



Shell Game

A Monthly Newsletter for the London Magic Community
January 2018

Volume 13, Issue 5

December's meeting

What a beautiful fall we've had. Too bad it didn't last until the December meeting, which happened during a terrible snow storm! But five hardy souls battled this early winter blizzard and came out for some *bizarre magic*!

Mark Hogan pulled out his tried-and-true "*Wizard's Competition*" *Ring on Rope* routine where the competition had to put the wedding ring on the princess's finger to win her hand in marriage. He also got **Keith O'Brien** to telepathically send his birthdate which was successfully received by **Jon Akrey**.

Kyle Robinson also brought his tried-and-true *card transposition* effect where two cards changed places – one right under Jon's hand. Kyle also brought a number of items that he received at last month's auction that had no instructions – so the rest of us had fun looking at the gimmicks and showing Kyle the effects (e.g. **Peter Mennie** demonstrated his handling of the *5 card repeat*.)

Jon Akrey performed his terrific *spoon bending* techniques (which seemed to fool Kyle badly!), did some cool *card manipulation* with some card specially printed for manipulation, and brought along some wonderful split coins and magnetic coins that were a delight to use. Jon also taped up his thumbs as well as Mark Hogan's thumbs, and yet was able to pass a roll of tape through his thumbs and even did a "*linking thumbs*" with Mark!

Keith O'Brien passed a silk right through his cellphone, and then proceeded to use "*Smokescreen*" to set his phone on fire (well, at least there

Next Meeting:

Date: Wednesday, January 17 (NOTE THE CHANGE IN DATE!)

Time: 7:30 PM

Topic: CHRISTMAS TREASURES!

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

was a lot of smoke!).

Many thanks for everyone who came out on a pretty awful night to share some magic and laughs!

Mark Hogan

November's Meeting

DATE: Wednesday, January 17 (NOTE THE CHANGE IN DATE!)

TIME: 7:30 PM

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

TOPIC: CHRISTMAS TREASURES!

No magician has ever ended up on the "naughty list" (Santa once told me). So I'm sure at least a few of us for some magic items for Christmas! (I, for one, got Criss Angel tickets!)

Come out on January 17 and show off what you got for Christmas. If it's a book or DVD, learn one or more of the effects and show them off.

Santa's elves know a thing or two about magic – so let's all see what they made for you!

We Want Your Reviews and Tricks!

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

magic_london@yahoo.ca

News Of Interest



Jay Sankey announced for Browser's Bash

(BrowsersDen.com)

Jay Sankey has been announced as an artist for the 2018 Browser's Bash.

This one-day, day-long event (9AM to 9PM) is being held on Saturday, April 21st at the *Montecassino Hotel and Event Venue, 3710 Chesswood Drive, Toronto, ON M3J 2P6.*

Jay is widely considered to be the most creative magician on the planet, with over 1500 original deceptions. His YouTube channel has attracted 260,000 subscribers and gathered over 19 million views. He has consulted for many of the world's top magicians, including **David Copperfield** and **David Blaine**. He's vanished the CN Tower, and fooled Penn & Teller.

Tickets are available at various price levels: *Bronze* (\$99 + HST), *Silver* (\$119 + HST), *Gold* (\$139 + HST). And all tickets include *lunch and dinner meals!* (really!)

Other talent announced to date includes **Dick Joiner** (Emcee), **Michael Close**, **Whit "Pop" Haydn**, **James Alan**, **Chris Pilsworth** and **Nicholas Wallace**.

For more information and to purchase your tickets, visit:
<http://www.browsersden.com/bash/>



Johnny Fox - magician and sword swallower

(Independent.co.uk)

Johnny Fox was professional sword-swallower and magician who entertained audiences across the America to help them, as he said, "forget about the sadness and the madness" in the world.

Fox was by his own count one of

around only 20 sword swallowers working in the US – dedicated performers who travel from festival to carnival preserving the traditions of the circus sideshows. He did coin-tricks as well as comedy and was known, according to the organisers of the local *Maryland Renaissance festival* – where he'd worked for 37 years – to "drive an eight inch spike into his nose" and to swallow five-foot balloons.

The 64-year-old had practiced fire-swallowing until he learned it was detrimental to his health – he died from cancer.

But his calling card was his sword act, which he taught himself for job security when he was in his twenties. Copycats could and did attempt to replicate his magic shows but few if any would dare to open wide and turn the sharp end of a sword in the direction of their throat.

Thousands if not millions saw his act on prime time television shows hosted by the likes of **David Letterman**. Thousands more watched him perform at Renaissance festivals and other gatherings.

He said the most important trait of a sword swallower was the ability to conquer fear – and that's not to mention the gag-reflex.

"You have to surrender and open up," Fox told the *New York Times* in 1999. The trick, he continued, is "the ability to relax and dilate your throat, the pharynx and the epiglottis ... when we swallow, they both open."

To counter suspicions that he was using a retractable blade, he sometimes employed a glowing sword that made light emanate from his throat. He was said to swallow swords up to 22 inches long, and up to 16 swords at a time.

In another feat, he swallowed a screwdriver.

"Twist it around a couple of times so my butt doesn't fall off," he told NPR in October, "and make sure I do it clockwise, not counter-clockwise,"

Fox was born in Minneapolis in the early fifties. An uncle of his entertained family members by inserting needles into his thumb, the Times reported.

Fox grew up in Connecticut, where he was living when his father took him to the Eastern States Exposition, a New England fair where he saw curiosities including "*The Giant From Reykjavik, Iceland, 8-foot-8*", "*The Lobster Boy, Alive*", and "*The Monkey Girl, Alive*".

Such so-called freaks, he told one local newspaper, were his superheroes because they had "the courage to stand in front of the public, hearing people say nasty things."

The fair also provided his introduction to sword swallowing. He recalled his brother's incredulity: "Don't believe it, it's fake."

Fox's father encouraged his boyhood interest in magic, giving him a book about **Harry Houdini**. Fox began his performing career in Florida but gradually became known around the country. He once appeared in a television commercial that required him to munching on light bulbs.

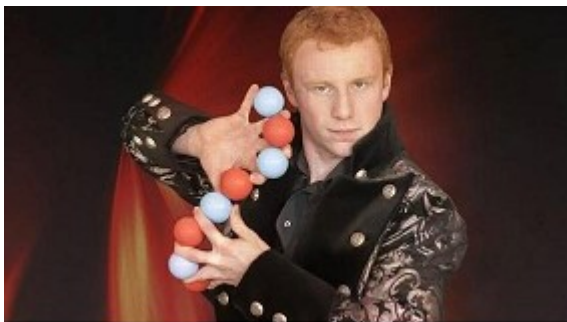
In New York City, he operated a museum: *The Freakatorium, El Museo Loco*, that featured such items as a narwhale tusk, a two-headed turtle, conjoined piglets preserved through pickling, and relics billed as clothing having belonged to **Tom Thumb**; and entertainer **Sammy Davis Jr's** glass eye. The museum closed in 2005, after five years, due to an increase in rent.

Fox was married and divorced four times. Survivors include his partner of two years, **Tammy Calvert**, a son from his second marriage, to **Susan Kelly**; a brother and a sister.

He delighted in providing his audiences with a means of escape from daily life, and the struggle it often entails, with an act that was both difficult to watch and impossible to ignore.

"It's gross and disgusting, I know," he once told *The Washington Post*. "But you'll watch."

John Robert Fox, born 13 November 1953, died 17 December 2017



Cal Tech student wins Magic Master Summit Competition
(SanLuisObispo.com)

Local magician **Elliott Hunter** was awarded first place in the 2017 [Magic Master Summit Competition](#).

Elliott, a second-year student at [Cal Poly](#), has been performing magic for more than 10 years and is a student at *McBride's Magic and Mystery School* in Paradise, Nevada.

He competed with a billiard ball manipulation that he's been perfecting since his freshman year of high school.

The *Magic Master Summit Stage Magic Competition* was created and is hosted by world class Illusionist, **David Davinci**, who received several competition entries from all over the globe.

Elliott hopes to graduate from Cal Poly by 2020 with a degree in manufacturing engineering. He performs monthly at the famed *Magic Castle* in Hollywood, as well as for several on- and off-campus events in the San Luis Obispo community.



The Amazing Johnathan coming to IBM convention

(Magician.org)

We are beyond excited to welcome The **Amazing Johnathan** to the *2018 IBM Convention in Grand Rapids, Michigan!*

A native of Michigan, The Amazing Johnathan is our *Superstar Celebrity Legend of Comedy* and will perform a late night show and comedy lecture. A \$5 donation will be requested from each of the late night show attendees which will be donated to a local charity.

The Amazing Johnathan is an eccentric entertainer whose bizarre humor and unscripted antics have earned him worldwide recognition as the most original and successful comic magician in history. His career has spanned 35 years, entertaining two generations of fans.

The Amazing Johnathan has performed for two presidents and has appeared on hundreds of television shows, including Comedy Central's "*One Night Stand*," "*Lounge Lizards*," "*Premium Blend*," and his own one-hour special, "*Wrong on Every Level*." He has also appeared on HBO's "*Young Comedians Special*," "*Late Night with David Letterman*," "*World's Greatest Magic*," A&E's "*Mindfreak*," as well as a game show called "*Ruckus*," which he co-created with **Merv Griffin**.

In 2001, Johnathan stopped touring and took up residency at the world-famous *Golden Nugget*, taking Las Vegas by storm and breaking box office records. Not since **The Rat Pack** had anyone done the numbers Johnathan did. He was given one of the most lucrative deals ever signed in Vegas, and for 13 years he was one of the biggest draws on The Strip.

In addition to being named one of the "Top Ten Acts in Vegas" by *The Las Vegas Review-Journal*, Johnathan has also won the prestigious "Best of Las Vegas Award."

In 2014, Johnathan began feeling dizzy and out of breath. After consulting his doctors, Johnathan announced to his fans that he had 12 to 15 months to live. His ailing heart had gotten much worse and was beating at only 15 percent. He quickly announced his retirement, performing his final shows at *The Magic Castle* in Hollywood. After thousands of fans had said their final goodbyes, Johnathan vanished from the scene, spending the next few years relaxing at home with his wife Anastasia and their daughter in between hospital visits.

Then Johnathan pulled off his best trick—he didn't die. The expiration date came and went, and Johnathan began feeling stronger. He even left his wheelchair and walked again, much to the amazement of his friends and family.

Although his heart is still severely damaged, most of the impairment caused by the lack of circulation has healed almost completely. Therefore, he has recently done a few abbreviated private shows to get his chops back.

This is Johnathan's FIRST time appearing at a magic convention. You don't want to miss this. [CLICK HERE](#) to register, and [CLICK HERE](#) to see the amazing list of talent released so far.

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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.

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