



Shell Game

A Monthly Newsletter for the London Magic Community
March 2019 Volume 14, Issue 7

February's meeting

The weather in February has been truly awful – and this night was no exception. Non-stop snow for a couple of days did not stop a good crowd from coming out in February – including a new guest. Welcome, **Clint Barkhouse!**

A returning friend, **Dom St. Jacques**, showed us his version of Dean Dill's "Blizzard" (using **Greg Wilson's Cold Case**) where a merely thought-of card becomes the only non-blank card in the entire deck!

Keith O'Brien showed us an awesome new item called *Quantum* (from *Theory 11*) where a Sharpie not only *slowly* penetrates a playing card, but is dragged around the card and slowly pulled out of it! Then to top it off, he had a spectator tear a selected card in half, staple it back together, then visually remove the tear – leaving just the staples! Really cool to watch!

Malachi Davey showed us his version of a *Paddle Move* effect using a pencil, and **Clint Barkhouse** explained a similar effect where he uses an "angel" from a Bicycle deck attached to the pencil. Always great to hear about different variations on effects.

Mark Hogan performed **Simon Aronson's "Prior Commitment"** where the correct location of two spectator selections are "told" to Mark by the two Jokers – only to see the Jokers predicted those locations all along!

Next Meeting:

Date: Wednesday, MARCH 20 (1 WEEK LATER THAN USUAL)

Time: 7:30 PM

Topic: BLIND MAGIC!
Beal Secondary School
525 Dundas Street, London
Room 253

Mike Fisher lead two important portions of the night. First, Mike lead a *Broken Wand ceremony* for two well-known club members who recently left us: **Dicky Dean** and **Lorne Overholt**. (see the February newsletter for information on Lorne and Dicky).

Afterwards, Mike performed the *Troublewit* phase of his "*Fair and Foul*" lecture on magicians of the 19th century. Handing us all Troublewits, he handed out charts of different Troublewit objects and we all raced to see who could create them the fastest! It was a definitely a headscratcher, but we had a lot of fun trying to shape those Troublewits into different objects.

Thanks to all who came out on a cold and snowy winter night for making the night so enjoyable.

Mark Hogan

March's Meeting

I

DATE: Wednesday, March 20
TIME: 7:30 PM
PLACE: Beal Secondary School
525 Dundas Street, London
Room 253

TOPIC: BLIND MAGIC!

It's a given that our audiences have to see our magic to understand and appreciate it. But what happens if you are performing for a person who is blind? Or what if you are blind (or blindfolded) yourself?

That's the challenge for March! Find some tricks that you could perform for a person who is blind. Or perhaps some tricks where you as the performer are blindfolded. Or even some tricks using gimmicked blindfolds.

Come out in March and "see the light" (get it??). Learn some effects that you can do where sight isn't required.

We Want Your Reviews and Tricks!

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

magic_london@yahoo.ca

News Of Interest



Browser's Bash 2019 - Suzanne

(Browser's Den)

Tickets for the 2019 Browser's Magic Bash are now available.

VIP Platinum and Gold tickets were already *sold out* after one day! But there are still *Silver* (\$129 + HST) and *Bronze* tickets (\$99 + HST) available. And prices include meals!

The 2019 Browser's Bash (the fifth edition of this event) will be held on **Saturday, April 13, 2019** from **9:00am to 9:00pm** at the same location as in past years, the **Montecasino Hotel and Event Venue** (3710 Chesswood Drive, Toronto ON M3J 2P6), located just north of downtown Toronto.



One of this year's Bash performers is **Suzanne**.

Not only did **SUZANNE** fool **Penn and Teller**, she was the first female magician to earn the *Close Up Magician of the Year* award from the *Academy of Magical Arts*. Plus she has been a featured cover story in both *Genii* and *MUM* magazines! (see photo above).

Her engaging style makes the audience an essential participant in her performance. Other respected professional magicians called her "flawless" and

"amazing". She is a favorite at Hollywood's famous *Magic Castle*. Her specialty is close-up magic for corporate and private events.

To see **Suzanne** fool **Penn and Teller**, visit:

<https://youtu.be/Oe3oMC9U2eY>

Also new this year at the Bash: **Over \$1000 of magic** will be given away via random draws throughout the day! Everyone who attends will have a chance to **win free magic!** Plus there will be lunch and dinner break talks and seminars by **Johan Babins, Chris Bruce, Chris Westfell, Wij**, and others.

For more information on the Browser's Bash or to purchase tickets, visit:

<https://www.browsersden.com/bash>

Magic at the Marienbad - coming April 5

(Mike Fisher)

Mike Fisher will be performing as the *Amazing Corbin, the Charming Cheat* at "Magic at the Marienbad" – starting a monthly event which will be held on the first Friday of the month starting on **April 5** at the *Marienbad Restaurant & Chancer's Pub* (122 Carling St, London).

Cocktail hour starts at 6:30pm with strolling magic from local magicians.

Magic at the Marienbad is "An incredible evening of mind-bending magic and hilarious comedy. *Magic at the Marienbad* presents a carefully selected duo of professional stand-up comics and world class magicians."

The **Amazing Corbin** will be the magic performer for the first event, along with comic **Dave Sokolowski**. Dave performs all over Ontario and New York. He is also a professional actor on television and movies.

Tickets are \$24 each, To purchase tickets, visit:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/magic-at-the-marienbad-tickets-54645853218>

FREE Lance Burton Teen Seminar at IBM convention in Scottsdale, Arizona

(Lance Burton)



I began my journey in magic with the help of mentors at the *Louisville Magic Club (Ring 64)*. It was the launch pad that led to a career as a Las Vegas headliner, my own TV specials, and international awards in magic.

The Ring 64 members didn't know it at the time – nor did I – of the success I would achieve; they were just passing along their love of magic.

That's what I want to do for your Ring at the upcoming I.B.M. Convention in Scottsdale – share my deep passion and experience in magic.

Specifically, I'd like to boost your youth magic program by training several of your teens at my **Lance Burton Teen Seminar** on **July 8-10**, just prior to the beginning of the *IBM Convention*, July 10-13.

The best way to learn magic is from mentors, not from the Internet, which can only offer a few secrets, not how to perform effects.

Here's how you can help me help your youth initiatives.

- Read this letter at an upcoming Ring meeting and share the word
- Read the attached letter going to all I.B.M. Teen members encouraging them to attend the Seminar
- Identify several teen magicians who might profit from individualized magic instruction by myself, **Jeff McBride**, **Larry Hass** and select guest presenters at the Convention
- Distribute copies of the "*The 2018 Lance Burton Teen Seminar*" article in *The Linking Ring*, September 2018, pages 46-49
- Follow the "*Spotlight on Lance Burton Teen – Where Are They Now*" monthly column that began in the October 2018 *The Linking Ring* to see the success of past seminar participants.
- Remind teens that the seminar is **free** if they register for the Convention at <http://ibmconvention.com/>
- Tell them that two partial travel scholarship available if they wish to apply for these travel funds

I'm pleased that my annual Teen Seminar has become the youth flagship program for the I.B.M. With absolute consistency, I am dedicated to training the next generation of magicians, but I need your help to ensure more youth in your area become actively engaged in magic.

Best Regards,
Lance Burton



Bill Abbott's Pro Tips

(Bill Abbott)

A free resource of ideas and inspiration for all performers, from a former Canadian Magician of the Year.

Thoughts on closers, openers, how to connect and how to make your audience fall in love with you. *Bill Abbott's Magic Pro-Tips* is a FREE resource that may inspire and motivate you in your magical journey.

Visit the following link for 20 tips from Bill to help you with your magic:

<https://billabbottmagic.com/blogs/bill-abbott-magic-pro-tips>

Magic and psychology

(The Atlantic)

"I'm going to flip through here and I want you to glance at a card in the middle," **Jay Olson** tells his volunteer, offering the deck of cards in his hands. "Not the bottom one—that's kind of simple for me—but one in the middle. Okay?"

She okays. He flips; she glances.

Olson, a graduate student in psychiatry at *McGill University*, puts the cards back in their box and hands it to her. "So which one did you choose?" The 10 of hearts, she tells him. "The 10 of hearts," he repeats. "Great. So now if you could just examine the outside of the box to make sure it's normal"—she does—"and then take that box and just close it right inside your hands."

He snaps his fingers over hers. "Now I want you to slowly open your hand and read the bar code"—and sure enough, there are the words, printed right on the box: the 10 of hearts. The volunteer hands the box back to Olson, giggling at the seeming impossibility of what just transpired, unaware that she didn't really choose the 10 of hearts at all. Olson chose it for her, in a piece of trickery so quick and so subtle as to seem almost like magic.

The scene is part of a [video](#) released in tandem with Olson's latest [study](#), published earlier this week in the journal *Cognition and Consciousness*. Together with a team of researchers from McGill and the *University of British Columbia*, he demonstrated the effectiveness of a technique that magicians call *forcing*, or manipulating a person's decisions without her knowledge.



In the first part of the study, Olson, a practicing magician, approached 118 people and asked them to randomly pick a card as he flipped through the deck, an act that took about a half-second in total. Each time, though, Olson already had a specific card in mind. As he flipped, he'd let his target card show just slightly longer than the rest. **Ninety-eight percent of the time, the participants picked the one he had in mind, even as 91 percent said the choice had been entirely theirs**—illustrating, the study authors wrote, that magic “can provide new methods to study the feeling of free will.”

But when I asked Olson about the method in question—how, exactly, did he maneuver the flip so that his card showed for just a fraction of a second longer?—he deflected. “I can’t share that,” he said. “It’s part of the secret.”

Olson and his colleagues are part of a small but growing group of researchers investigating how tricks like this one can offer insight into how people think, perceive, and remember. In some ways, the pairing of science and magic doesn’t seem like much of a pairing at all: One field dedicated to uncovering the rules of the world, and another predicated on the (seeming) ability to break them; a discipline that tries to further understanding, and a performance art whose continued existence depends on secrecy.

In other ways, though, it makes a strange kind of sense. Magicians build their craft on the knowledge of *how* people act, psychologists dig into the *why*, and this new area of study that some have dubbed “neuromagic” tries to fill in the space in between. A recent special issue of the journal *Frontiers in Psychology* titled “*The Psychology of Magic, the Magic of Psychology*” (Olson was a co-editor) included a study on insight and problem-solving that had subjects watch the same trick over and over until they cracked it, one that used data from eye-tracking movements of audience members to examine attention, and one that used fMRI scans to see what happens in the brain when people witness a seemingly supernatural event.

“The actual link between science and magic is quite intuitive, but it’s actually difficult to draw direct links between the two fields, and one reason is that magicians and scientists generally use quite different language to describe the same principles,” said **Gustav Kuhn**, a professor of psychology at Goldsmith’s College, University of London, a practicing magician, and another co-author of the *Frontiers* magic issue.

For example, forcing, the technique examined in Olson’s card study, can take two very different paths towards a similar end. *Physical forcing*, which Olson used, is when one object is made to somehow stand out over the others that surround it. *Psychological forcing*, by contrast, is “when you try to make an option more salient in somebody’s mind,” Olson explained.

“Say that I ask you to think of a card. Based on the wording of that, I can influence you to choose particular cards.” (In a previous study, he and his colleagues examined the factors that made certain cards more memorable or more visible than others. When the researchers asked subjects to name a card, for example, **40 percent of people would choose either the Ace of Spades**

or the Queen of Hearts, information the team later publicized in the magicians' magazine *Genii*.) Both types serve the same purpose—the subject makes what they think is a choice—but one is a matter of perception, the other a more complicated mix of memory, association, and social interaction.

Two other major tenets of magic tricks, *illusion* and *misdirection*, present the same sort of challenge. “When [magicians] use misdirection to prevent you from being aware of something, the mechanism by which this happens is sort of irrelevant, really—they just need to have a mechanism that works really well,” Kuhn told me. “But you can fail to notice something because, for example, you fail to encode the information, or because you encode the information and afterwards you forget about it. These are two very different processes in perception and memory, and as scientists, for us, it’s very important to distinguish between the two.”

For the entire article, go to:

<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2015/02/this-is-your-brain-on-magic/385468/>

Shell Game
Vol. 14, Issue 7
March 2019

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