

Shell Game

A Monthly Newsletter for the London Magic Community
December 2023

Volume 17, Issue 4

November's meeting

The November meeting was all about *Forces and Reveals*.

Mark Hogan said he remembered the meeting as he was sorting his socks, so he brought them in and **Jim Atkinson** helped him find one. Eventually one sock was left which happened to match the only sock **Mark** was wearing! And **Peter Mennie** used the socks to show his own kids routine using them as gloves, where the kids form a line joining hands with matching socks and the socks at the ends matched Peter's prediction.

Andrew Olmstead had a spectator use his *Fickle Finger of Fate* to touch any 3 of 4 folded pieces of paper to burn. The 3 papers he burned had cute animals written inside (how terrible!) – and the only paper he didn't burn said "*Firewood*". He also explained the results of a study on what lay people thought about how they felt about different force and non-force selections.

Peter Mennie also showed us parts of his change bag routine with balloons he uses to lead into **Jeff Hobson's** "*Balloon Bag*", as well as **Jim Steinmeyer's** "*Nine Card Problem*".

Steve Seguin had a spectator thoroughly mix cards on the table, and when the deck was cut, the card cut to matched Steve's prediction!

Next Meeting:

Date: Wednesday, DECEMBER 13

Time: 7:00 PM

Topic: TRICKS USING CHRISTMAS ITEMS

**Location: Beal Secondary School
525 Dundas Street, London
Room 253**

And **Mark Hogan** showed how playing cards can be used as a *Lie Detector* (with a variation on **George McBride's** "*Vanishing Lie Detector*") and

also tried **Dani DaOrtiz's** "A La Carte", where playing cards were used to capture different spectator's thoughts for the plot of a book, and when one plot was selected, it matched both the card and plot written on sticky notes attached underneath **Mark's** shirt!

Thanks to everyone who came out and showed off their forces and reveals!

Mark Hogan

December's Meeting

I

DATE: Wednesday, DECEMBER 13

TIME: 7:00 PM

**PLACE: Beal Secondary School
525 Dundas Street, London
Room 253**

TOPIC: TRICKS USING CHRISTMAS ITEMS

There are lots of things that we bring out when the Christmas season rolls around: Wrapping paper, cards, boxes, gifts, ornaments, ...

So while they're out, why not use them for some magic? If you know of any tricks that you can do that include the use of Christmas items, bring them out in December - we'd love to see them!

We Want Your Reviews and Tricks!

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

magic_london@yahoo.ca

News Of Interest

An update on the idea of the club doing a public show

(Steve Seguin)

Here's an update on the public show(s) we are organizing for the club...



The [Palace Theatre](#) is very interested in hosting a series of shows as a fundraiser for their theatre. They proposed a series of *3 separate shows* – one in *February, March, and April*. These would be one-hour shows, which makes the following format possible for each:

- *Emcee*
- *15-minute performance slot*
- *15-minute performance slot*
- *30-minute performance slot (highlighted performer)*

This would allow for each show to be anchored by a more experienced performer while giving newer performers a chance to shine.

The shows would be on either their *main stage (which seats 350)* or their *studio theatre space (which seats around 80)*. There should also be a place to perform close-up before each show. The Palace Theatre would handle promotion and ticket sales. All we would do is perform.

I have impressed upon them that the show would be geared towards adults (while staying “*family friendly*”) and would not be a “*kids show*”.

Based on the survey we did earlier, the following people were interested in performing on stage:

- **Kohl** (stage or close-up)
- **Ricardo**
- **Mike** (stage or close-up)
- **Keith**
- **Andrew O.** (stage or close-up)
- **Mark H.** (stage or close-up)
- **Alan** (stage or close-up)
- **Peter** (stage or close-up)
- **Leonardo**
- **Scott**
- **Ben**
- **Mark E.** (stage or close-up)

Close up only:

- **Kevin**
- **Byron**

If you are still interested in performing on stage, please email me at Steve_Seguina@hotmail.com, and let me know whether you'd prefer a 15-minute spot or a 30-minute spot. Also, let me know if you'd be interested in emceeing.

Someone from the *Palace Theatre* will be attending our December meeting to get a better idea of what we have in mind.



Honouring the life of Darwin Ortiz (1948-2023)

(ModelFact.com)

Darwin Ortiz, born in 1948, emerged as a luminary in the realm of magic, specializing in gambling expertise and card manipulation from an early age.

Hailing from New York City, his fascination with card tricks became a lifelong passion.

In a pivotal decision in 1974, **Ortiz** left *NYU Law School* to pursue card magic wholeheartedly. He initially supported himself by employing card counting techniques in blackjack and teaching at **Harry Lorayne's** memory school.

Darwin Ortiz's journey intertwined with notable figures in the magic world.

A contemporary and intimate friend of renowned US coin magician **David Roth**, he found mentorship in the seminal British/US close-up performer **Derek Dingle**.

Darwin Ortiz gained widespread acclaim for his written works delving into the theory of magic, notably "*Designing Miracles*" and "*Strong Magic*," regarded as seminal contributions to magical literature.

Acknowledged as the premier card manipulator globally, **Ortiz's** performances and writings earned him a distinguished position in the magic community.

He penned influential works such as "*Gambling Scams 1984*" and "*The Annotated Erdnase*," garnering admiration from fellow magicians who hailed his unparalleled contributions to the field of magic.

Lastly, **Darwin Ortiz's** legacy remains etched in the annals of magic, leaving an indelible mark on the art. Acknowledged as the world's premier card manipulator, **Ortiz's** legacy lives on through his contributions, inspiring generations of magicians.

His passing leaves a void in the magic community, but his indelible mark will forever enchant those touched by the art of magic.



David Berglas dies at age 97

(BBC.com)

David Berglas, one of the most influential magicians and mentalists of the 20th Century, has died aged 97.

The Magic Circle, seen as the most famous magic society in the world, confirmed **Berglas** died in London on Friday night.

Also known as the *International Man of Mystery*, he was the first magician to have his own programme on British TV, *Meet David Berglas*, in 1954.

His son **Marvin** said he was a "giant in the magic fraternity".

In the 1980s **Berglas** had a second television series - called *The Mind of David Berglas* - where he entertained celebrities, including **Omar Sharif**, **Christopher Lee** and **Britt Ekland**.

Throughout the decades, he appeared frequently on British TV and radio and became a household name for his stunts, one of which included driving a car around London while blindfolded.

Berglas was renowned for a trick called the *Berglas Effect*, with which he could find a spectator's chosen card at any number in a deck of cards.

It is regarded as the holy grail of magic effects, the secret of which he took to the grave.

The magician was born to Jewish-German parents who fled the country when the Nazis took power in the 1930s.

After the war, when he was involved with US military intelligence, he ended up in Bradford where he studied textiles, according to the *Jewish Bradford heritage group*.

Mr. Berglas was appointed MBE in 2018 for his services to magic and psychology.

He said at the time: "I am delighted to accept this honour but even more pleased that the art of magic has at last been recognised.

"I have spent over 60 years entertaining people in person, on radio and television - 'reading their minds' - but I certainly didn't see this one coming."

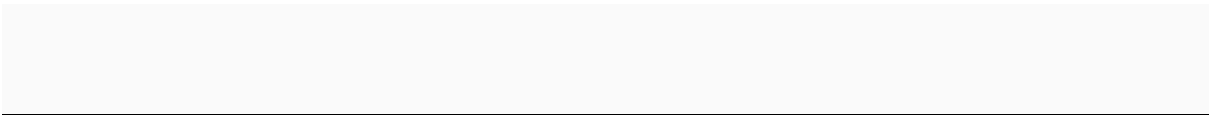
His son **Marvin** said: "My father was a giant in the magic fraternity, known for his originality, creativity and showmanship.

"His mysteries have not only baffled audiences but also his peers. However, to us, his family, he will always be best remembered as a loving husband, father and grandfather."

Illusionist **Derren Brown** hailed **Berglas** as "one of our greatest living magical performers" when **Berglas** was awarded his *MBE*.

"Generations of magicians owe him a debt of gratitude," **Brown** said.

"Each of my shows is indebted to his artistry and astonishing body of work. I thank him for his constant inspiration."



Larry Becker passes away at age 94

(AZCentral.com)

Larry Becker, the world-renowned mentalist whose extraordinary talents captivated audiences worldwide, has sadly passed away. He left this world on October 7, 2023, leaving behind a legacy of creativity, wonder, and amazement.

Born on August 13, 1929, in Baltimore, Maryland, to **Louis** and **Rose Becker**, **Larry** was the middle child of sister **Marilyn** and younger brother **Gordon Becker**. His journey into the realm of mentalism began at a young age, inspired by a performance of the renowned magician **Dante** in 1943. Over the years, he honed his skills to become one of the most celebrated figures in the field. His performances were nothing short of mesmerizing, as he astounded crowds with his ability to read minds, predict outcomes, and unearth hidden thoughts.

Larry Becker's impact on the world of mentalism extended far beyond his own stage presence. He authored numerous books and invented many magic tricks, sharing his insights and techniques with aspiring mentalists and magicians, ensuring that his knowledge would continue to inspire generations

to come. His book, "*Stunners: The Mental Magic of Larry Becker*," first published in 1992, sold out in only 90 days. In the second edition, "*Stunner Plus*," Larry presented his death-defying "*Russian Roulette*" trick, a testament to his daring spirit. Often called a visionary, he lectured on the art of mentalism across the globe.

In addition to his remarkable achievements in the world of mentalism, **Larry Becker** was a prominent figure in the field of advertising. He co-founded *BeckerKanter Advertising* in Cherry Hill, NJ, with his partner **Richard Kanter**. The firm became one of the largest advertising agencies specializing in shopping malls, thanks in no small part to **Larry's** creative abilities. **Richard Kanter** called **Larry** a "multi-faceted genius" for his graphical and copywriting creative abilities.

Larry Becker's knack for crafting memorable slogans and his impeccable artwork set him apart as a recognized leader in the advertising field. He had an innate ability to capture the essence of a brand and translate it into a compelling visual and textual narrative.

Larry received numerous awards throughout his career, including the prestigious "*Mentalist of the Year Award*" and several accolades for his contributions to the art of advertising and mentalism. His legacy, both in the realms of magic and advertising, will continue to inspire and amaze, reminding us all of the boundless possibilities of the human mind and the power of creative expression.

Larry Becker is survived by his loving and devoted wife, **April**. Their 48-year marriage was a true love story, with each describing the other as their perfect match in every way. He is also survived by his three daughters, **Gayle Glade, Carol Irvine, and Terry Wolkowicz**; his six grandchildren, **Joanne Tegethoff, Joshua Horowitz, Emilie Grossman, Ben Grossman, Aria Wolkowicz, and Justin Wolkowicz**; and two great-grandsons, **Tyler and Kaden Tegethoff**, as well as friends and countless admirers who will forever cherish the moments of wonder he brought into their lives. He will be greatly missed but never forgotten.



Doug Hunt recaptures Tallest Stilts record

(Kitchener CTV News)

Congratulations to our good friend **Doug Hunt**, who on October 17, 2023 recaptured the *Guinness World Record for Tallest Stilts*, which he initially achieved in 2002 with a set of 15.36m (50ft 9in) stilts.

The new record was set with stilts measuring **16.76m (54ft 11in)** and he took 14 steps at the *Wayne Gretzky Sports Centre* in Brantford.

He organized the event to inspire his local community & raise money for *Participation Support Services*.

"We wanted to bring it back to Canada, we wanted to bring it back to Ontario, we wanted to bring it back to Brantford where we did it 21 years ago", **Hunt** explained.

Strong winds posed a challenge and **Hunt** had to work between gusts.

Back on the ground, **Hunt** said the number one thing he felt was relief.

"I had a lot of people behind me, but when it came down to the time, there was one person who had to do it for the team," he explained. "So I didn't do it alone, but man there was a lot of pressure to make sure I got this thing done."

To see his official Guinness world record, visit:

<https://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/tallest-stilts>



David Copperfield to make the moon disappear in early 2024

(Today.com)

Fans are over the moon with excitement over **David Copperfield's** newest trick.

The legendary illusionist, who counts making the *Statue of Liberty* disappear and walking through the *Great Wall of China* among his many accomplishments, has announced he is working on a bold new stunt.

"I'm going to make the moon disappear," he said Oct. 27 on *TODAY*.

Copperfield said he has worked hard to make this a reality.

"It's taken 30 years of work, that's literally 30 years of our lives to develop it," he said. "And there's multiple methods to make it work and I'm collaborating with *Save the Children*, an amazing organization to show the world the difference one person can make.

"If one person can make the moon disappear from the sky, imagine how together we can make poverty and hunger and danger disappear for our children on Earth."

We all know a magician never reveals his secrets, but **Copperfield** *did* reveal that his rehearsals for this sky-stunning event, which he plans to pull off in February 2024, are on point.

"They're going well," he said. "In fact, I've been testing them the past few months and people have reported seeing strange things in the sky at night, all around the country."

"So, if anybody in the home sees anything weird up in the sky, please let me know by tagging me on *Instagram* or *Twitter* or *Facebook*," he added.

If you'd like to see the moon go MIA yourself, you will have the opportunity to do just that. **Copperfield** said he's giving some people a chance to see it happen in real time.

"We're going to have a contest for people to actually win a chance to see the moon vanish live and in person and we'll reveal more about that over the next few months on my socials," he said.

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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

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