



Shell Game

A Monthly Newsletter for the London Magic Community
April 2007
Volume 2, Issue 8

March's meeting

The March meeting introduced a new concept to the club, which proved to be really enjoyable for everyone.

At first, it was going to be a simple theme – Tricks with a shuffled deck. But our brilliant prez, Steve Seguin, added a twist that took this theme to another level.

Everyone (members and guests) sat together around a central table. One deck of cards ("hermetically sealed in a Ziploc bag for the past few decades", so says our prez) was opened for the first time, shuffled, and passed around the people at the table.

The game: If you're handed the deck, do a trick with it. No substitute decks. No substitute cards. Cards can be torn, written upon, or destroyed – but that deck still must be used.

And even more of a twist: No repeating effects! Once an "Ambitious card" or "Torn and Restored" effect is performed – no one else can do the effect!

If you're handed the pack and you can't think of a trick – pass it on and you're out! (Think of this as the club's version of "Last Magician Standing"!)

One of the purposes of the game became clear early on: There are tons of tricks that can be performed with a shuffled deck – even for those of us who aren't finger flickers! Almost everyone participated, and the tricks were wide and varied.

During the next two hours, the cards were lost & found in a variety of weird places, flipped over, floated, torn, mangled, written upon and pretty much abused in every way imaginable! (When I needed a particular card for a trick and it was ripped to shreds a few minutes earlier, I had a "brain freeze" and was out!)

We never got to a winner – it seems that after two hours there was still at least a portion of a deck left - and still lots of people who still had some tricks to do!

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, April 24, 7:00PM
NOTE THE CHANGE IN DATE

Beal Secondary School,
Room 253
525 Dundas St., London

Topic: LECTURE BY PATRICK PAGE!

This lead to lots of discussion after the meeting trying to learn the effects others performed.

This member has never had such a large participation and wide variety of effects shown in one evening. Just about everyone both did and got something out of this night – and that's what it's all about!!

Mark Hogan

April's Meeting

DATE: Tuesday, April 24
(NOTE THE CHANGE IN DATE!)

TIME: 7:00 PM
PLACE: Beal Secondary School
Room 253

Topic: LECTURE BY PATRICK PAGE!

Hailing now from London, Patrick Page was originally born in Scotland.

He is an entertainer with over 50 years of experience, having worked as a magician, comedian, writer and producer. A living legend in British magic, he has been referred to as "Britain's answer to Dai Vernon!"

Over the course of his career, Page has created and collected material of every description for countless performances, on television, for private performances, and stages the world over.

Among his many awards, He is the recipient of England's most coveted magical honor (given by London's prestigious Magic Circle),

"The Maskelyne Award." He was also the "Guest of Honor" at the 2004 FFFF convention.



News Of Interest

Houdini – murdered?

A team of forensic scientists will examine the exhumed remains of the world's most famous escape artist Harry Houdini to determine if he was murdered almost 80 years ago.

"Everything will be thoroughly examined. We'll examine his hairs, his fingernails, any bone fractures" says James Starrs, dean of the team of pathologists, anthropologists, toxicologists and radiologists which form the scientific "dream team" to do the investigation.

It could take months for the necessary legal paperwork to be completed and the body exhumed, but may move faster as the family and cemetery officials support the plan.

Houdini died on Halloween 1926, at age 52, after being punched in the stomach by a college student testing Houdini's abdominal muscles.



The Illusionist vs. The. Prestige

With the house all to myself for days, it was time for celebration! And what a better way to

celebrate than to watch two movies on magic that are now out on DVD – “The Illusionist” and “The Prestige”.

(This also gives me a chance to fill a column in this newsletter with my movie critique. It would be nice if I had any experience in critiquing movies – but why should that stop me from giving you my opinion. After all, everyone is entitled to my opinion!)

First on the DVD disk player was “The Illusionist”. This stars Edward Norton as a magician who finds out about two things at a young age – magic and girls (any else been there?). His main squeeze at 10 years old just happened to be a princess. Not being royal himself, their romance was doomed, and he was forced to roam the world, learning his craft but aching for her. (It’s a bit mushy here – it needed a good car chase or kung fu fight to liven it up.)

She became a spectator-assistant at one of his performances (played by Jessica Biel – who doesn’t do much, but looks great, and that’s what matters!). They fall in love again. Naturally, she’s now engaged to the evil prince. (You probably knew how this would go – the script isn’t exactly rocket science.)

The second half does get interesting. Death, apparitions, ... and I don’t want to spoil it. They did make an attempt at a twist for an ending – but you’ll likely figure most of that out, too. The magic was disappointing – almost all camera tricks and many too far fetched. (Although I thought the Orange Tree

was a great trick for the time period).

“The Prestige” was next. And there was no comparison – this movie beat the “Illusionist” hands down – in every way.

First, the story: Two rival magicians (played by Hugh Jackman and ...) let their rivalry get the best of them. Their assistant (and the wife of Hugh Jackman) dies as a result – which causes them to up the stakes at each other’s performances in their unquenchable goal to destroy each other. (Sounds good, doesn’t it?)

You have to play very close attention to each scene as it switches from the past to the present without warning. This also makes you want to see the movie again, just to see if you caught everything.

And there’s tons of magic shown – and at least it was real for the time – Water Torture; Bullet Catch; and a great debate on who could do the best ..., where a person enters a door and instantly appears at another one!

They did give away the secrets of a lot of these effects – which I’m sure will upset some traditionalists – but there’s no way to tell this story without it! It gives a real feel into how a magical rivalry can turn obsessive. Many of us want to “outdo” each other at the club – this just takes that feeling and cranks it to the extreme!

My only complaint is the final effect - involving David Bowie playing the real-life character Tosci, who was a real-life competitor with

Thomas Edison. I won't give it away, but the effect is totally unbelievable – which is unfortunate because every other effect was totally believable! A lay audience wouldn't care about this – but as a magician, I was disappointed that they went this far.

I was told to watch "The Illusionist" first, and then "The Prestige" – and now I know why. "The Prestige" was by far the hands down winner of this "Battle Royale of DVDs". If you haven't seen it yet, make sure you watch this one.

CAM CONVENTION
JUNE 14 –16, 2007
KITCHENER, ONTARIO

CAM Convention Lecturer



Oscar Munoz

Oscar Munoz, award winning illusionist and humorist, has spell-bound audiences with his multifaceted talents. Throughout the United States, Korea, Japan, and Mexico, Oscar has presented his special brand of comedy magic to the delight of adults and children of all ages.

Oscar will be presenting his unique brand of comedy magic to the delight of "children" of all ages!

Renowned motivational speaker, with over fifteen years of experience, uses his brand of magic as a vehicle to transport students of all grade levels to a world of wonderment and empowerment.

Oscar performs more than 480 presentations annually and is known throughout Texas as a leading specialist in the field of motivational presentations.

We Want Your Reviews and Tricks! Please send any original reviews, magic tricks or routines to: magic_london@yahoo.ca

Shell Game
Vol. 2, Issue 8
April 2007

Concept by : Steve Seguin

The Shell Game is a free newsletter sent to members of the London Magicians Guild and other people in the community interested in magic.

Opinions expressed do not reflect the views of the London Magicians Guild.

London Magicians Guild web site: www.geocities.com/magic_london

London Magicians Guild e-mail: magic_london@yahoo.ca