

**2014/2015 Club Membership Dues are now due!!**

Please bring your **\$40** membership renewal dues to the next meeting, or mail them to: *Mark Hogan, 21-455 Hyde Park Road, London ON N6H 3R9*



# Shell Game

A Monthly Newsletter for the London Magic Community  
December 2014 Volume 10, Issue 4

## November's meeting

The theme of October's meeting was **Taking the Stage**, and there were a number of members who brought stage effects. The evening turned into an "improvement session" with everyone providing input and suggestions to make the effects more effective.

**Mike Fisher** was up first to show us his revised *silk-to-egg* effect for his new show. Then after showing the audience how it was done (a hollow egg), he turned the hollow egg into a real egg!

**Matthew Kennedy** brought in a cool looking vase that he used with a routine where the vase actually turned into a hat! And **Jon Akrey** presented *Hundredth Monkey*, an effect recently used on America's Got Talent!

**Mark Hogan** did some effects for an upcoming show – a prediction effect with playing cards where the card was chosen by shooting a toy gun; a mind reading effect where the spectator used an eye chart to spell his chosen word; and **Jon Allen's** *Silent Treatment*, where the predicted card is in the magician's mouth!

### Next Meeting:

**Wednesday, December 10**

**Time: 7:30 PM**

**Topic: ROPE NIGHT**

**Beal Secondary School  
525 Dundas Street, London  
T-253**

**Mike Fisher** returned with an excellent card prediction using a set of slates. **Matthew Kennedy** fooled me terribly with *The Switch*, where two cards

inserted in the middle of the deck were immediately pulled out of the deck. And **Paul French** got into the action with a *Twisting the Aces* effect where the cards ended up being mirrors (after all, they says it's all done with mirrors!).

Thanks to everyone who came out and presented or shared their ideas on stage magic!

Mark Hogan

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## December's Meeting

**DATE: Wednesday, December 10**  
**TIME: 7:30 PM**  
**PLACE: Beal Secondary School**  
**T-253**

## TOPIC: ROPE NIGHT

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Cut and restored; moving knots; penetrations; ... There lots of things to do with ropes. So dig out some ropes and we can perform and learn some favorite rope tricks and routines. Mike would also like to demonstrate his rope tie escape routine for us.

Hope to see you on December 10!

**We Want Your Reviews and Tricks!**

Please send any original reviews, magic tricks or routines to:

[magic\\_london@yahoo.ca](mailto:magic_london@yahoo.ca)

## News Of Interest



### Murray Sawchuk - On a roll in Las Vegas

(Las Vegas Sun)

There's no denying that magician Murray Sawchuk is on a roll as he gets ready to take on a new run at Sin City Theater in Planet Hollywood after nearly three years at the Tropicana's Laugh Factory.

He's just completed four months of filming "Extreme Escapes," which starts

broadcasting on Reelz for 26 weeks as of this Saturday. He was asked to do the "Blind Drive" illusion and wound up being invited to do more than 21 "escapes" for the series.

In addition to being picked up for another year as the magic expert on "Pawn Stars," Murray will return to The CW's "Masters of Illusion." He also hosts for the first time with his "Fantasy" at the Luxor dancer wife Chloe Crawford the new National Geographic's "Brain Games" filmed at Container Park downtown.

Murray's contributions to magic on television were recognized at the Los Angeles Fame Awards show one week ago: He was presented with a Career Achievement Award in the Magic Arts. Additionally, Murray was surprised with the Best Comedy Variety Act of 2014 award for his former show at Tropicana.

I asked him to tell me about his new show at Planet Hollywood opening Dec. 20, with a red carpet premiere Dec. 28:

"Realistically it will be about 35 percent different because I've got a bigger stage and a lot better lighting. It's a real stage, not me trying to do real stuff on a postage stamp. A lot of my signature bits are going to look totally different because of the lighting and proper stage to do them on.

"I do a lot of magic on the reality-TV shows, but at the Laugh Factory, it was comedy-based. I'll keep the laughter, but I am going to have more hard-edge magic. I want to make sure I cater to that because some acts in town, none mentioned, do stuff on TV, and when you see them live, it doesn't equal to what they do on TV."

#### **Is it tough being a magician in Las Vegas?**

It is if you are not original or you're not different or you're not a brand. If you're just a magician, a good-looking guy who does tricks well, then it's a tough market. It's kind of like going to New York and starting your own bank — every corner in New York has a bank. Being in Las Vegas, you really have to come in with your own unique style.

You look at Mac King and myself or Nathan Burton. We're all magicians, and let's be honest, we all cut a rope and we all put it back together the same way, but I think what differentiates us and what makes people buy tickets to see us and why I keep getting on TV month after month is because I've become a viable product.

Most people after the show want a picture, and 80 percent of the time it's because I look ridiculous. I've got the crazy hair, I've got the ridiculous glasses on, I think I'm just a funny person to have in a picture. Whereas if I was pretty standard looking, I don't think the intrigue would be there. It's the same thing Carrot Top created.

### **Why did Las Vegas become world headquarters for magicians?**

People came here to do things that were unexpected. It's a fun place to let your imagination run wild. I think magic falls right in to that realm of believing in the unbelievable and doing what you can't do. When Siegfried & Roy came in and had a show, that was literally the Cirque du Soleil of the 1970s. That was the show that you couldn't see anywhere else in the world. You couldn't even tour with it because it was so big.

That's really what set Las Vegas apart in a sense of massive shows, and they were magicians, and all of a sudden you realize there's a place where you can see magic unlike anywhere else. That really opened the door for people like myself to come into this town and make magic really viable along with singers like Frank Sinatra and comedians like Rodney Dangerfield who were so famous.

All of a sudden you could be a famous magician in Las Vegas.

### **Can magic become more magical? Or are you all tapped out? David Copperfield once told me there are only seven real illusions. Can you make magic more than those seven?**

I really believe that you can. In the sense you can make magic more than what it is by creating better-quality effects. Nowadays we're watching 3D movies, 4D movies because they've got this great digital photography.

You can have these things right in your living room, and it's going to make people say, "Let's go see a real live show with real human beings." It doesn't get more 4D than that. Our technology is pushing us right back in the realm of making magic more magical.

### **I'm curious — do magicians spend time trying to think of more than just the seven basics of magic?**

I think they do, but, to be honest with you, I think they do more than try to think of the eighth and ninth way to do magic. I think we all try to remake it with our own identity. For example, the trick where you take a deck of cards and stab one the audience has selected with a sword.

In my show, I take a beer bottle, smash the end and stab the card with the shard of the beer bottle. Immediately people look at that and say it's a brilliant new trick. In reality, visibly it is, but in reality, it's the card trick that was invented 100 years ago.

So we work harder on branding a trick using an old principle, one of the old seven principles, with our kind of style. We all cut a piece of rope, but we all do it our own way. Some make it funny, some mystical and magical, and some make it a lecture.

## New Broadway show - "The Illusionists"

(ABC News)

One grew up idolizing **Harry Houdini**. The other worshipped **David Copperfield**. Now they're both in a place known more for jazz hands than sleight of hand.

Italy's star escape artist **Andrew Basso** and American **Adam Trent**, who focuses on technology-based tricks, are two of the seven magicians set to play Broadway this winter in the show "The Illusionists." It will run at the *Marriott Marquis Theatre* from Nov. 26-Jan. 4.

"It's been almost 20 years since magic has been on Broadway. To me, it's been long overdue. But maybe it's been gone for a reason. It's been waiting for something like this," Trent said.

The rest of the lineup includes Belgium's weapon specialist **Aaron Crow**, campy magician **Jeff Hobson**, illusionist and "*America's Got Talent*" veteran **Kevin James**, macabre specialist **Dan Sperry** and **Yu Ho-Jin**, a Korean who just won the title of "*Magician of the Year*."

The goal is to do with magic what *Cirque du Soleil* did with circus - get rid of the dated lions and sequins and make it adult, sophisticated fun. The show has a throbbing rock beat and intelligent pacing.

Basso and Trent stopped by The Associated Press to tease their upcoming show. On camera, Trent made a bunch of playing cards appear and disappear, took a bite out of one only for it to instantly return and set a lighter label on fire. Basso told a story of once getting much too close to fire himself.

A few years ago, Basso was shackled in an explosive-rigged wooden coffin and had 60 seconds to escape before a speeding car crashed the coffin. "I needed 55 seconds to escape." Well, the car crashed and he escaped, but the blast was 10 times bigger than it had been at rehearsal, for still-unknown reasons. Basso suffered severe burns. But "I will not stop doing it," he vowed.

In the show, Basso will recreate Houdini's famous *Water Torture Cell* - he'll be put face-first into a tank of water with his feet manacled. This time, though, there will be no covers on the tank to hide any tricks.

Trent, who grew up in Boulder, Colorado, wearing out VHS tapes of Copperfield TV specials, calls himself "*The Futurist*" because he likes to mix comedy, technology and music into his act, something the old school of magic has resisted.

The world of magic is "going through extreme growing pains," he said. "A lot of the young guys want to present it in a fresh way and a lot of the older guys think it should stay a certain way."

Trent said innovation in magic is slow, partly because magicians are loath to reveal their new techniques or tricks. "The same basic principles in magic are used over and over again but they're dressed up differently," he said.

"So whether it's a card trick or you make that card an iPhone, it's the same exact sleight of hand. But when you change the object and present it differently, it does become something new."

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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:  
[magiclondon.brinkster.net](http://magiclondon.brinkster.net)

London Magicians Guild e-mail:  
[magic\\_london@yahoo.ca](mailto:magic_london@yahoo.ca)