "They won't believe us. Here *you* look for yourself. Is there a yellow label on the card? And is there a number written on it? Please tell everyone what the number is."

When the spectator in the audience announces the number, you hold the card up high and display both sides of it as you return to your helper on stage and accept the resulting applause. Hand him the card, thank him for his help and invite him to resume his seat in the audience.

However, just as he reaches the edge of the stage, stop him. "Just a minute. Haven't you forgotten something? You still have my pencil. Just toss it to me." During the previous few moments you have casually reached into your right-front trousers pocket and slipped the pencil there up your jacket sleeve. Grip the eraser end between your thumb and forefinger and bring your hand nonchalantly from your pocket, concealing the pencil behind relaxed fingers. You should not, of course, look at your hand during any of this.

When the spectator pretends to throw the invisible pencil to you, extend your right hand to catch it and, at the same time, use the tip of the second finger to pivot the pencil out to the fingertips, causing it to pop suddenly into view.



This bit of business concludes the routine with a final touch of whimsy and charm that should bring you a second round of applause.

Before leaving this piece, I will mention one more thought: If you should opt to use pre-show work for the selection of the card, you could greatly simplify your preparation by having the spectator physically choose a card and remember it.

In doing this, you actually force a card on him. This force must be convincing and direct.<sup>4</sup> If the possibilities for selection are narrowed to one or several cards, your initial envelope preparation is greatly reduced, and the necessity of learning the selection while on stage is eliminated. Of course, your working conditions and ability to "sell" the pre-show force as a purely mental selection<sup>5</sup> will affect the attractiveness of this course of action. My personal preference, however, is to prepare the necessary envelopes and perform this extraordinary effect with a genuinely free and spontaneous choice.

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<sup>4</sup>See, for example, the ridged-card forces in Chapter One of this volume.

<sup>5</sup>For an excellent example of this brand of mental *double-entendre*, see Phil Goldstein's "Four-sided Triangle" in his *Red Book of Mentalism*, pp. 5-6.

# The Sough of Horses' Wings

~~~~~EFFECT:  
A spectator is brought on stage and handed an empty envelope, which he seals himself and keeps in his possession. Another person selects a page from a book and is asked to memorize a few words from it. The book is given to him to hold and he is asked to join the performer and first spectator on stage.

The performer steps back and concentrates. He then makes a slow, curious gesture toward the book, at which time everyone in the audience hears the distant sound of *paper tearing!*

He asks the spectator to open the book to his selected page. When he does so, a look of great surprise appears on his face. The chosen page has disappeared—it has been *ripped from the book!* When the other spectator then, at the performer's instruction, opens the empty envelope, which he himself sealed, he finds the missing page inside. Unexplainable! It seems that teleportation is a reality!

STAGE PERFORMANCE

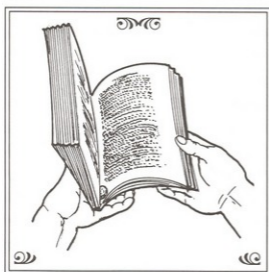
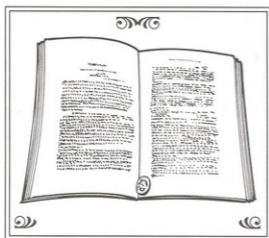
"The Pegasus Page", as it has come to be known, a brilliant invention of Herbert Milton,⁶ is one of my favorite mental effects and, thanks to some small but telling refinements of which I am rather proud, it is one I've successfully used to baffle audiences and magicians throughout the world.

You will certainly have anticipated that the torn page appears in the spectator's hands through the agency of a Teleport Envelope. You load the secret compartment with a folded page torn from the book you will use. This page should be torn unevenly from the book, leaving an easily discernible portion of it still attached to the binding.

You will need a duplicate book as well, which you will use to force the identical page removed from the first book. Any riffle force will serve the purpose here nicely. When using new paperback books, I have employed the old idea of creasing the spine at the force page, which provides a break discernible to you as you riffle off the pages. However, more often these days I will use another method for creating a riffle break, an idea of Barrie Richardson's, which allows you to force almost any page and leaves no trace of preparation in the book:

Place a small coin in the gutter of the book, near the bottom edge and between the page you wish to force and its facing page. I always take the precaution of wrapping a rubber band around the bottom end of the book while it is in my attaché case, so that the coin cannot accidentally fall out. As I take it from the case in performance, I can quickly strip off the band and leave it behind.

⁶See his "Page of Mystery" in Percy Naldrett's *Collected Magic Series: Volume Six* (1925), p. 18-23. Arthur Emerson later popularized Milton's trick and named it "The Pegasus Page" in his *Third Evening at the Magic Circle* lecture notes (1968). Related effects are Annemann's "Whim of Tituba" in number 67 of *The Jinx*, Nov. 18, 1939, pp. 463 and 465; and Corinda's "Zarkamorta II" in his *Thirteen Steps to Mentalism*, pp. 201-206.



Holding the book in your left hand, near the bottom of its spine, walk downstage to the first row of the audience and ask someone to call stop as you riffle through the book. Riffle the pages off your right thumb until the spectator stops you. At that moment let all the pages above the break created by the coin escape from your thumb, and raise the outer end of the book slightly, causing the coin to slip from it and into your cupped left fingers. Hand the book, opened to the desired spot, to the spectator in his seat and direct his attention to the proper page, requesting

that he note the page number and memorize a few words that he sees there. As he does this, and all eyes are on him, you can take advantage of the moment to let the coin in your hand drop into a convenient pocket.

Now we come to the vanish of the page from the book. To accomplish this you must switch the book just used for the page force for its duplicate, from which the forced page has been removed. At the moment this rests, ready to be grabbed, in your attaché case. The switch may seem bold when described, but I assure you, I've never been caught doing it, and I've performed this trick for some of the best posted magicians in the world.

First, you must have had the foresight to have selected for your primary assistant a gentleman in shirtsleeves and a woman sitting with friends. You target one of these types because neither will be carrying a pen. (If a woman is called up, she will leave her purse with her friends rather than bring it on stage with her.) It is this person who is given the apparently empty Teleport Envelope and asked to seal it.

After forcing the page and having a few words noted, retrieve the book from the spectator in the audience, letting it snap shut, and turn to the spectator on stage, who you have positioned roughly downstage center. "Do you have a pen?" you ask. As he begins to tell you that he hasn't, continue, "That's no problem. Here is one for you."

As you are talking, you stride calmly to your open attaché case, which sits on a side table, stage left and a bit upstage of the spectator. Its raised lid is turned toward the audience, so that no one can see into the case. You are at this point holding the force book in your left hand. Place both hands momentarily behind the lid and quickly switch the two books as you seem to search for a pen. With the duplicate book now in your left hand, raise this hand to the top edge of the lid to steady it, as with your right hand you continue to look for a pen. The book should be at least partially in view above the lid. Search for a few moments more, then pretend to discover the pen, which is waiting conveniently for you in a compartment of the lid, and bring it out with your right hand. Do not rush the switch of the books in the case. Just exchange them calmly and without hesitation. It is also vital that you not look at your left hand at any time during the switch. All your attention should be focused on your right hand as it searches for the pen. Another thing that lends misdirection for this switch is a continuous line of entertaining commentary.

Now walk back to your on-stage assistant and hand him the pen, asking that he record the number of the selected page

on the sealed envelope he holds. While he does this, return to your helper in the audience and hand him the book, asking him if he would mind joining the two of you on stage. Position him downstage right, several yards from the spectator with the envelope, and ask him to hold the book out in front of him, pressed between his palms.

So now we have our one helper on one side holding a book with the chosen page torn from it; and on the other side is the other helper, clasping an envelope containing that missing page. Everything is poised for the climax. But there is one piece of the puzzle yet to be explained: How do you let the audience *hear* the spectral page as you teleport it from the book to the envelope?

The answer is embarrassingly simple, though no one has ever guessed it. In your inside breast pocket you have a miniature tape player that contains a clear recording of a page being torn. The speaker of the recorder is turned outward and you are wearing a wireless mic to pick up the sound and broadcast it. The tape player is activated by an on-off switch placed near the edge of your jacket, or at your side where your elbow can press it, or under your toe inside your shoe—wherever you find it most convenient.

So all you need do at this point is *act*. Stand between the two spectators and ask the one with the envelope what page number he wrote down. Turn to the second spectator and ask if that is indeed the page he selected in the book. On receiving confirmation of this, you proceed to make several dramatic gestures toward the book, eventually activating the sound of the tearing page. Triumphant ask the helper with the book to open it to his selected page. When he does so, he finds only a tatter of it left in place! You then hand a pair of scissors to the helper with the envelope and ask him to cut it open. Have him look inside and discover the torn page. Next, have him unfold it and verify the page number.

Bring the two spectators together and ask your second helper to make sure it is the page he memorized a passage from. As he testifies to this, calmly take the scissors and envelope from the first spectator and pocket them. To wrap everything up visually, take the book and page in your own hands and match the torn edges, providing final proof that it is indeed the same page and striking a stance that cues the audience for applause. It will be immediate and sustained.

Conclude by presenting the book and torn-out page to the second spectator and send both helpers back to their seats. Years ago I bought several thousand remaindered paperback books at just pennies apiece, so that I could do this trick for many years. I enjoy leaving the spectator with an ungim-micked book to ponder after the show (a thing not feasible with the original Milton method).

SURROUNDED PERFORMANCE

There are performing circumstances in which the book switch in the attaché case is not practical: nightclubs, for instance, or garden parties—situations in which you must work partially or fully surrounded. I am so fond of the Pegasus Page effect, I became determined to find a method for doing it under these conditions as well. Since a book switch seemed impractical, I came up with a method that uses only one book, yet allows the book to be kept by the spectator.

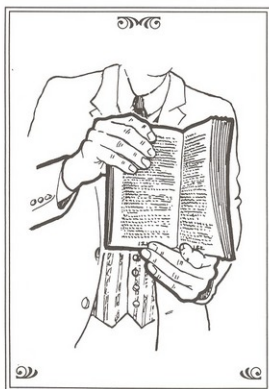
To do this, one must sacrifice just a little. Instead of teleporting nearly a full page, you mentally transport a fairly large corner of the page instead. The corner in question is sealed in the secret compartment of a Teleport Envelope.

You begin the performance by asking a gentleman with a jacket on to help you, and you show him the empty compartment of the Teleport Envelope. Have him seal the envelope and place it in his pocket for safe keeping.

Next bring out the book from which the page corner was removed and approach another spectator. Riffle force the page



with the missing corner in the following manner. Have the person stand and position her on your left. Hold the book out in front of you and execute a riffle force (which can be further aided by the missing corner itself). Because you have placed the spectator on your left, if you keep the left-hand portion of the book (the released pages) perpendicular to the floor, she cannot see the missing corner on the left-hand page.



Having stopped the riffle, move your right hand to the missing corner and grip the book there, right fingers covering the corner. Immediately turn the open book around, so that it is facing the spectator, and ask her to call out the number of the page she has stopped you on. Hold the book with the left-hand page fully facing her and tap the area of the page number with your left second finger. Here I should mention that you

should use a book that has the page numbers positioned at the bottoms of the pages.

Next turn the book toward you again, continuing to conceal the missing corner as you let the book close. Of course, your handling should appear completely natural and unpremeditated. This can be easily learned with just a little practice.


Hand the book to the spectator and continue with the presentation as detailed in the stage method.



I hope these examples have demonstrated for you the remarkable and baffling effects made possible with the Teleport Envelope. It is now time to teach you the secret of this exceptional utility device—



Construction of the Teleport Envelope

 YOU WILL need two completely opaque manila pay envelopes of the end-opening type. You can use any size of envelope that suits your needs. The preparation can be done in a few minutes.

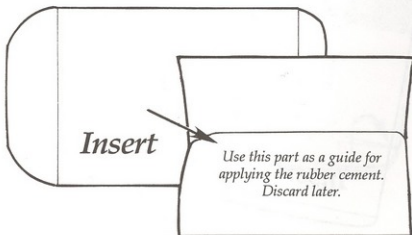
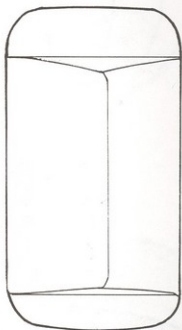
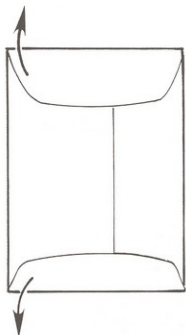
- 1) Remove the adhesive from both envelopes. This is easily done with a soft eraser.
- 2) *Carefully* unseal the glued bottom flap of each envelope.
- 3) Now remove the back (seamed side) from one envelope by cutting along both long edges with a *sharp* knife. We will call the front side with the top and bottom flaps attached the "insert". Don't discard the back of the envelope. It will be useful later.

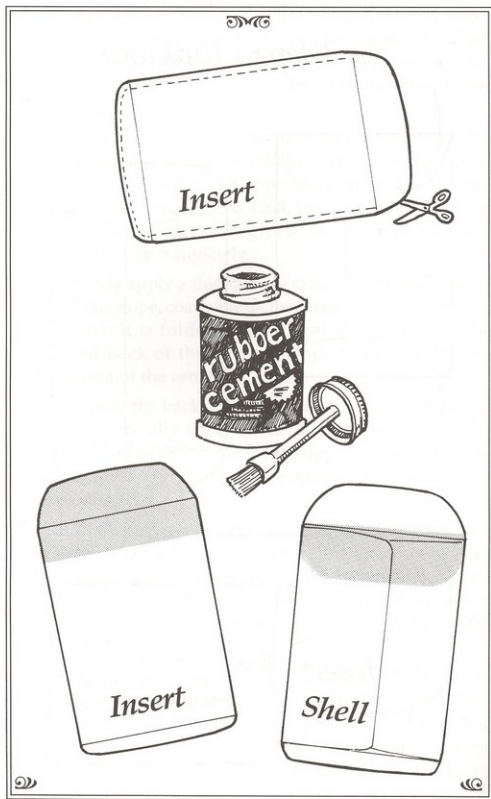
- 4) Trim three-sixteenths of an inch from each of the long edges of the insert, so that it fits closely into the second envelope. Also trim down the bottom flap of the insert, so that later it will be completely covered by the untrimmed flap of the second envelope.
- 5) Coat the entire top flap of the insert and an area roughly half an inch long below the fold line with a good grade of rubber cement. When you apply the cement, use the cut-off back of the envelope to mask the lower portion of the insert, so that the edge of the glued area is perfectly straight. Let the glue dry completely.
- 6) Next, neatly apply a thin layer of cement to the back of the second envelope, coating only that area covered by the top flap when it is folded down. Again, you can use the removed back of the first envelope to help guide the application of the cement.
- 7) Finally, bow the back (seam) side of the second envelope open and carefully apply a line of cement—about three-eighths of an inch—to its inside upper edge. While the cement dries, prop the envelope open with a toothpick or match stick.
- 8) After all cement-coated areas have thoroughly dried, you can assemble the Teleport Envelope. As you do this, take care not to let the cement-covered portions touch each other. I recommend that you place a piece of paper inside the second envelope to prevent unwanted contact during the assembly.

Slip the insert inside the second envelope until the folds of the flaps are perfectly aligned. Then coat the trimmed bottom flap of the insert with normal glue and fold it up and over, onto the back of the envelope. Do the same with the bottom flap of the envelope, thus entirely concealing the smaller flap.

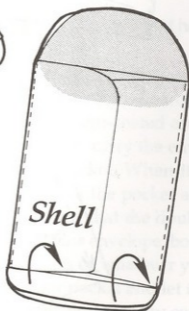
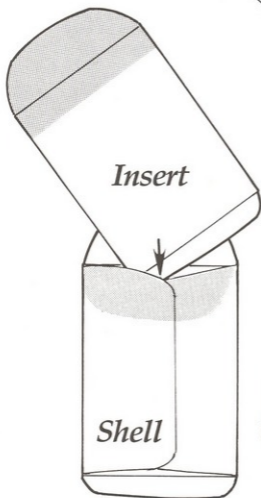
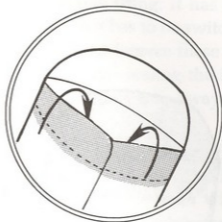


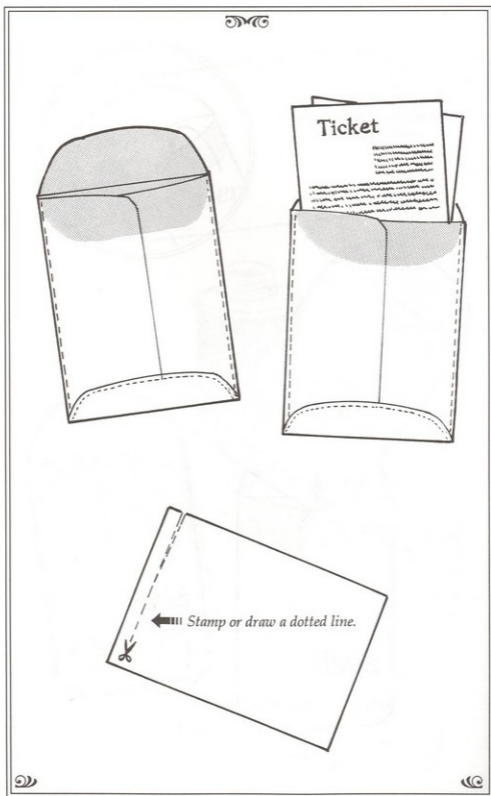
The Teleport Envelope





The inside of the shell for three-eighths of an inch is also coated with cement!





The result is a normal looking self-sealing envelope—normal in appearance except for one thing: it has two superimposed top flaps. The object that has to be switched or that is destined to appear is inserted *between* these two flaps. You then glue the flaps together—sealing the item into its secret compartment—and carefully trim away any overlap that may result at the edges.

- 9) One last thing: Draw a dotted line on the front of the prepared envelope, positioned about an eighth of an inch below the top edge. This indicates to the spectator where he should cut to open the envelope. I've had rubber stamps made for the most common sized envelopes. These have the dotted line and also show a tiny pair of scissors. This gives the envelope a professional appearance.

I recommend that, to save time and trouble, you make up a number of Teleport Envelopes at one sitting.

At this point I suspect the reader will fully understand how this envelope works in performance:

Once the envelope has been constructed, you place some paper item—*theater tickets, an invoice, an airline boarding pass, a note, etc.*—inside it to keep the cement-coated areas from coming together prematurely. You then carry the envelope in the inner breast pocket of your jacket. When it is needed in performance, simply take it from the pocket and hold it with the back of the envelope up, so that the double wall can't be noticed. Press on the sides of the envelope, bowing it open, and casually remove the tickets or whatever you have placed inside. Put them back in your pocket and let the assisting spectator clearly see that the envelope is now completely empty. Then hand it to him and let him seal it. In all innocence, he has just done the compartment switch himself!

When the time comes to have the envelope opened, give the spectator a pair of scissors and ask him to cut the envelope

open along the dotted line. This action securely seals the first compartment while simultaneously opening the second (secret) compartment.

Recently I have been able to eliminate the need for placing something in the envelope to prevent the cement-coated surfaces from making premature contact. Once the cement is dry I carefully dust it with talcum powder, taking care to remove any excess powder. As with the classic "Clippo" effect, the powder stops the surfaces from adhering until they are cut through with scissors. Applying the powder is a bit more work, but I find it worth the effort.

One final note: The scissors you hand the spectator should be short, with blunt ends. This avoids the possibility of your helper using them as a letter opener to slit the flap open rather than snip off the end.

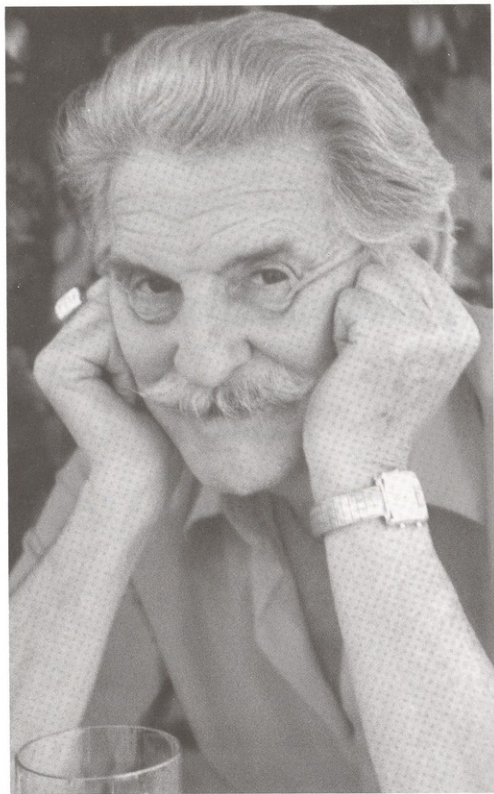


Chapter Seven



Brainbusters





...and friends

Billy McComb

SOMETIME IN 1971, Supreme Magic published a book by this extraordinary artist, *McCombical Magic*. For a magical entertainer this book is an absolute *must!* The routines Billy describes there are without exception professional, and I was more than inspired by them.

Years ago, Dany Ray sold me a Humber ring, and I found the first logical handling for this prop in Billy's book. Because I didn't wish to copy Billy, I changed his linking finger-ring routine to fit my requirements, and it became *the* signature piece of my repertoire, partly because I was the first magician to present it in Germany, partly because of Billy's excellent thinking.

Later I came to know and value Billy personally during the Vienna F.I.S.M. convention. He is a living lexicon in the field of magic and knows (almost) everything that has to do with tricks and their methods. He freely gives this information to anyone who is interested.

He is called "Uncle Billy" by his magical friends and admirers. I consider myself fortunate to be able to call him my friend, who is always at the disposal of colleagues, or me, when we need him. In today's times that is quite unusual. *Thanks for everything, "Uncle Billy"!*



News Time

~~~~~IN MENTAL programs it is often necessary to be able to perform extraordinary effects with unprepared objects that you borrow from spectators. Wrist watches are well suited for the purpose. Many years ago, a watchmaker made me a gimmicked wrist watch fashioned after Hember's Ducatillon Mental Watch<sup>1</sup>, which I used for many presentations for the press, and later as a feature effect on a television broadcast from the famous Olympia Music Hall in Paris. This watch made it possible for me to divine or predict a seemingly random time set by a spectator on my watch.

Then I read John D. Pomeroy's "A Matter of Time" in his 1973 book *Mentology*.<sup>2</sup> In this trick Mr. Pomeroy explained

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<sup>1</sup>This is described in *Richard Hember: The Man and His Magic* (1980), pp. 37-38.

<sup>2</sup>Pp. 37-38.

how a special type of watch crown could be of great use to a mentalist.<sup>3</sup> On learning this secret I immediately sold my Himber-style watch. At the time Mr. Pomeroy released his excellent idea, the special crown required was available, but not widely used in wrist watches. Since that time the desired type of crown has become quite common, making it possible for me to present my routine with *unprepared* wrist watches, even watches I can borrow!

### EFFECT

The mentalist borrows a wrist watch and invites a spectator to come on stage. The crown of the watch is pulled out and the watch is set in front of the spectator's eyes. The spectator herself then holds the watch face down and turns the crown as much as she wishes, rotating the hands to a completely random time—one that is unknown to everyone, herself included.

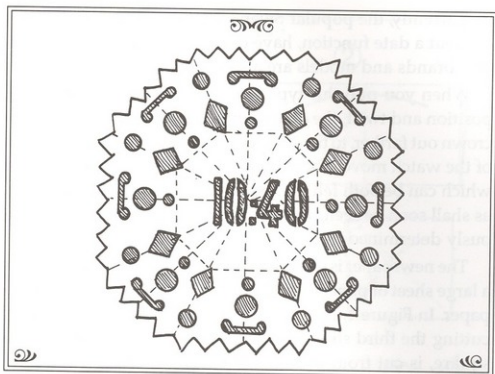
Once the spectator has executed this simple task, the performer tears a design from a folded sheet of newspaper. This accomplished, he instructs the spectator to push in the crown of the watch, locking the hands at their new positions. She is then told to turn the watch face up and announce, loudly and clearly, the random time she has set.

The performer unfolds the sheet of newspaper and the audience sees that he has torn out a design resembling an ornate doily pattern—and to everyone's amazement, in the center of this newspaper brocade appears a clock face *showing the time just announced by the spectator!*

Mental experiments with small props performed for large audiences are always problematic. For this reason I always

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<sup>3</sup>Bev Bergeron, in his 1989 monograph, *Predicting Time*, reports that he made the same discovery of the double-setting crowns in certain watches in 1969. It would be worth the while of the serious performer to locate a copy of this work (released by Exclusive Magical Publications), as it contains many fresh ideas using the principle.



look for some way to make the climax of every trick visible to everyone, even in the largest theaters. The paper tearing stunt (an original idea of Keith Clark's<sup>4</sup>) I've adopted here is *one* solution to the problem of visibility, one with a touch of charm that delights your spectators at the same time you astonish them.

#### PREPARATION

During the performance I have plenty of time to look at wrist watches. In this time, I almost always find a watch with the special characteristic I need to perform this trick. What I need is any wrist watch with a date function and, therefore, a crown with two positions: one for time, the other for date.

<sup>4</sup>See "The March of Time" in *The Jinx*, No. 20, May 1936, pp. 116 and 114. Annemann includes a note that in 1931 Mr. Clark copyrighted this effect in Vienna, Austria. His original presentation was to fold a sheet of paper and tear it behind his back, creating a clock face that showed the current time less two minutes, which he explained was due to the fact that he started tearing the paper two minutes earlier!

Currently, the popular Swatch-brand watches, even those without a date function, have this type of crown. Other suitable brands and models are also widely available.

When you pull this type of crown out to the first setting position and twist, the date changes. Only when you pull the crown out farther, to the second setting position will the hands of the watch move. There is a definite click at both positions, which can be both felt and heard. This type of watch crown, as shall soon be seen, permits the performer to force a previously determined time.

The newspaper is, of course, also prepared. You must make a large sheet of paper from three double-page sheets of newspaper. In Figure 1, A and B are two full sheets. C is made by cutting the third sheet in half widthwise, and D, which is a square, is cut from the remaining piece. The shaded lines show the areas where glue is applied to make the four pieces one large sheet.

Fold this big sheet in half widthwise, as shown in Figure 2, then in half lengthwise (along the dotted line), forming a square, as in Figure 3. Make sure your creases are sharp.

Fold the square along one diagonal, as indicated in Figure 3, then once more, as show by the dotted line in Figure 4.

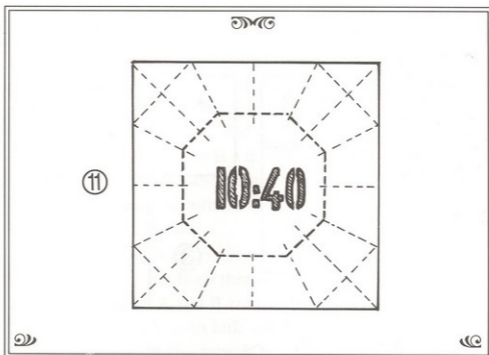
This results in forming a triangle of paper, like the one shown in Figure 5. Flip this over and you will see the shape shown in Figure 6.

Now turn the triangle ninety degrees clockwise and fold the top point down, making the crease even with the left point of the triangle, as in Figure 7.

Then fold the bottom point up, just where the folded down point has come to rest, as indicated by the dotted line in Figure 8. The result is shown in Figure 9.

Now undo these last two folds, as shown in Figure 10.





If you now unfold the sheet the rest of the way, you will see a pattern of creases like that shown in Figure 11. Notice that the creases formed from the final fold, indicated by the heavy dotted line in Figures 10 and 11, border the central area where you will cut or tear out your clock face.

Using light pencil lines, draw a watch face with hands, or a digital readout like 10:40, in the center of this jumbo newspaper sheet. Naturally, the time shown is the one you will force. Then, with a pair of scissors, cut out your simple watch face, or use a pin to make perforations for you to tear neatly along. In fashioning your clock face, take care to position it on the paper in such a way that the tears won't be visible when you refold the sheet into its triangular form (Figure 10)—which you do in preparation for performance.

### PERFORMANCE

The presentation of the trick is quite simple. If you spot a man in your audience wearing a watch with the feature mentioned above (as mentioned, an analog watch with a date window

is a sure sign), ask to borrow it. On your way back to the stage spot someone who looks intelligent and cooperative, and ask this person to assist you. Whenever possible, choose a woman for this task. When the two of you are back on stage, show her how to set the hands of the watch. In doing this, you pull out the crown to the second position. Show your helper how to rotate the hands and make sure she understands the operation. While you are talking to her about this, boldly set the time to be forced and push the crown all the way in; that is, so that neither setting position is engaged.

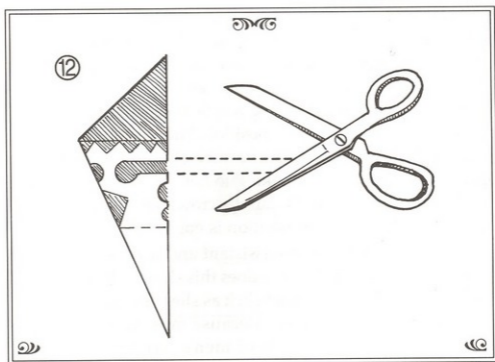
Hand the watch to your assistant and ask her to pull the crown out *carefully*. When she does this she will feel a definite resistance and hear a distinct click as she pulls the crown out to the first setting position. Because most women are not familiar with the operation of men's wrist watches, and because you have cautioned her to be careful with this borrowed watch, she will not try to pull the crown out further—and that is exactly what you want. When she turns the watch face down, she can rotate the crown as long as she wishes. She will change only the date. However, she will not be able to change the time you have set.

*Important:* If you borrow a Swatch brand wrist watch for this test, use a male assistant on stage. Swatch watches are most often worn by women, who will therefore be familiar with their crown settings.

As soon as the lady has finished "setting the time", have her firmly push the crown all the way in, against the case of the watch, so that she knows the hands are locked in place.

With the time locked in, you now pick up your folded piece of newspaper and begin tearing or snipping away at it, something along the lines suggested in Figure 12. So long as your decorative cuts remain above the lower crease, all will be fine. (You could lightly trace the design you plan to tear in pencil, but with just a bit of practice, this shouldn't be necessary.)





Make your tears or cuts swiftly as you converse entertainingly with your helper. When you have finished your alterations to the paper, ask the spectator to turn the watch face up and clearly announce the random time she has set. Pause a moment, for effect, then unfold the newspaper to reveal the pretty pattern you have made, with the correct time boldly displayed in the center!

But what should you do if you do not find a spectator with the right sort of watch? Quite simple. Have one of your own in your pocket. Then borrow one similar in appearance from someone in the audience, and while you accompany your lady assistant to the stage, switch the watches.

### NOTES AND TIPS

I have a watch in my collection that is equipped with both numbers and astrological symbols on its face. This feature has made this watch extremely valuable in my close-up work. Imagine the effect when a spectator finds that she, or another

person at the table, has somehow unwittingly stopped the hands of the watch on her own astrological sign!

Many magicians and mentalists have explored the watch principle described here, and as a consequence have developed some wonderful routines. Now that you know the secret, you will also be able to develop other trick combinations, which will provide you with some sensational results in your professional work. However, this is only possible if you perform and present the effect correctly.

When you borrow a watch for a mental routine, *never* forget to reset the watch to the correct time and date, *before* you return it to the spectator! This is not just covering your tracks; it is also *common courtesy*. And if you have switched your own watch for a spectator's, then resetting is even more important, because the action confirms the audience's belief that you have been working with a borrowed watch. In such a case, of course, you merely pretend to reset the time on the spectator's watch.

If you feel there is a chance that your helper may not follow your instructions when pulling out the crown of the watch, you can prevent a possible mishap through the following procedure: Once you have demonstrated how the hands are turned and you have secretly set the force time, it only takes a slight pressure on the crown to move it to the first setting position (the date). Perform this tiny maneuver as you hand the watch to the lady. The handling is still completely logical and fully motivated. It is, though, absolutely necessary to the success to the illusion that she push the crown in against the case herself after she has "set" it!

# My Telephone Directory Test

~~~~~ THERE ARE book tests in endless number, but many of them have considerable disadvantages. The best experiments of this kind come from England and America, but you must carry the gimmicked books with you. Books are heavy and bulky, making them a problem if you travel alone a lot, as I do.

I am also of the opinion that one should avoid book tests in which a page is forced by rolling dice or selecting a playing card. My experience has shown that these procedures do not convince an audience. If a force is used, it must be simple and *logical*.

At the 1991 Mental Workshop I learned about Kurt Teichmann's "Telephone Directory Test", and I think highly of it. I

thought about it and developed a new version, which has always been greatly appreciated by my audiences. This trick is absolutely inexplicable to the public. I also find that magicians are puzzled at the end of the routine, thanks to the various refinements and niceties.

EFFECT

The performer asks someone from the audience to volunteer for a curious experiment. This person is requested to take a seat on stage. Next, several spectators in the audience note down three-digit numbers on a pad. The sheet with their numbers is removed from the pad and handed to the spectator on stage.

She now freely selects one telephone directory from a stack representing various cities. The performer moves well away from her and requests that she choose one of the numbers on the sheet of paper and read it out for everyone to hear. She is next asked to turn to that page in her selected directory and read the first entry to herself, after which she announces only the name of the selected person or business. Following considerable concentration, the performer correctly announces the profession, street address and phone number of the selected party!

Next, the volunteer selects a second number from the pad, which is not announced. She opens the directory to the freely selected page and selects another entry. The performer asks the spectator only to concentrate on the phone number. The performer concentrates as well, then notes something on the pad. The spectator is now asked to announce the phone number. The pad is turned around and it is seen that the performer has written down precisely the same phone number. He goes even further by announcing the name, address and profession of the selected party correctly!

This series of events have a tremendous impact on audiences, but they are topped by yet another feat: The spectator is asked to open the directory somewhere near the middle and to select any entry on that page. With a further bit of concentration, the performer announces the name and phone number of this third free selection!

The final phase of the routine can also be presented as an experiment in influence or prediction, in which a sealed envelope is proven to contain a large computer print-out of the selected name and phone number!

PREPARATION

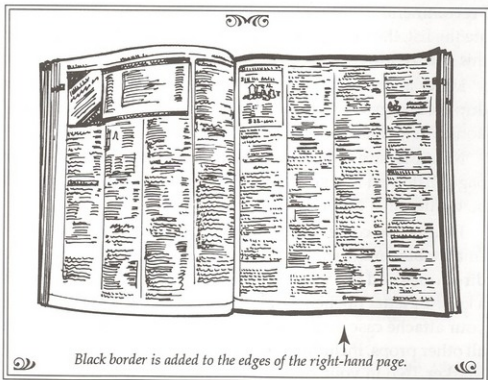
Once again, I have combined some well-known principles, to synthesize several simple effects into a presentation that far surpasses the sum of its parts. Experienced mentalists will have strong suspicions from the effect description that I use a number-switching pad to force the pages. A variety of such pads are available through magic dealers. I personally use the Working Professional's Switch Pad, which is described in Chapter Three (pp. 111-114).

Another important prop is a specially prepared telephone directory: One hundred and twenty pages are removed from the center of the directory and replaced with a ranging-force bank that consists of four pages duplicated thirty times. These force pages must each contain no more than four display ads. You will therefore need thirty copies of your city's yellow-page directory. You could purchase these from the local phone company. Or you can do what I did:

Each year, when the new directories are issued, various sites are established where people can drop off their old directories for recycling. I am unaware of any law forbidding you from helping yourself to a few of these discarded books, which you can later return after you have carefully extracted the required four pages from each. Assemble these sets in a

neat stack and take them, along with an intact current directory to a local bookbinder and have him remove the original center pages, glue in your force bank and trim the edges. The result is a directory that looks completely normal and can be used for many years. (It isn't necessary to replace the directory each year. You can simply replace the old cover with a new one.)

When your bookbinder has finished your directory, mark the first and last pages of the repeating section on the top, bottom and side edges. If you draw straight, neat, black lines, they will pass as part of the advertising layout.



In the first quarter of the prepared directory (in a large city this would mean between pages 100 and 300), look for a page with many small listings and only a few ads. There should be two to four ads, distributed around the page. Note the page number, as it will be used as a force number on the number-switching pad.

Do the same with the second quarter of the book, but make sure that this force page is at least a hundred pages short of the repeating section. One hundred pages *after* the duplicate pages (in the third quarter of the book), find your third force page; and one more in the back quarter. *Important:* Each of these four force pages must start with a *small* entry, not a display ad.

Having found your four force pages, copy down the small listing at the upper left corner of each of these pages, *and* the display ads as well, making a cue sheet for yourself. Also note the positions of the ads; e.g., UL (upper left) or LR (lower right). I recommend using a typewriter or computer printer to create the list, then reduce the typed text on a photocopier. Paste this cue list around a thick felt-tip marker. *This is Marker One.*

Make another cue list of all the display ads on the four duplicate pages of the repeating section, as well as their positions. Paste this around another marker. *This is Marker Two.*

Next prepare the number-switching pad to force the four pages listed on Marker One. Each number, of course, should be written in a different hand.

Finally, we come to the stage setting. Have a chair and a small table on the stage. A stack of three or four various city directories and the yellow pages are on the table, along with a knife or letter opener. Also have a microphone available. Set your attaché case on a second chair or table. It should contain all other props, including a sketch pad and Marker One. Place Marker Two in your right-side jacket pocket.

PERFORMANCE

PHASE ONE

Ask a spectator, preferably a bright and charming woman, to assist you on stage. Seat her at your table and ask her her name. Picking up your Working Performer's Switch Pad, jot

her initials in the lower right corner of the page, then pass the pad to someone in the first row of the audience, asking that he write down a three-digit number. When he has done that, carry the pad to someone else and have her do likewise. Repeat this with two other spectators, choosing persons widely separated from each other, so that they do not later compare notes.

Having collected four numbers, return with the pad to the spectator on stage and make the switch of pages, handing her the sheet with your force numbers.

Next, turn everyone's attention to the stack of telephone directories on your table. If you are working in a hotel, you can claim that you have borrowed these from the front desk. (Most major hotels in large cities do have various directories from the surrounding area available, so you actually can borrow them from the desk, adding your prepared one to the stack.) *Don't* mention the particular cities covered by the directories. Speak only of "telephone directories and yellow pages from various cities, borrowed from the main desk of the hotel". Comments along these lines will defuse any suspicion possibly raised by the directories.

Ask your helper to select one of the directories. Of course, you must force the prepared book on her. Whatever force you use, it must look like a free selection. A clean equivoque procedure is probably best; for example, some variety of Annemann's take-two-hand-me-one strategy.

You now walk to your attaché case, take the sketch pad and Marker One and return to the audience, leaving your helper on stage with her directory. Have her freely select one of the three-digit numbers from the sheet and read it to the group. Then instruct her to open the phone book to that page and read the phone number of the *first* entry to herself.

It takes only a glance for you to see which quarter of the book she has opened. That gives you all the information you

need for your first revelation. While you hold the pad casually under your left arm and gesture with the marker in your right hand, ask your helper to tell you only the name of the selected person or company. This is both a presentational ruse and a check to assure that she has followed your instructions correctly. You, with a credible dramatic flair, now name the profession or type of business, street address and phone number—all information you quickly glean from the marker in your hand.

PHASE TWO

"I know what you're thinking now, ladies and gentlemen! You believe that I learned the names and telephone numbers on every page in the whole book by heart. I'm flattered that you think me capable of this!"

Having openly addressed a suspicion that will have occurred to many spectators, and using it to misdirect from the real method, you proceed to deflate the theory as follows:

Addressing your assistant on stage, ask her to think of another number from those on the page from the pad, this time telling no one what it is. Have her then open the directory to that page and select "one of the many bigger ads" there. Request that she put her first finger on the ad "to focus your concentration." Since there are four or fewer large ads on the page, all in different positions, you immediately know from the quarter of the directory she has opened and the portion of the page she puts her finger on which ad she has chosen.

While this is going on, take the pad from under your arm and ask your helper to concentrate on the phone number in the ad she has selected. You concentrate as well, glimpsing the number on the marker, then write it as large as possible on the pad. You can also divine the name, address and profession from the ad. This is left to your discretion. Some performers will wish to go further, others may feel this is going too far.

PHASE THREE

The freedom with which you have let the spectator handle the telephone directory will convince even knowledgeable mentalists that it is beyond suspicion. It would, however, be a big mistake to emphasize this fact. Instead, let the fact that you borrowed the books from the hotel desk, and the freedom of handling the spectator is granted speak for the innocence of the directory.

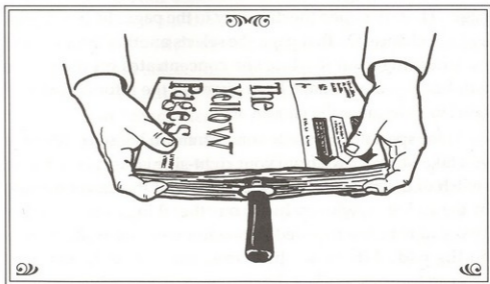
At the conclusion of Phase Two ask the volunteer to close the directory. Then have her take the knife or the letter opener and request that she "slip it *into the middle* of the book somewhere." The phrase *into the middle* is most important, since it psychologically guides the spectator to introduce the knife into the prepared center section. Meanwhile, you casually place the marker you hold into your right-front trousers pocket, and replace the pad under your left arm.

You can check the accuracy of the insertion your helper has made by spotting the black lines on the outer edges of the pages. Have her open the directory to the page she has chosen by pure chance. On that page she selects another large ad and puts her finger on it while she concentrates on the phone number. Again you have been given all the information you need to determine the chosen ad.

As the spectator begins to concentrate on her selected entry, you take Marker Two from your right-side jacket pocket. This switch of the markers may seem bold, but it is never noticed by the audience, who are intent on other things. From Marker Two you read the required phone number and write it large on the pad. After revealing your success with this, you proceed to get as much of the chosen name and address as you deem believable.

NOTES AND TIPS

If you are fresh to the field of mental magic, you may be concerned that the spectator may insert the knife somewhere other than the prepared center section of the directory. If your instructions and wording are clear, and if you are in control of your performance, there will be no trouble, I assure you. However, while gaining confidence and experience, you may wish to assert tighter control over the spectator's actions. You can do so by grasping the directory by its top and bottom, holding it horizontally, with your forefingers laid along the front edge. Then ask the spectator to slip the knife somewhere into the middle. You can casually say something along the lines of "Would you please slip the point of the knife into the middle of the directory. The middle is approximately where my fingers are." Given this kind of guidance, only a deliberately troublesome person could do other than you wish. After all, she is the center of attention, she has probably never been on stage before and she *wants* to do everything correctly.



If the reader desires to present the third phase as an experiment in psychological persuasion or as a prediction, proceed as follows:

The information from each display ad is written on a large sheet of paper, or even better is printed with a computer. These sheets are folded and each one is put into its own envelope, which is sealed (perhaps using decorative, red stickers). Then the envelopes are marked in one corner for secret identification. You must next construct an index for these prediction envelopes. Make it from card stock and place it in the bottom of your attaché case. It is important that you can recognize with a single glance the location of the desired envelope. I've organized my index in this manner: On the left side I have all envelopes that read UPPER LEFT, MIDDLE LEFT, LOWER LEFT; on the right side are UPPER RIGHT, MIDDLE RIGHT and LOWER RIGHT; and the middle of the index contains UPPER CENTER, CENTER and LOWER CENTER.

When you pass by your helper, to put the pad and pen back in your attaché case, you can see where she is pointing on the page. You then remove the respective envelope from the index. I will leave each performer to decide how the prediction is dramatized. However, whatever presentation you choose, the audience must never suspect there is more than one envelope in the attaché case.

I wish to mention that the idea of using a switch pad to force pages in a telephone directory, the positions of which provide visible cues, is the exceptionally cunning idea of Peter Warlock, who published it in his trick "Telephonic".⁵

The methodology for this routine is reasonably simple, but to reap the highest reward from it the effect demands a great deal of showmanship and attention to presentation. Do give it your very best effort.

⁵See *The New Pentagram*, Vol. 4, No. 7, Sept. 1972, p. 53-54.

Mind Over Meniscus

IT WAS about fifteen years ago that Billy McComb, during a visit to my home, recommended J.M. Hartz's "Hydrostatic Glass" trick to me. Soon after, I ordered one from Supreme Magic in England and put it into my cabaret act, using a routining based on that of my friend, Alan Shaxon. The effect registered well enough with my audiences, but I didn't care for two aspects of the trick: First, I didn't like the appearance of the plastic tumbler supplied. It looked cheap, and it is my practice to use props of obvious quality in all my performances. Second, the method required that you constantly keep your finger over the secret air hole in the glass, which greatly restricted the freedom of handling.

The first problem was the easiest to solve. It is certainly more difficult to drill a small hole in a glass tumbler than in a plastic one, but a skillful craftsman can do it.

As for the second problem, it occurred to me that one could use a small glass disk coated with a film of Vaseline to cover the hole, as is done with the Demuth Milk Bottle. This would allow a far more natural handling of the glass.

I found a craftsman to drill the necessary hole and fashion a Plexiglas disk to fit the mouth of the glass. The result was a prop that was superior to the magic shop variety, but—if I wished to use this effect as a mental feat, I had to be able to perform it with the glass *in a spectator's hands*.

The final piece fell into place when my partner Bernd brought home some rhinestones he planned to use on costumes. It occurred to me that one of these small glass ornaments would look like an elegant ornamentation on a quality wine glass. Taking a beautiful, hand-blown, Bordeaux-style wine glass to my craftsman, I had him drill a small hole near the stem and fashion a Plexiglas disk to fit the glass. The rest of the story I shall save for a few minutes. First, let me describe the end result I was able to achieve.

EFFECT

The performer fills a large stemmed wine glass with red wine, then covers the mouth with a square of wet newspaper. Next, in the manner of an elementary science experiment, he inverts the glass and displays how the wine is held captive inside by the piece of newspaper.

A spectator is invited on stage to participate in a more unusual experiment. He is handed the inverted glass and asked to hold it over a clear champagne pail, which sits on the performer's table. The performer explains that he will remove the newspaper while he attempts to support the wine in the glass through sheer force of will.

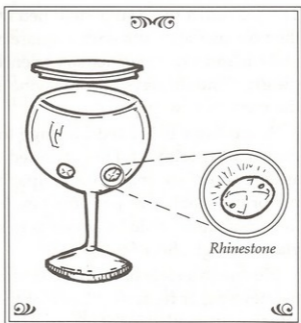
He enters a state of deep concentration, then slowly peels the newspaper from the mouth of the glass and—the liquid remains suspended in the inverted bowl! After a few moments

of strong mental exertion, he indicates a woman in the audience and tells her to call out, "Now!" sometime during the next ten seconds. She does and at that instant the performer visibly relaxes and the wine comes spilling from the glass, still held by the spectator, into the clear pail below!

PREPARATION

You will need a hand-blown crystal wine glass. I recommend that you use a large glass, for maximum visibility. Mine measures approximately eight inches tall by three inches in diameter. This is prepared with a hole drilled near the stem as previously mentioned. The hole should be approximately three-thirty-seconds of an inch in diameter, and the surface of the bowl surrounding it must be ground flat for about an inch. This ground area will tend to be more oval than round. You must then make a Plexiglas disk that is custom fitted to the bowl. All this will take careful craftsmanship, but the final result is worth the cost and effort.

Next you must go to a sewing supply or costumer and find four glass rhinestones, either clear or colored, measuring about three-quarters of an inch. Choose these to suit the style of your glass. With one of the various "super" glues, fix three of the rhinestones permanently to the bowl of the glass, equidistant from the hole and each other. The hole will be covered by the fourth rhinestone, completing a regular pattern on the glass.



Before placing the fourth rhinestone over the hole, you must first attach the end of a length of "invisible" thread to it, using a sewing needle to pass the thread through one of the holes in the rhinestone and knotting it. The length of the thread should be between two and three feet. The precise length must be determined by experimentation. The type of thread used will depend on the particular performance conditions and lighting. More on this later.

Apply a thin film of Vaseline to the ground area around the hole in the glass, taking care not to get the jelly into the hole itself. You don't want this hole accidentally blocked when the rhinestone is moved aside. Apply a similar film of Vaseline to the flat underside of the threaded rhinestone. Then set it over the hole. The Vaseline layers should hold the stone securely in place, forming a watertight seal. The other end of the thread is attached with a dab of magician's wax to a piece of newspaper about five inches square.

Besides the prepared glass and disk, you need a clear plastic champagne pail, a carafe of red-tinted water (your "wine"), a nice looking tray on which the various props for the trick can be carried, a small towel, and two five-inch squares of newspaper, one of which, as mentioned, has the thread attached to it.

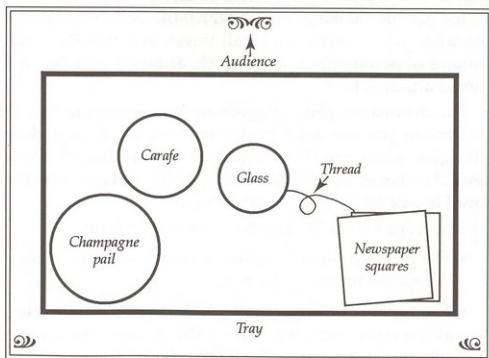
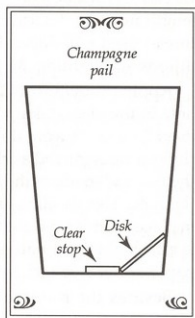
The champagne pail contains some minor preparation. To its bottom you cement a couple of small squares of clear Plexiglas, which are about a quarter of an inch thick. Pour several inches of water in the bottom of the pail and have the towel handy on the table behind the tray.

The props are set in these positions on the tray:

- ◆ The glass sits mouth up in the center, with the sliding rhinestone turned to the right.
- ◆ The square of newspaper with the thread attached lies at the right rear corner. Over this you set the second square of newspaper. The thread should be arranged to

travel leftward, unobstructed, toward the glass. I recommend that you coil it carefully on the tray so that it cannot tangle or catch.

- ◆ The carafe of water sits to the left of the glass.
- ◆ The champagne pail rests at the left rear corner of the tray. It can also sit on the table just behind the tray. Inside the pail you set the disk gimmick, propping it against the side of the pail at the rear, so that it can be easily picked up. The small squares of Plexiglas cemented to the bottom of the pail stop the disk from sliding flat onto the bottom, and the water in the pail makes the disk and little stops virtually invisible.



PERFORMANCE

Start by picking up the carafe and filling the wine glass approximately three-quarters full. Set the carafe off to the side where it is out of the way. Next take the top square of newspaper and wet it in the champagne pail. As you do this, secretly pick up the disk gimmick, clipping it flat against the underside of the newspaper square. Immediately place the disk and newspaper cleanly over the mouth of the glass, fitting the gimmick into place without hesitation or fumbling.

Place the flat of your right hand over the newspaper and mouth of the glass; and, with your left hand turned thumb down and palm outward, grip the stem near the bowl. Now invert the glass, turning the bowl straight forward, then down, while keeping the sliding rhinestone directed to the right and the thread relaxed. At the same time, carry the glass over the champagne pail. As you hold the glass about a foot above the mouth of the pail, slowly and somewhat gingerly remove your right hand from the mouth of the glass. The newspaper and wine remain suspended, as any school child would expect. This simple feat of science should gather you a modest first round of applause.

Now point to a spectator in the front row and ask him to join you on stage. Request that he stand on your left and have him grasp the inverted glass by its stem near the foot. When he has a firm grip, slowly and cautiously remove your left hand from the glass, leaving him holding it.

Explain that you will now endeavor to exceed the bounds of known science. You will remove the newspaper from the mouth of the glass while you attempt to support the wine inside by sheer power of thought. Caution your helper to hold the glass securely and very still. Then, with your right hand, reach under the glass, nip one corner of the newspaper piece between forefinger and thumb, and very slowly peel it away, leaving the liquid apparently suspended in the glass.

Quickly wad up the piece of newspaper and drop it onto the other newspaper square on the tray. Pause a moment, while the audience takes in the unnatural state of gravity confronting them and awards you a second, much harder round of applause. Dab your fingers dry on the towel and casually pick up both pieces of newspaper together, crumpling the dry one around the wet wad. Then push them into your left vest or trousers pocket. You are now hooked up to the sliding rhinestone on the glass.

At this point you are still standing directly behind the table, so that the thread runs straight back from the glass to your body. Given this arrangement, even if the thread weren't of the invisible kind, it would be next to impossible to spot from the audience.

You needn't worry about the spectator moving the glass much. Thanks to the precarious appearance of the situation, he will wish to hold the glass very still over the champagne pail, in case of an accident.

Look out into the audience and indicate a woman toward your right. As you point to her, step slightly to the right, positioning yourself to take up all but an inch or two of the slack in the thread. Practice is necessary here to learn the exact position required to tighten the thread without dislodging the rhinestone from its place.

Ask the woman to call out, "Now!" whenever she likes, but without too great an interval, as you don't believe you can continue your mental exertions much longer. You may wish to exercise tighter control over the timing by having her call out whenever she wishes as you count aloud to ten. When she says, "Now!" you physically relax, making a very small body turn to the right. This slides the rhinestone away from the hole and releases the water from the glass.

Important: You wish to move the rhinestone enough to uncover the hole, but not enough to pull it from the glass.

The water falls into the pail and the disk gimmick goes undetectably with it. The water already in the pail cushions the fall of the gimmick, so that it makes no appreciable noise as it hits—and once in the water it becomes invisible as it drifts to the bottom.

Take the wine glass from the spectator and accept your third round of applause which, I assure you, will be loud and long. As you send the spectator back to his seat, you can casually remove the newspaper wad from your pocket and set it on the tray with the glass.

NOTES AND TIPS

The tray is not absolutely necessary if you are working on stage, though it does make clearing the table much easier, and it catches any drips and splashes. For cabaret and club use, though, I recommend the tray, as its raised edge can aid in obscuring the bottom of the champagne pail, and thus the gimmick when it resides there.

Pulling the rhinestone just enough to uncover the hole may sound like a very delicate procedure. It does take some practice, but the knack is not difficult to acquire. I suggest that you first rehearse with a length of common sewing thread until you learn the necessary movements. Then switch to invisible thread for further practice.

The best type of thread to use, as already mentioned, will be determined by the stage conditions and lighting. I use several types, from the very fine close-up style thread required for floating cork and bill effects to the thicker dancing-cane thread. You may also wish to experiment with invisible elastic thread, which gives you a little more freedom of motion. The techniques of invisible thread use are beyond the scope of this work, but the thread and good instructional texts can be had at any well-equipped magic shop.

I must tell you that, when I finally achieved a practical, working version of this effect, I couldn't wait to demonstrate it for the man who first started me thinking about the trick. When I finally had a chance to show it to Billy, I'm delighted to say I got the very look of astonishment that I had hoped for. I wish you the same fulfilling reaction during your shows.



*ME WITH TV STAR RITA WERNER
MESSESHOW, BUDERUS 1990*

Guiding Star

FOR A long time I've been looking for a surefire method to tell a spectator's astrological sign. The following routine is the answer I sought. The spectators are always baffled by it, and even more importantly, they are *entertained*. In addition, it is suitable for table-hopping as well as more stationary venues.

EFFECT

The performer displays an elegant pillbox and opens it. Inside this container a folded slip of paper can be clearly seen. The box is closed again and handed to someone. The performer then deals twelve cards face up on the table, each bearing a sign of the zodiac. He asks the person with the box to set it on her personal astrological sign.

Smiling, the performer takes up the pillbox, opens it and dumps out the slip. When the spectator unfolds it, she

discovers that the slip contains a brief astrological characterization of her sign! By the way, the slip also has the mentalist's name, address and telephone number on it.

PREPARATION

If you browse department stores, gift shops and import stores, you can find pillboxes and decorated containers of all shapes, sizes and designs. After a brief search I found an oval box with a handsome scarab on the lid. This suited my tastes perfectly, but the design is not important. What is important is that the box should be attractive and elegant in appearance, and that a three-and-a-half by five-and-a-half inch slip of paper, folded several times, fits comfortably inside, with enough room to move around a bit, when the box is shaken.

The slip of paper is a "dummy", which has been fastened loosely at the bottom of the box with a short length of thread. This dummy should be able to move around a bit in the box, but it mustn't fall out when you turn the box over.

Next you need to prepare twelve slips of paper that match the dummy, each containing a brief personality reading based on elementary sun-sign descriptions of the twelve astrological types. Such descriptions can be found in any beginning astrology text. And if you are wise, you will have your name, business address and phone printed on these slips. You can do a nice job of printing these on a laser printer. I recommend that you make up at least a dozen copies of each slip at a time.

The last item is a billet index, made from flexible card stock, which contains the twelve different horoscope slips. I use an index modeled on Annemann's.⁵ The index is loaded with the horoscope slips in alphabetical order and is carried in your left-side jacket pocket.

Place the pillbox in your right-front trousers pocket, or in the right-side jacket pocket if you perform while seated. You

⁵See *Annemann's Practical Mental Effects*, pp. 78-80.

will also need twelve cards with the signs of the zodiac printed on them. Not many years ago, nicely printed decks of such cards were available through magic shops. However, you can make up a set with reasonable ease by drawing the signs on blank card stock, or by neatly gluing signs cut from an astrology book onto the cards.

PERFORMANCE

First, deal out the twelve zodiac cards in a face-up circle and ask someone to concentrate on her sign. Next bring the pill-box from your pocket, open it and exhibit the slip of paper inside. Since the slip is loosely mounted in the box, its slight natural motion as you move the box makes everything look as it should.⁶

You then replace the lid on the box and hand it to the spectator, asking her to set it on the card with her astrological sign. As she does this, you should have enough time to extract the corresponding slip from the billet index and finger palm it in your left hand.

With your right hand, pick up the box and transfer it to your left hand. In the same action, casually remove the lid and set it on the table. Let the dummy slip be seen once more in the box. Then invert the box either over your right hand or the table, and release the palmed slip. The illusion of the slip dropping from the box is perfect, or should be with a bit of practice. Hand the slip to the spectator and let her read it. She will be baffled when she sees that you have apparently anticipated her sign before the two of you even met!

NOTES AND TIPS

It is possible to begin the effect by openly placing the slip of paper into the box. The presentation then changes from one

⁶This clever loose connection embellishment is an idea of Scotty York's, first published in his *Decennial Prelection* lecture notes, pp. 8-9.

of prediction to one of telepathy: You first ask someone to concentrate on her astrological sign while you attempt to pick up her thought. You then remove a dummy billet from your wallet and place it into the box.

Before the show, you have put a tiny dab of magician's wax in the bottom of the box. In performance you casually drop the dummy billet into the box. Then, as you give the spectator one last view of the slip in the box, tip it mouth toward the audience and, naturally, insert the tip of your second finger inside to prevent the slip from falling out. In this action secretly press the slip firmly to the bottom of the box, causing it to adhere there. The performance now continues as previously described. The indexed slips, in this case, should be hand-written, of course.

If you happen to be working at a table covered with my Mentalist's Tablecloth (pp. 132-134), instead of using zodiac cards you can simply have the spectator set the box on the sign embroidered on the cloth.

Pay Blaze

~~~~~ TO THE best of my knowledge it was Craig Karges who first suggested doing Tom Sellers' Just Chance plot with the performer's pay check.<sup>7</sup> His idea was excellent, as it took an effect that most often leaves the audience feeling as if they have lost something valuable in a game that was rigged, and turned it into a struggle for the performer, in which he must try under difficult circumstances to retain something that is rightfully his.

In my interpretation of the plot I've added the visually dramatic element of fire, capitalizing on an idea borrowed from Maurice Fogel's "Fantasy in Flames"<sup>8</sup> while avoiding its major pitfall: During performance, I have an envelope with

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<sup>7</sup>*Magick*, No. 265, pp. 1322 and 1324; also *The Craig Karges Connection* (1986), pp. 17.

<sup>8</sup>Originally marketed by Corinda's Magic Studio.

my fee for the show mixed with four identical envelopes. Then four of the five envelopes are irretrievably burnt. No one could seriously believe that anybody would incinerate four times his fee in cash just to make an impression!

When I perform "Pay Blaze", it is either as the penultimate piece in my act, or as an encore item. As such, it always proves a highly entertaining and distinctly memorable feat.

### EFFECT

The performer's fee for the performance is sealed by a spectator into an opaque envelope, then mixed by the helper with four identical envelopes that contain pieces of newspaper. The spectator points to someone in the audience, who is asked to designate one of the five envelopes while the performer attempts to guide her psychically in her choice. When the envelope has been chosen, the spectator sets it aside, in clear view of everyone.

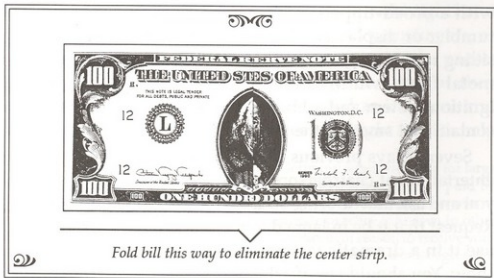
He next drops the remaining four envelopes, one by one, into a large bowl of fire, where they are immediately consumed in flame. If the spectator in the audience has made an error, the performer is out a considerable sum of money. It is, then, with great relief that he finds, on the spectator's opening the one remaining envelope, that his stack of bills is inside!

Aside from the sheer entertainment that is reaped from this effect, astute spectators will be impressed by the fact that the performer, from start to finish, never handles the envelopes.

### PREPARATION

You will require five heavy envelopes that are completely opaque. I use bright yellow security envelopes with dark blue linings—yellow because it is the most visible color from platform and stage. These envelopes should be of the self-sealing variety.

You will also need ten stage bills and ten to fifteen flash bills for each performance. The stage bills must be the best replicas you can legally obtain; good enough to pass visually for the genuine article at a glance. I now must make a dark confession. I make color photocopies of real bills for this trick—but the reader undoubtedly knows that the Treasury Department takes a very dim view of such practices, and I certainly don't suggest you run off unaltered photocopies of currency. Indeed, making such copies falls under the heading of counterfeiting, and is a serious crime. However, it is my understanding that one can make certain alterations in duplications of currency that will keep one on the right side of the law. First, copy only one side of the bill, leaving the opposite side blank. Second, when you make your copies, remove a quarter inch strip from the center width of the original bill. You can do this without destroying the bill by making a simple trough-like fold in it, as shown in the illustration. Removing this center section from the photocopies makes them obviously bogus, should you ever find yourself explaining your forgeries to an intrigued Treasury agent. Yet, if these bills are folded in half, as they are during your performances, the missing section is not obvious. The entire



idea here is to serve the purpose of entertainment without taunting the federal government. Indeed, it may prove more difficult to explain your wholly innocent purposes to the photocopy shop staff, who generally, and wisely enough, will want no part of such business. You will have to find a color photocopier in a quiet corner where you can make your stage bills unobserved.

Flash bills, on the other hand, seem to come and go in the magic market. During times when I cannot obtain them, I cut regular flash paper into bill-sized pieces and decorate them with colored pencil to resemble currency. The likeness wasn't terribly good, but then these hand-drawn flash bills are barely seen, if they are seen at all, by the audience.

To prepare for performance, place two or three flash bills between two of the stage bills (trimming the lengths if necessary, so that they match), then fold the stack in half along its width and seal it in one of the envelopes. Similarly stuff three more envelopes. Place a fifth folded stack of stage money and flash bills in your left-front trousers pocket; and the fifth envelope, unsealed and empty, in the inner left breast pocket of your jacket.

Have the four sealed envelopes lying on your table, along with a broad-tipped marker, a letter opener and a glass tumbler or display easel. On another small table or stand, sitting roughly eight to ten feet to the right, you have a large metal fire bowl. My bowl contains a remote-controlled ignition system and a hinged metal lid that can be used to contain and smother the flames.

Several days previous to the show, you must contact the entertainment chairperson or company manager who hired you and ask that he bring your fee in cash to the performance. Request that it be in large denomination bills, as you plan to use it in a dramatic test you've prepared specially for the show. You should specify the bills you require, so that their

number is reasonably close to that of the stacks of false bills sealed in the envelopes.

### PERFORMANCE

Tell the audience that you have requested a special favor from the person who booked you for this performance: You have asked that he bring your fee for the show to the theater in cash. Ask the booker to stand in the audience, so that you can identify him. Make your way up the aisle to him and thank him for his cooperation as you receive the stack of bills.<sup>9</sup> The exact amount is left discreetly vague, but you make it clear to the audience that it is a substantial sum in the form of several large bills. Fold the bills in half, so that they match the appearance of the packets of false bills.

On your way back to the stage, grip the bills in your right hand, holding them above your head, so that they are always visible to the crowd. At the same time, casually place your left hand into your trousers pocket and palm the folded packet of fake bills. When you reach the front row, indicate someone seated there, on your right, and ask if he can assist you with a test of unusual importance. As you make this request, pretend to transfer the folded bills from your right hand to your left. Actually, nothing changes. You simply turn the right hand palm down, concealing the real bills behind your fingers, as you turn the left hand palm up below it, bringing the packet of fakes into view. You do not look at your hands as they execute this switch. The action is treated as innocent and incidental, its motivation being to free your right hand to help

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<sup>9</sup>This trick has a wonderful side-benefit. In Germany, when working for large companies, it is the rule rather than the exception, when you are paid by check, that the company's bookkeeping department will take three weeks or more to issue and post it. Perhaps this corporate practice is known in other countries as well. With this effect you have an excellent reason to receive your fee at the performance, thus expediting business matters in a most agreeable fashion.

the spectator from his seat. You do not carry through with the action, of course, but its intention is clear. This switch is bold and admittedly inelegant, but it is nonetheless deceptive for all that, and it is well-covered when you are in the audience, as the majority of spectators can't see below your waist, where the switch takes place.

Hold your left hand with the fake packet over your head as you step back on stage with the spectator. Once there, reach into your left inner breast pocket and leave the palmed packet of bills behind as you bring out the empty envelope. Hand this to the spectator and ask that he hold it open. You then deposit the fake packet in the envelope and ask that he immediately seal down the flap. It is important that you perform these actions cleanly and clearly, leaving no room for doubt that the spectator has sealed your money in the envelope.

Now point out a table just behind you, on which rest the four identical sealed envelopes. Explain that these contain bill-sized pieces of newspaper to make them look and feel exactly like the envelope holding the cash. Have him pick them up, adding them to the envelope of money. Then tell him to mix all five envelopes behind his back, until no one, himself included, can tell which one is which.

Next hand him the broad-tipped marker from the table and ask him to number the envelopes from one through five.<sup>10</sup> Once he has done that, request that he point out an attractive lady in the first few rows of the audience. Ask this woman to concentrate for a moment, then call out any number from one to five. Explain that you will try to guide her psychically to the right choice.

When she names a number, have your on-stage helper place that envelope on the table, propping it up against the glass there, so that everyone can keep an eye on it. Point out

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<sup>10</sup>This is an idea I have lifted from Terry Seabrooke's hilarious "Burnt Note in Wallet" presentation.

that, throughout the test, you have not touched any of the sealed envelopes, and that you will continue that practice to the end.

Indicate the metal bowl standing off to your right and ask your helper to go over to it, swing back the lid and step a few feet away from the open bowl. As soon as he does that, use the remote control to ignite the fire in the bowl. (In my case, my behind-the-scenes assistant does this.) The sudden blaze from the bowl draws surprised gasps and laughter from the audience. Of course, if you are using a bowl without an ignition system, simply step over to it and drop in a lit match. Then walk well away from it as it begins to flame.

*Important: Never perform this trick in a room with an active fire-sprinkler or smoke-detection system. Doing so would prove disastrous. If such a system is present, ask that it be shut off during your performance, and if this can't be done, don't do this effect!* Also make sure that the room and stage area are well-ventilated, as burning paper creates a large amount of smoke that, if left to hang in the air, can make even a large room most unpleasant.

We are now ready to have some fun. Ask your helper to name any of the numbers on the four envelopes he holds. Then tell him to walk over to the blazing bowl and drop that envelope into the flames. Make the most of the situation as he does this. He then chooses a second envelope, which he also drops into the fire. This is continued until all four envelopes have been burnt, with plenty of amusing by-play between each. By using heavy security envelopes filled with flash bills, you can be assured that the stage money will be consumed in the flames before it can be seen by the spectator.

Once the envelopes have been burnt, walk over the bowl and slam the lid closed on it, extinguishing the fire. Then walk with the spectator over to the one remaining envelope on the table. Turn to the woman in the audience who chose this



envelope and say, "I hope, madam, that you have made the right decision, because I really need the money. If not..." Here you reach into your jacket pocket and remove a stage pistol.

"...then..." Look down at it for a moment, then look meaningfully out at the lady. This should bring a nice laugh. Next, slowly raise the gun to your own temple and hold it there for a bigger laugh.

"But let's hope for the best. Sir, on the table with the lady's envelope is a letter opener. I haven't touched the envelope and I will not touch it now. Please open it and let's see how we've done." Let the spectator slit open the envelope and extract the folded packet of stage bills. The instant the packet is drawn from the envelope, take it from him and exclaim, "We did it!" as you hold the packet in the air, displaying it while the audience applauds.

To clean up: As the ovation subsides, bring out your wallet and open it. Turn to your helper and say, "I'll keep this, if you don't mind," and tuck the packet safely away. This is fully motivated, as everyone understands that you don't wish the spectator to learn the amount of your fee. "But you and the sensitive lady in the audience have my undying gratitude for a job well done." With this, you send him back to his seat with another round of applause.

And there you have it; a fully entertaining Just Chance effect that leaves you a victor over adversity instead of a miserly adversary—and a dramatic handling during which the sealed envelopes never enter your possession!

## Early Edition

~~~~~ I AM OFTEN engaged by large companies to do employee motivational training or to entertain customers at expensive promotional meetings. These gatherings almost always occur in first-class hotels, in Germany and abroad. For these occasions I wished to find a headline prediction that was surefire and completely unexplainable. In addition, as is my bent, I wanted a method that would baffle *everyone*, public and magicians alike. It took years to develop a method that satisfied these criteria.

The methodology I finally focused on was a very bold approach sometimes known as "The Bally Prediction" (after a version of it marketed by Al Stevenson). The concept is far from new. Joseph Dunninger is said to have used a version of it, and Donn Davison did the most thorough written treatment of it to date in his 1977 monograph titled *Dy-no-mite*

Prediction. My handling features a number of new refinements and psychological subtleties that enhance the effect while making the method completely impenetrable.

EFFECT

Two to three weeks prior to the performance, the head of the company receives an envelope clearly marked PREDICTION. He is asked not to open the envelope, but to bring it with him to the event. Near the end of the performance this dignitary is asked to open the envelope in front of the group and read its contents. The performer remains in the audience as all this is done. The newspaper headlines of that day are identical (or as close as desired) to the written statements made by the performer weeks in advance!

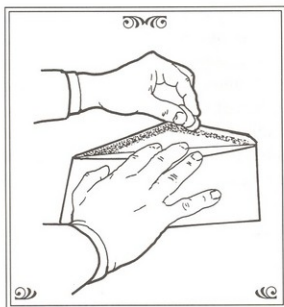
Please note the following points:

- ◆ Neither the envelope nor the prediction are switched.
- ◆ The performer need not personally know the person who receives the mailed prediction.
- ◆ During the performance, the performer positions himself in the audience and never approaches the assisting dignitary.

PREPARATION

FIRST METHOD

In this version a self-sealing envelope with a window is used. With a soft eraser neatly remove one half of the self-adhesive all along the flap. The result is a self-sealing envelope that can be easily opened. Into this envelope put a clean sheet of paper with your name and address on it. These must be visible through the window of the envelope. Then seal the envelope, place a stamp on it and take it to the post office. Once there, explain to the clerk that you are mailing the envelope to a stamp collector and ask that the stamp be clearly postmarked



for your philatelic friend. The round-stamp date must be clear, as this is very important for the performance. The date should also precede the performance by two to three weeks.

Now mail the letter. With some luck it should arrive at your home the next day. Carefully open the flap and remove the

sheet of paper with your name and address on it. And don't throw it out. You can use it again.

On the day of performance, write the newspaper headline or captions from the front page stories on a fresh sheet of paper, preferably using a typewriter or a computer printer. *Important:* This prediction paper can be your personal stationery, but it must not carry an address for the person who will receive it, or your own!

Slip this paper into the envelope and seal it. Apply an additional line of adhesive to the "fatigued" seal to ensure that it remains stuck shut and arouses no suspicion. Next, write the company executive's name and address on a self-adhesive mailing label and stick it onto the cellophane window. Finally, write PREDICTION—DO NOT OPEN boldly across the back of the envelope.

SECOND METHOD

While I successfully used the method just explained for several years, my experience has shown the following method of preparation to be the best, and I've been using it for quite some time. Here a self-sealing envelope *without* a window is

used. How do you get such an envelope properly postmarked, with the company executive's name and address on it? At stationery supplies you can find erasable pens, pens that use a special ink that can be cleanly removed—but only with the special eraser that comes attached to the pens. So, when you mail the envelope to yourself, address it with one of these pens. Then, when you receive it back, use the special eraser to remove your name and address and readdress the envelope to your dignitary.

A clean erasure is dependent on the paper the envelopes are made from. This should be a hard, smooth-finished paper. A few trials may be necessary to find the best envelopes for the job. Also, let the erasing chemical dry for a few minutes before you write over it. Do not use the erasable pen for the address revision, as the chemical used to remove the ink remains in the envelope, and will cause the new ink to disappear! Instead, use an ordinary pen to do the readdressing.

You can also erase the ink first, then paste a mailing label over the erased area. You can either write or type the address on the label.

On the day of the performance, write your "predictions" on a sheet of paper or your personal stationery (note comment above concerning addresses). Seal this in the envelope as explained in the first preparation method and bring it to the performance site.

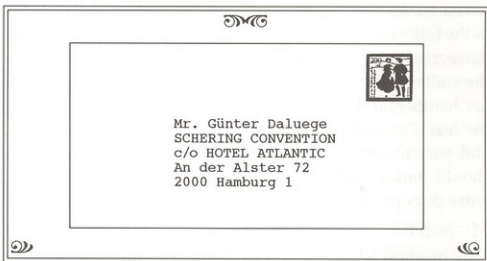
THE PLANT

Now you will wonder, how does the dignitary receive the prediction, without knowing it has not been mailed to him? To accomplish this, I will give you three different procedures.

METHOD A

Arriving at the hotel, you should have the prediction letter in hand. Register at the reception desk and surreptitiously drop

the letter at your feet. After registering, bend over and pretend to find the letter. Hand it to the desk clerk saying, "This was on the floor." You have cleverly addressed the letter not to the executive's home or office, but in care of the hotel. Example:



Most of the time, I perform on the opening evening of the convention. This means that many of the participants have not yet arrived. I come to the hotel in the afternoon to check the sound and lights in the room where I will perform. Of course, Mr. Daluege has not yet checked in, but a room has been booked for him. The room number is known to the hotel clerk. Therefore, the letter will be filed with the booking documents or with the room key. In most cases the clerks change around noon, and it is therefore impossible to check when the letter really arrived at the hotel! To bolster the deception, mark the envelope with an entry stamp on the back. This is a rubber stamp that reads "Received On..." and shows the date, which can be changed. Such stamps can be purchased in office supply stores. The stamped date should read two or three days after that of the postmark. As a finishing touch, sign or initial it as a hotel clerk would.

In the afternoon or evening, Mr. Daluege, our dignitary, arrives at the hotel. When he receives his key he also is

handed the prediction. At that point your work is done, but for the presentation and showmanship it requires to put the piece over.

METHOD B

If you travel with a partner, the prediction can be deposited in the following manner: After your arrival at the hotel, your partner goes to the restaurant or café to have a snack. When the waiter approaches the table to take the order, your partner hands him the envelope, explaining that it was lying on the seat. The waiter will surely approach the reception desk, and once more everything is in place for your success. You should station yourself somewhere nearby to assure that the letter does reach its intended destination.

METHOD C

This method is the boldest of the three, but I often use it because it has certain advantages. In this scenario you mail a second letter, addressed to yourself at the hotel. In the address, you specify the name of the convention and the date of performance, so that the letter will not be returned by the hotel. This letter should be mailed four to five days prior to performance.

When you enter the hotel you are carrying an elegant attaché case. The actual prediction envelope is in the case. You register and receive the key along with the other letter, which has already arrived. When the letter is handed to you, you open the case and toss the letter carelessly inside. You then move away from clerk but remain at the reception desk as you pretend to search in your case for something. You then casually remove the prediction letter, look at the address (acting puzzled) and say, "This letter isn't for me!" Hand it back to the clerk, who will of course refile the letter to be given to your dignitary.

PERFORMANCE

It is essential that the person brings the letter to the performance. You, therefore, should call him, if at all possible, a few hours beforehand and ask if he received the prediction. If you find you can't reach him before the show, you can assure that he has the envelope with him by introducing him in the audience, sometime early in your performance. You explain that he will later be an instrumental part of an experiment, after which you ask him then if he has the envelope on him? If he doesn't, you send him off to get it while you proceed with the performance. He will have returned with the envelope before you are ready to do the prediction.

Because the mechanics of the trick are over from your point of view, all that is left to do is to sell the effect, using the necessary verbal evasion that creates the picture you desire in the minds of the spectators.

The newspapers whose headlines are going to be predicted can be distributed in the audience or, even better, be displayed on stage. As the finale of your performance, you ask the dignitary to come on stage, where you have—and this is very important—a microphone awaiting him. Also, have a letter opener handy on a table near the mic.

You now begin to build the effect. The presentation might sound something like this:

"There are people with the ability to foresee coming events. Parapsychologists call this talent precognition. For my last experiment I wish to see if prophesy is really possible. Mr. Daluege, we have not really had a chance to meet or speak until this moment, is that right?"

"Yes."

"I mailed an envelope to Mr. Daluege. May I ask you to remove that envelope now from your pocket. Another question, sir: Have I touched that envelope since you received it?"

"No."

"Have a look at the postmark. Can you clearly identify it?"

"Yes."

"Would you please read the date of the postmark aloud for everyone?"

"October fifteenth, 1994."

"Would you please tell us today's date?"

"November fourth, 1994."

"Would you please tell us the date of the newspapers, which are on stage there?"

"November fourth, 1994."

"All those newspapers carry today's date then?"

"Yes."

"Would you again please read out the date of the postmark, sir?"

"October fifteenth, 1994."

"Would you open the letter now and read it aloud to us?"
(Here you indicate the letter opener for his use.)

"Berlin, October fifteenth, 1994.

"Dear Mr. Daluege:

"For the last five nights I have awakened after having dreamed. I immediately made notes about these dreams and am now organizing them in this letter. In my dreams I vaguely saw the headlines of the following newspapers before me:

"First, *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, whose headline was...

"Second, *Die Welt*. I only recognized a photograph, in which there seemed to be...

"Third, the headline of *Bild* on November fourth contains something about..."

After each headline or description of a photograph is read aloud by the spectator, you hand the corresponding newspaper to the audience in corroboration of your accuracy.

Of course, for the sake of believability, the predictions should paraphrase the day's headlines, not quote them word for word. Also, should you find, on the day of your performance, that the major news stories involve serious accidents or crimes, I recommended that your predictions either avoid these events or make only vague, blurry references to them. To predict such events accurately may raise some very thorny questions for you to deal with.

If you have forced playing cards, Tarot cards or addition totals during the show, you can include these events in the prediction as well. This actually lends credibility to the experiment, since the spectators have participated in these events.

You will have noticed how the conversation with the dignitary during the show is controlled to imply to the audience that he has been in possession of the prediction for days, not just hours. And for him you have arranged a trail of evidence that leads him to believe that he was meant to have the prediction earlier, and that, nevertheless, it has been kept safe in the hands of the hotel staff for days prior to his arrival. Since you wish him to notice the subtle and misleading traces you have provided, make sure that he takes the prediction and envelope with him when he leaves the stage.

NOTES AND TIPS

I do not inform the dignitary in advance that he is to expect the prediction envelope. I used to do this several weeks before the show, but on two occasions I had the person call my office, a few days prior to the performance, to tell me he had not yet received the envelope. I then had to have my secretary explain that she had misplaced the proper address and had sent the prediction to the hotel instead. Luckily, the dignitary in each case did not call at the hotel for the prediction before the day of the performance, and everything went well. Now, though, I wait until I have planted the envelope, and later phone the dignitary's room to see if he has received it.

The reason you don't put his address on the prediction letter is that it might be read aloud with the rest of the prediction, and you want *nothing* on the prediction or envelope that could suggest that it might conceivably have been returned to you. Such a thought could provide a hint, albeit small, of your method. By avoiding an address, your tracks are completely covered.

Of course, the entry stamp on the envelope is calculated to stifle such suspicions, but the audience doesn't know about this stamp—and *you* must never mention it! Sooner or later the dignitary will have a look at the envelope and notice the entry stamp which, for him and those he talks to, puts the final touch of conviction on the authenticity of your prediction. And if you have included events that happened during the show among your predictions, the combination of principles and strong presentation leave no clue to any explanation but the one you desire.



Chapter Eight



Mind Bender





...and friends

*Marvyn and Carol Roy—
“Mr. Electric”*

THESE ARTISTS came to the Red Rose after they had concluded a successful run at the world-famous Lido. Marvyn is one of the most creative conjurers I know. He has developed several successful shows during his career, always based on a single theme. In addition to his “Mr. Electric” act, known worldwide, he has been “The Magic Jeweler”, an act he created and toured with Liberace for several years in Europe and in the U.S.

More recently he put together his show titled “Mr. Puzzle” for the Magic Castle. During the times that Marvyn is not touring, he works as a table-hopper several days a week at top restaurants and hotels in and around Los Angeles.

It is always rewarding to listen to Marvyn and Carol. They are a never-ending source of tips and good advice, which they gladly give to anyone interested in magic, if only one is willing to listen.





Mind Bender

~~~~~ IN JULY of 1987 Lee Earle presented to the public of Phoenix, Arizona, a "spiritistic session" titled "Manifestations: the Ultimate Séance". This production was very well received by Phoenix audiences and became the longest running theater production in the history of Arizona.

In the closing months of 1989, Lee decided to document the workings of the complete séance for his fellow mentalists. This took the form of a book, *Manifestations*, and six audio tapes, which detailed all effects and construction plans for this spiritistic spectacle.

In the séance, Lee presented a most astonishing experiment, which baffled its audiences completely. He bent the stem of a champagne glass in the manner one might expect of Uri Geller! Such an effect had never before been described in the literature of magic or mentalism. Understandably, it



roused my interest immediately and I started thinking about the effect. I first determined that if I was to include this trick into my repertoire, it had to meet these criteria:

- 1) The glass has to be taken from a spectator's table and must not be switched.
- 2) The bending must be visible to a larger audience and must work without any handling or manipulation on my part.
- 3) I must not be near the glass as it bends.
- 4) Objects on the spectator's tables have to be out of my control during and after the bending.
- 5) Glasses or objects that have bent must be examined by skeptical spectators, without my touching them or coming near them.
- 6) There must be no stooges.

Psychokinetic effects never fail to make a strong impression on people, and they talk about these tricks long after the performance. This PK effect, if it could be done under the conditions I required, would be sensational. It took me a few months to find a solution that completely satisfied me. Since then, I have performed it with success for both the public and magicians. Recently, I showed it at the Bob Haines Memorial Invitational, which took place January 17<sup>th</sup> through 19<sup>th</sup>, 1992, in Newark, New Jersey.

## EFFECT

From a spectator's table the performer borrows a wine or champagne glass (which can be used or even filled) and sets it on a pile of books resting on his table. Then he asks the rest of the spectators to hold their glasses high in the air.

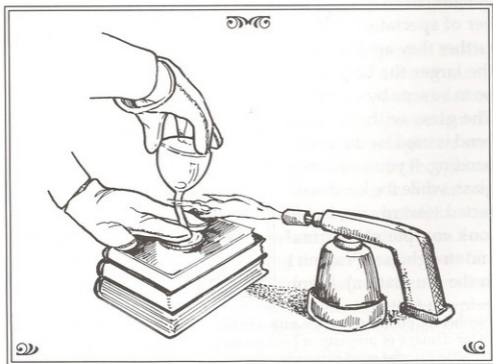
The performer concentrates on the glasses before him and asks the audience to do the same. After a few suspenseful

seconds, the stem of the glass on the pile of books slowly and visibly bends! And eventually it is noticed that the power of the group's concentration has caused stems on other glasses in the audience—glasses the performer has never touched—to bend as well!

### PREPARATION

The illustration shows how you bend the glass stems. A gas soldering torch is used to heat the glass. You will find this tool in most hardware stores. Each gas cylinder used with these torches contains enough gas to bend ten to twelve normal wine or champagne glasses, and can be replaced for a few dollars.

Place the glass on a pile of books, positioning the center of its stem at a height even with the flame when the torch sits on your work table. Make sure to direct the flame away from you and at the middle of the stem. The flame must *never* hit the upper or lower end of the stem, or the bowl or foot, or the

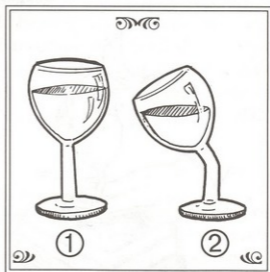


glass will most likely burst from the heat. Also make sure the glass is room temperature before you heat it.

The time it takes to bend a glass stem depends greatly on its thickness. As the stem heats up, one hand firmly presses the foot of the glass against the pile of books while the other hand grips the bowl. One can feel when the stem becomes hot enough to bend. A light but deliberate pressure to the bowl is applied, bending the stem *away from the flame*.

Glass is a poor conductor of heat. Therefore it is unlikely that you can be burnt if you hold the glass as prescribed. Nevertheless, *fireproof gloves should always be worn when bending glass stems, along with protective goggles. Also clear all unnecessary materials off your working surface. You are dealing with glass, an open flame and intense heat, so exercise every precaution to protect yourself and your workplace from accident.*<sup>1</sup>

For each performance you will need one glass with a large bend in its stem, and three or four others that are only lightly bent. The size of your audience is a factor to be considered in gauging the degree of the larger bend. The greater the number of spectators and the farther they are from you, the larger the bend must be to be seen by everyone. The glass with the large bend is used for the visible bending. If you look at this glass, while the bend is directed toward you, it will look completely normal and straight (see Position 1 in the illustration). If you



<sup>1</sup>Neither the publisher nor the author of this work assumes any responsibility for damage of property or bodily injury resulting from this procedure, so please exercise good sense and take every precaution for safety.

then rotate it ninety degrees, the bend will appear (Position 2 in the illustration). Using nail polish, put a small mark on the foot of the glass, indicating the exact position it must be in for the bend to be invisible to the audience.

Before your performance you must distribute the prepared glasses at different tables throughout the room. This is easily arranged in hotels, because the tables are laid at least one hour before admission. Of course, you must *avoid* being observed by the wait staff as you plant these prepared glasses. Put the glass with the large bend on one of the tables near the stage, making sure that you have easy access to it.

Since I often do repeat engagements in hotels, I always manage to steal away a few glasses and take them home with me for preparation. However, when I am working a hotel for the first time, I get some glasses from the bar, using any excuse, and prepare them in my dressing room. If you find yourself doing this, here is an invaluable tip: *Do not prepare your glasses anywhere near the sprinkler system in the room!* I assure you, the results of doing so would be extremely unpleasant.

Many readers will fear putting the bent glasses on the tables. But I can assure you, from the experience of many performances, that the preparation is never noticed before you draw attention to it—and several of these performances were done before audiences of knowledgeable magicians and mentalists! A glass is a common object. Everyone recognizes it and therefore nobody considers examining it. My friend Toni Forster, one of Germany's best-known mentalists, and many other friends in the profession have drunk from bent glasses for hours without noticing the preparation—*until* I presented the bending stem effect for them. After everyone sees the glass on stage visibly bend, I mention that the phenomenon often occurs at unpredictable sites spontaneously. I ask everyone to examine their wine glasses. Of course, the

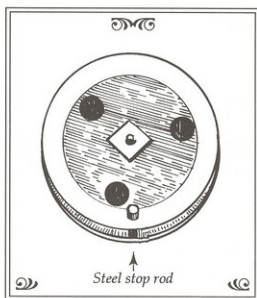
bent ones I've planted are now discovered; and often others are found that I had nothing to do with! For people will find, or imagine they find, imperfections in some of the glasses, natural to their manufacture, but which are now attributed to me. It should be obvious from all this that you must *never*—I repeat, *never*—mention beforehand that you will be bending the glasses!

Now let's discuss how the visible bending is accomplished. On your table you have a pile of books, which you use, before or afterward, in a book test. The uppermost book of the pile is gimmicked for the bending.<sup>2</sup> Inside it is a modified clockwork from a music box. The motor I use has been taken from a baby's toy that is meant to be suspended over a crib. When a string on the toy is pulled, it winds the music box and sets it playing. Try to find one of these music boxes for infants, as the pull-string winding mechanism is useful for our purposes. Other music box motors can be modified. However, make sure that you use a good-quality Swiss motor, and not a cheap plastic one. You want a motor that is reliable and will not break down, since the modifications are very time-consuming.

I had my friend Claus Fleischhauer, a master mechanic conceive and build my modified motor. What I am about to describe is his elegantly simple design. First extract the music box motor from the toy and remove any motor housing it might be attached to. Next unscrew the musical comb and discard it. The motor should now be perfectly silent when it runs. Next you must carefully remove the grooved spool, to which the wind-up string is attached, from the spring-drum housing. Cut the string from the spool and drill a small hole

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<sup>2</sup>This gimmicked book can be a duplicate of one of the books used in the book test, which is switched in after the book test has been performed; or it can be included among the other books during the selection procedure for the book test, but its selection is avoided through equivoque.

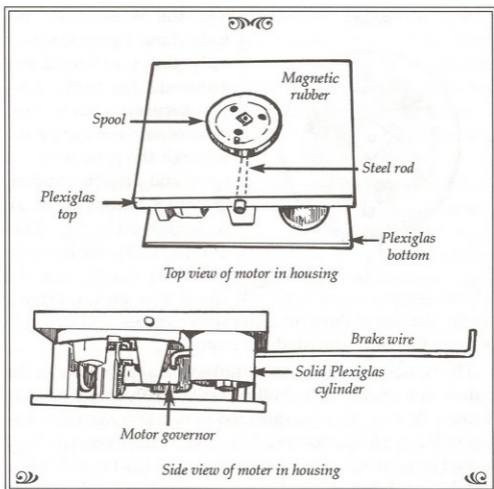


near the outer edge. This hole should pass through only the top lip of the grooved edge. In this hole you securely glue a short piece of steel rod that passes through the groove of the spool and projects approximately a sixteenth of an inch above the top. This little rod will serve two purposes: 1) it will halt the spool and motor after a

single rotation of three hundred sixty degrees; and 2) it will provide the means to wind the motor.

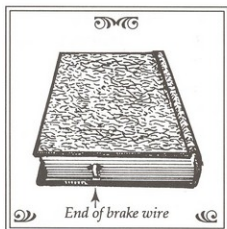
This spool is made from cast plastic and is hollow in the center. You must fill the hollow center with epoxy resin to increase its strength. If you are modifying a key-wound motor, you will have to fabricate such a spool or have one specially turned from metal. Once the winding post has been installed and the spool strengthened, it is remounted on the shaft of the spring drum. This motor shaft should also project slightly from the center of the spool, as it will serve as the axis for the rotating platform on which the wine glass sits.

Next you must house the motor between two rectangles of Plexiglas. The top piece has a hole drilled through it that is approximately an eighth of an inch larger than the motor spool, which sits precisely in the center of it. This top piece of Plexiglas is about three sixteenths of an inch thick and another hole is drilled through the edge of it, passing from one side to the large center hole. Another piece of steel rod is inserted through this hole and glued permanently in place. This rod projects into the groove of the spool far enough to block the vertical stop rod. You then cover the entire surface



of the Plexiglas top with a layer of magnetic rubber sheeting. The top of the spool should lie even with the magnetic surface.

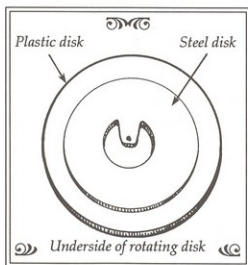
You now need to install a brake for the motor. This is nothing more than a length of sturdy wire, with a half inch at one end bent down, and a similar length at the other end bent up. This runs through a hole in a solid block. I've used a short section of one inch diameter Plexiglas rod, which is fixed securely to the underside of the top housing with a nut and bolt. If the inner end of the wire is turned downward, it engages the little wings of the rotating governor for the motor and stops it. When turned ninety degrees, the wire moves out of the way, allowing the motor to turn. The length of this wire is such that the free end projects roughly a quarter of an inch



from the inner edge of the gimmicked book, allowing you to activate the motor while the book is closed.

Next you must manufacture the disk that sits on top of the motor and turns ninety degrees. This is cut from a thin piece of rigid plastic and is roughly three-and-a-quarter inches in

diameter—just a bit larger than the foot of the average wine glass. To the underside of this disk you cement a smaller disk cut from a sixteenth-inch-thick sheet of steel. This disk is about two-and-a-half inches in diameter and has a small hole drilled in its center, into which the projecting spindle of the music box motor closely fits.



This steel disk also has a crescent-shaped area cut from its center. This cut-out space makes possible a delay between the activation of the motor and the ninety degree turn of the disk. The disk is fitted onto the motor spindle, with the projecting end of the stop rod in the spool sitting inside the crescent. The

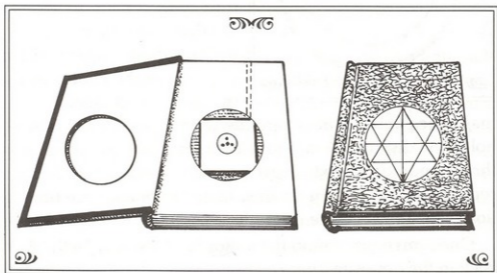
magnetic rubber that covers the top of the motor housing holds the disk in place. You use the disk to wind the motor three hundred and sixty degrees: exactly the distance the stop rod allows. When you do this, have the brake wire turned downward to keep the motor from running.

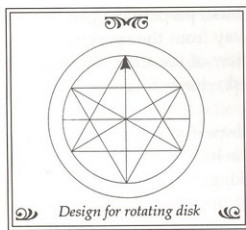
Once you have wound the motor one turn, swivel the disk back in the opposite direction for as far as the stop rod in the



crescent will permit. If you now start the motor, the spool will rotate, swinging the stop rod inside the crescent from one end to the other. When the stop rod hits the other end of the crescent, it engages the disk and turns it ninety degrees, until the spool completes its full turn and is stopped from going further. It is, then, the length of the crescent that creates the time delay before the disk turns. This delay is determined by two factors: the speed of the motor and the length of the crescent. You will have to experiment with this length to get the desired degree of rotation. My motor takes thirty seconds to turn the spool a full three hundred and sixty degrees, and the delay is just over twenty seconds. Each unit will vary slightly in the delay time it provides.

The modified clockwork and rotating disk is fixed into a hole cut in the front portion of the book. A circular section has also been cut from the book cover. This circle matches the size of the rotating disk and is glued to it. To camouflage the disk in the cover of the book, you must paint it with some design. I have used a six-pointed golden star girded by a golden circle, as shown in the illustration. Note the arrow in the top point of the star. This arrow is set before your performance to point straight outward toward the audience. Also note how the





intersecting lines define the exact center of the disk for you. When you set the wine glass on the book, the center of the stem must lie directly over this center point. You will have to rehearse until you can place the glass in this position without hesitation or readjustment.

The disadvantage of this trick is that it is vulnerable from the side views. For this reason, it is essential that you position your table upstage center, so that the audience must look up at it. Additionally, I recommend the use of a three-panel folding screen made from clear Plexiglas, which is put on the table behind the books and to their sides. Illuminate the side panels with two small halogen lamps, making sure that the stem and bowl of the glass are well lit. As you know, Plexiglas reflects light, and the reflections prevent spectators seated on the sides from seeing the bend in the stem. When presenting the bend, you should rely on these lamps, while dimming the house and stage lights, and using a follow spot on yourself.

## PERFORMANCE

Preceding this trick, I always perform a strong book test (see, for instance, "The Sough of Horses' Wings", pp. 203-210). Then I put the books used for this test in a pile on the table. As I do this I set the prepared book on top. Your table should be fairly small, so that there's only room for the books and the folding-screen. I also provide an outward motivation for the presence of the folding screen: In a previous effect, I use it for a display stand, by clipping several envelopes to it.

You may wonder, what if the glasses bear the emblem of the hotel? This would make any rotation of the glass obvious.

The problem is easily solved: First, prepare the glass so that the emblem will be turned away from the spectators when they are given the "unbent" view of the stem. Then, in performance, fill the glass with red wine before you place it on the book.

I should mention that I *never* perform this effect if one or more spectators are present who have already seen it. This is a common situation when working corporate functions. Even if the invited clients are different, the company representatives almost never change. You should never perform this experiment on such occasions. If you find you have repeat spectators in your audience, be prepared to replace the glass bending feat with some other PK effect. You might, for example, look into the various items on the market that allow you to shatter glasses, light bulbs, even bottles, seemingly by means of "thought waves". When I must use a substitute for the glass bending, I will often make the glass move and fall off the table instead. I take a glass from a spectator's table and put it on my own. After considerable concentration the glass moves slowly backward until it drops from the table and shatters on the floor. Everything, including the table, can be examined. It is not as shocking a stunt as the bending, but it is nevertheless an impressive exercise of PK. The method is quickly explained:

My table has a round Plexiglas top. This top is prepared with a dry lubricant such as Reflex-pearls (see p. 138-139) before performance. I also arrange a loop of Finn John's Esoteric thread on the table top. The thread runs back to the rear curtain and is later pulled by my assistant. All I must do is check the lighting to assure that the thread isn't visible to the audience, and make sure the loop is securely caught around the stem of the glass when I place it on the table. When the thread is pulled, the glass glides smoothly backward over the reflex pearls (which are like tiny ball bearings) and falls

to the floor. The effect looks very eerie and can be thoroughly amazing.

Before leaving this effect, let me tell you how I've used it to obtain some phenomenal press coverage. I arrange for a press conference in connection with some large performance I am doing. The conference takes place at my living quarters, and I have set the gimmicked book, ready to operate, on the television set. The bent glass is stored in a nearby cupboard with other stemware. The couch on which the reporters will be seated is roughly seven-and-a-half feet in front of the TV, and positions them so that they will be looking up at the glass when it rests on the book.

When the reporters have arrived I seat them; and if it feels appropriate, I will offer everyone a glass of wine. In such circumstances, I spot the most skeptical person in the group, and make sure he receives a glass with a mild bend in its stem.

Eventually, I mention my experiments in mind over matter and fetch the prepared glass from the cupboard. As I set it on the book I trip the motor and step back to let it do its work. Everyone watches the stem bend as I concentrate. Next I invite my skeptical guest to raise his glass as I make some mysterious passes at it, making it bend while it is in his own hands.

After it is all over, I hand the glass on the book to one of the reporters while I express some disappointment in the results and apologize for being distracted in my concentration. "You should see the glass I bent yesterday. I usually do better than this."

Saying this, I go back to the cupboard and bring out another glass, one I've put a huge bend in. Everyone in that room is there for one purpose: to get a good news story. When I set up the situation as I've just described, I have yet to have the reporters fail to snap photos of this glass, showing its thirty-five degree bend. I let them take it with them, and later

this is the glass that is used for the story—and they all swear they saw it visibly bend! You can imagine the publicity this little performance has brought me.



## ***Bester Illusionist des Jahres: Ted Lesley verbiegt Weingläser - ohne sie zu berühren***



**Ted Lesley vor zwei „krumgedachten“ Gläsern.**

Als er vor drei Tagen aus New York kommend in Berlin aus dem Flugzeug stieg, hätte er eigentlich einen roten Teppich verdient: Ted Lesley (54) brachte eine Auszeichnung mit, die noch kein Europäer vor ihm erhielt. Er wurde „Mentalist des Jahres“ und erhielt den „Dunninger Award“, benannt nach dem berühmten amerikanischen Illusionisten.

Der KURIER besuchte den im wahrsten Sinne zauberhaften Künstler in seiner Wohnung in Friedenau. Was ist der Unterschied zwischen einem Zauberer und einem Mentalisten? „Zauberer machen ihre Tricks mit den Händen, ich mache meine mit

dem Kopf.“ Sprach's, stellte ein Weinglas auf den Tisch, setzt sich drei Meter entfernt davon, schaut konzentriert in Richtung des Glases. Der Stiel beginnt sich langsam zu verbiegen... Wirklich und wahrhaftig: Ich habe es mit eigenen Augen gesehen!

Ted Lesley hat an die 180 Auftritte pro Jahr. Zu seinen spektakulärsten zählte eine Illusionsshow, bei der er ein Auto auf der Bühne erscheinen ließ. Große Industrieunternehmen laden den Künstler meist zu Tagesvorstellungen ein. Doch derzeit arbeitet der Entertainer an einer Show, die er am liebsten im Winter auf einer Berliner Bühne präsentieren will. Garantiert zauberhaft! gi.

## Do the Right Thing A Parting Word

FOR YEARS I have been fighting performers who steal the ideas and inventions of others. Magical organizations seem to do nothing against such individuals, and it has only been recently that the International Brotherhood of Magicians has begun running articles in *The Linking Ring* by well-known magicians and inventors discussing ethical considerations.

The majority of successful magicians are conscientious about properly acquiring the rights to perform the material they do. Fred Kaps is a fine example. In his lifetime he created very little that was truly original. However, he was able to see the potential in a trick, and he worked hard on it until he discovered a way to perform it that perfectly suited his personality. But before he performed the trick professionally, he always requested permission to use it from the inventor.

A case in point is his routine for the "Floating Cork". It is well established that this trick is the invention of Bruno Hennig-Joro of Germany. Fred Kaps obtained permission from Herr Hennig-Joro to perform his "Floating Cork", even though Mr. Kaps had refined the method and presentation considerably. This effect became a signature piece for Kaps, and years later his routine was officially marketed by Ken Brooke in England—and in the instructions Bruno Hennig-Joro was properly recognized as the inventor of the trick.

Regrettably, there are some in our profession who don't exercise the same sense of justice. Permit me to mention a few instances that I can recount from personal experience.

One so-called "fellow performer" in Germany, after seeing me work a couple of times, came one night to my show with a tape recorder and stole three quarters of my act, complete with patter! A complaint to one of the largest organizations for magicians in Germany, the Magischer Zirkel von Deutschland e.V., resulted in no meaningful action. This, then, was the ultimate recognition my peers awarded some twelve years of constant work to develop and refine original presentations. As a bonus this dishonest fellow has cost me important work. One client, who was hiring me more than ten times a year for substantial fees, began to use my poor replica instead. When I asked the client about this, he simply shrugged his shoulders and said, "Why should I hire an expensive Ted Lesley when I can get the same act for half the price?"

On a smaller scale, some years ago I invented a unique method of marking cards, which I eventually released commercially as "The Working Performer's Marked Deck". I am flattered to see it commonly referred to as the "Lesley Deck" by magicians throughout the world. Yet, almost immediately after I put my deck on the market, dealers in the United States began selling inferior versions, all without permission, of

course. The only favor they did me, I suppose, was to leave my name off these shabby knock-offs.

And just this year, at the 1994 Meeting of the Minds, held by the Psychic Entertainers Association, a fellow turned up selling my "Teleport Envelope" without a word to me. I am happy to say that in this instance the president and board of this organization of professionals concluded that the culprit had violated the group's laws of ethics and requested his resignation. If only the other organizations in magic would have the courage to send a clear message to copyists!

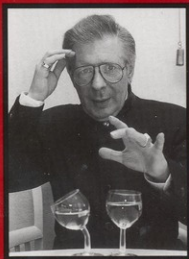
Such unfair practices are not uncommon in the world of magic, yet the very organizations one would expect to fight these infractions—like the Magic Dealers Association and the international magicians' organizations, do nothing. While there may not be anything these groups can legally do to stop the thieves, they can expel them from their organizations. I think such measures would generally improve the ethical climate in the world of magic.

Throughout my performing career I have always exercised the practice of requesting the permission of the inventor before putting any item in my professional repertoire—even if the item had been published in a book or magazine for the use of the reader. In my experience, when creators are courteously approached and asked for permission to use one of their inventions, they are almost always happy to help and are very generous with their ideas. The cost of this practice is nothing more than a phone call or a postage stamp, and the benefits have been a clear conscience and the forming of many valued friendships. Permit me to suggest that if you follow my advice in this, you too will reap the same excellent rewards.





WOULD YOU BELIEVE YOUR EYES if you saw someone concentrate on a borrowed wine glass and, while it stood in total isolation, you saw it visibly bend? This is just one of the amazing marvels that Ted Lesley, Germany's top professional mentalist, and winner of the Psychic Entertainers' Dunninger Award explains in *PARAMIRACLES*.



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—How, through sheer mental concentration, to make the wine in a glass held by a spectator defy gravity

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