



Shell Game

A Monthly Newsletter for the London Magic Community
March 2017 Volume 12, Issue 7

February's meeting

The February meeting theme was Homemade Magic, and there were some mighty impressive props that were on display. More on that later.

First, **Mark Hogan** performed a couple of **Larry Becker** effects. First he revealed two mentally selected words from a stack of 30 different words. Then he told the story of Gentleman Jim and had the spectator imagine the correct time where he won his big poker jackpot as well as the card he selected for his big win!

Mike Fisher shows us a terrific *Banknite* effect using a cleverly constructed die (handmade, of course!). He also showed off a space trick where two selected cards with space images on them matched Mike's predictions. And he turned into his Captain Corbin persona & placed a deck containing a selected card in a scary pirate isolation chamber and had a "kid" fire a real (small) cannon at it, which blew a hole right through the selected card!

The star of the night was **Keith O'Brien**. He showed off some amazing magic props to do effects like these: A card containing a hole – but he peeled off the hole leaving it repaired; passing a hanky through the middle of a cellphone; a ladybug walking along a card spread to find a selected card; a Ring Flight that he modified to lock in place; and some astonishing levitation work with loops and a spider pen.

Next Meeting:

Date: Wednesday, March 8

Time: 7:30 PM

**Topic: BRING A TRICK FROM A BOOK FOR
SOMEONE ELSE TO DO!**

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

But the coolest item of the night was his *homemade close-up pad*. But not just any close-up pad – one that *blows smoke* out of several places in the mat that could be controlled! I won't give away how he constructed this, but it's safe to say the idea is ingenious – and it wouldn't surprise anyone if he thought of marketing them. It was easily the highlight of the night.

Thanks to everyone for bringing out some of their homemade magic!

Mark Hogan

March's Meeting

DATE: **Wednesday, March 8**
TIME: **7:30 PM**
PLACE: **Beal Secondary School**
 525 Dundas Street, London
 T-253

TOPIC: BRING A TRICK FROM A BOOK FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO DO!

You likely have one or more favorite books or magazines in your collection. Bring a trick from that book/magazine and the instructions as well as any props required to perform it – as someone else is going to learn it and perform it!

Pick one that you think someone else can learn in a fairly short period of time. We'll perform them once people feel comfortable with them.

Come out and see someone else perform something from one of your favorite books/magazines!

We Want Your Reviews and Tricks!

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

magic_london@yahoo.ca

News Of Interest



Festival de Magie de Québec

(FestivalDeMagie.ca)

This year the **Festival de Magic de Québec** will be held *May 4 through 7* in *Québec City* at the *Capitole de Québec* hotel.

Here is a list of the many performers and lectures scheduled for this event:

Luc Langevin

Hector Mancha (*FISM world champion 2015*)

Rob Zabrecky

Boris Wild

MysterAct

Nicholas Dutel

George Saterial

Marc Trudel

Phillippe Theriault

And many others!

For more information or to register, visit:

<http://www.festivaldemagie.ca/>

Casino makes Harry Blackstone Jr. apprentice reappear

(Triuplicate.com)

Although magician **Aaron Radatz** is the star of the show, seeming to effortlessly conjure illusions and tricks at will, the performance people will see this Saturday at *Elk Valley Casino* is the product of months and even years of dreaming, planning, building and organizing by a team of talented people.

Radatz will be returning to this weekend for two shows in his third appearance of the past five years at Elk Valley.

"Collaboration as a team is crucial," Radatz said Tuesday. "Early on when I apprenticed with well-known magicians, one of the things I learned by watching them do it is that you come up with an idea and all of the concepts to pull it off, and then you hire the people who can put together all of the pieces and components — a welder, a seamstress, an artist to sketch it — to make it the best it can be."

Radatz said the process of thinking up new tricks is "a ton of fun. I have notebook after notebook of ideas. Most of them don't make it onstage just because there isn't time onstage, and also some things work but others don't."

When Radatz has a "sit-down" show — a long run at one venue as opposed to the frenetic pace of single-night shows on a cross-country or world tour — he will set up cameras and try out new tricks and jokes to see what comes off well onstage and resonates with audiences.

"It's one of those things about magic: You can create something and rehearse it in front of family and friends, but you really have to perform it in front of an audience to see if it's something you want to do for several years to come," he said.

This year's show — which Radatz stresses will feature new material and be unlike past performances in Crescent City — he calls "magic unplugged." It features popular street magic-style tricks with an emphasis on interacting with the audience with props and audience members' personal belongings, making them vanish and reappear. Then he will close with a tribute to Harry Houdini by escaping from a straitjacket.

Radatz has enjoyed performing magic since early childhood. An important moment in his development was when he saw **David Copperfield's** famous live show making the Statue of Liberty disappear in 1983.

"I was amazed to think this is something you could do for a career."

Copperfield's contributions didn't end there. Radatz has had several opportunities to meet with him and receive critiques of his work.

"He's been my major inspiration."

As a teenager he began performing for schools and private parties, and at the age of 18 he gave a center stage performance for the *Chrysler Corporation* at a new car announcement in San Francisco. Two years later became the

youngest magician to headline a production at Casino Magic in Biloxi, Mississippi.

He is the only magician to have apprenticed for **Harry Blackstone Jr.**, a well-known magician in the 1970s and '80s.

"I always jokingly say it was like a Harry Potter school. I didn't get paid; my payment was what I learned," he said.

Under Blackstone, Radatz' jobs included moving props and selling merchandise — "pretty much every non-glorious thing. But it was a great way to learn how to pull shows like this off."

As Radatz' career has progressed, he has toured 45 states, 37 countries and six continents.

Several countries were added to that list through his work as the only magician ever commissioned by the *Department of Defense* to deliver command performances to members of the U.S. military, according to his website.

"They are by far the most rewarding shows I've ever done," he said.

His performances for the troops began with what he described as "cushy" assignments in places such as rural England, but then they started sending him to "places that weren't threatening but were weird, like Rejavik, Iceland, which was like being on the planet Hoth."

The assignments progressed to more dangerous locations, such as Sarajevo, Bosnia, and then the Middle East.

"I had to wear bulletproof vests, and the audience members had guns at their side, but I also felt like I had a lot more reason to be there. This was the only thing they had to do that didn't include being bombed that night. You felt like your presence was more needed. It was just awesome. They're so welcoming. They take such great care of you. And there's something about being fresh from the United States: they ask you where you're from, how things are back home — they just want to make small talk."



How David Copperfield became the world's most successful magician

(Forbes.com)

I spoke to **David Copperfield**, the most commercially successful magician in history, about his early influences, what keeps him motivated to continue to perform after years of magic, how he comes up with new tricks and his best career advice.

Copperfield is currently performing at the [MGM Resorts](#) in Las Vegas. His television specials have won 21 *Emmy Awards* of a total 38 nominations. Best known for his combination of storytelling and illusion, Copperfield's career of over 40 years has earned him 11 *Guinness World Records*, a star on the *Hollywood Walk of Fame*, a knighthood by the French government, and he has been named a *Living Legend* by the U.S. Library of Congress. He has so far sold 33 million tickets and grossed over \$4 billion, which is more than any other solo entertainer in history. When not performing, he manages his chain of eleven resort islands in the Bahamas.

Dan Schawbel: You started practicing magic at such a young age. Who were some of your influences back then?

David Copperfield: My influences weren't magicians in the classic sense, but the great MGM stars like Gene Kelly and Fred Astaire. Frank Sinatra was a huge influence. If only I could sing! I also studied the great film directors. Capra. Hitchcock. Victor Fleming. Orson Welles.

I loved magic of course, but it was sort of in a stasis when I was a kid. Being a magician meant wearing tails and saying nothing and making birds appear. Having role models from the cinema turned out to be a good thing for me, because I was inspired to bring storytelling to magic, romance, choreography—all the elements of film and theater that I loved. My initial contribution was to add romance, suspense, and narrative to my work.

Schawbel: After decades performing magic on TV and in front of crowds, what keeps you motivated? Are you still honing your craft?

Copperfield: I love creating experiences that haven't been seen or felt before, and if I get it right, I'll be pushing my art forward. I'm blessed and cursed with never being satisfied.

I still feel like I did when I was sixteen, striving to get better every day. We record each performance. I watch each show and try to see what the audience is responding to. I look for ways to improve everything. Complacency has never been a problem. Rarely do I feel completely satisfied with a show. Usually, I obsess about how each little thing can be enhanced, improved. It's a difficult way to live but I have high standards and striving constantly to meet them is part of what keeps me going.

Schawbel: What is your process for coming up with new magic and how do you decide which you will continue to use?

Copperfield: I brainstorm with my team constantly. I'm always looking for new material. I watch a movie and think, "Wow, I loved that part where I felt something new. What if we....?" There are many classic themes in magic. Appearing, disappearing, levitating, passing through solid objects, etc. I like to take those themes and see how far I can push them so we do things no one has ever done before. I never take no for an answer. Years ago, when I decided to make the Statue of Liberty disappear, I had a lot of people rolling their eyes. After I did it in front of a live audience, the doubting vanished, just like the statue. When I tell my audiences to "live the impossible," I'm not kidding.

Schawbel: Aside from being a magician, you're also a very successful businessman. You own islands and even a museum. How do you balance being an artist with being a businessman?

Copperfield: Necessity. I never wanted to be a businessman. It just happens. You have to attend to the business side of things. But I'm not a guy absorbed by a ton of hobbies. I don't golf. I don't play tennis. I don't ski. My work is how I have fun—though not without stress—and the islands, the museum, and developing them into something I'm proud of—that brings me a lot of joy.

Schawbel: What are your top three pieces of career advice?

Copperfield:

1. *Passion.* Fall in love with something as early as you can and then go for it with everything you have. Passion will keep you going when the going gets tough.

2. *Preparation.* Learn everything you can about your dream—other's mistakes, potential drawbacks, the history, etc. Then work your tail off so that you are completely prepared. There's an old saying I'll paraphrase: "The will to be great is far more common than the willingness to do what it takes to be great." Improvisation and spontaneity are crucial but they must come from a base of enormous preparation. Learn to fly, but not by the seat of your pants.

3. *Persistence.* Get used to the fact that there is no substitute for hard work. The old saying is true. The harder you work, the luckier you tend to be. So is the

other old saying, "God is with those who persevere." Learn from setbacks, use them to improve. And charge your fears. Run at them. Use fear as energy.

Penn Jillette condemns "violence" in David Blaine's Bullet Catch

(magicnews.org)

If you want to hear **Penn Jillette** talk about **David Blaine's** *Bullet Catch* from his most recent TV special, visit:

<https://youtu.be/WUDCn0snnPU>

Shell Game
Vol. 12, Issue 7
March 2017

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