



# Shell Game

A Monthly Newsletter for the London Magic Community  
March 2020 Volume 15, Issue 7

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## February's meeting

This month we had a lecture by our own *Mr. Magic* – **Dennis Weir!**

Dennis was a High School science teacher for much of his life, and he says he started every class with a magic trick! And he showed us some of the tricks he would use in class

He started by inverting a Mason jar full of water without the water coming out – then he could make it come out on command! He also presented his *Shell Game* routine using Tim Horton's cups and a loonie – where in the end the water and loonie disappeared! Of course science was involved and Dennis gave us a rundown of the science involved in both effects.

Next came a couple effects from his friend **Peter the Near Great**. "*Stretch the Rabbit*" was a nice *Clippo* version where the rabbit's long neck could be cut shorter and shorter! And his "*Hat and Purse*" was a nice take on Torn & Restored Tissues where the performers produces a hat and the spectator produces a matching purse (with candy inside!). Dennis also had a Troublewit vase that he turned into a couple different hats!

### Next Meeting:

**Date: Wednesday, MARCH 11**

**Time: 7:30 PM**

**Topic: COIN MAGIC!**

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

Along with performing **Jack Harron's** *Cut & Restored Rope*, Mr. Magic took a couple pieces of strings and with two spectators pulling them, turned them into a single string! He also presented a *Card Zig Zag Lady*, a *Harbin table* and a *Snapper* gimmick that he had made himself!

Next he performed *Shawn Farquhar's Torn to Pieces*, where a torn signed photo is restored - inside out! He also had a very nice *Three Card Monte* stand-up routine where the followed card changed into a different card – twice!

Card tricks were next as Dennis performed his version of “*Sam the Bellhop*” where the cards tell a story – as well as *Spelling Diamonds*, where a packet of all Diamonds could be found by spelling them! He finished with “*Aces Up*” where a spectator cut to all the Aces, and his take on the *9 card trick* where he found 5 spectator’s selection by having them spell personal information about themselves!

Many thanks to *Mr. Magic* (and his family in attendance!) for his terrific presentation which made for a fun and enjoyable night!

Mark Hogan

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## March’s Meeting

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**DATE: Wednesday, MARCH 11**

**TIME: 7:30 PM**

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

## TOPIC: COIN MAGIC!

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Back by popular demand ... we want to see some *coin magic*!

Coin magic can come in all shapes and sizes – including productions, vanishes, penetrations, restorations, teleportations and even mental magic – using both sleights and a host of coin gimmicks. Almost everyone has some defects they do using coins – we’d love to see what you’ve got!

So dig deep into your pockets, come out in March and learn some new coin magic to add to your repertoire!

**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

## “Magic at the Marienbad” - Friday March 13 show

(Mike Fisher)

This month's *Magic at the Marienbad* show is on **Friday, March 11**. (Yes – that's *Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>!*) Doors open at 6:30pm – show is at 7:00pm.

Break out of the winter blahs with our *March Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>* show. The night's performers will be bringing some unusual magic and freaky tricks for Friday the 13th. It would be very unlucky to miss this show.

Opening the evening is **Awesome Mike!** His performance during our January Variety show was Awesome and now he's coming back with a full show to amaze.

Our headliner for the evening is a little different, somewhat strange and definitely perfect for a Friday the 13th. **Poppa Jimbo** will bring his strange and creepy style of hoo doo voo doo magic.

For more info and to order tickets, visit:  
<https://www.facebook.com/MagicMarienbad/>.



IBM Convention and Lance Burton  
Teen Seminar free for IBM junior  
members

(Magician.org)

The I.B.M. is excited to announce that under the leadership of our youngest elected President, **Alex Zander**, the convention committee of Pittsburgh 2020 (July 8-11, 2020) has decided to allow I.B.M. Youth members the opportunity to register for our annual convention for the low cost of *NOTHING!*

Yes, you read that correctly. All youth members under 18 in good standing will be able to register for FREE. That means you'll be able to attend the convention, participate in events, lectures, contests and see all the shows for absolutely no cost to you. (If you aren't a youth I.B.M. member, that's OK - you can join the I.B.M. for one year for \$55 when you register for the convention.)

There are a few stipulations to this amazing deal though. As a youth member, you must be accompanied to the convention by a parent or legal

guardian and as such they must be registered for the convention. The good news is the cost for registration for a non-magician parent is considerably less than the cost a magician would have to pay.

As a free registrant to the convention, we will be calling on you occasionally to help us with such things as backstage helpers, set-up crews, line up maintenance and even assisting some of our magical stars.

We do have a *limited number of these FREE registrations* available so you need to act quickly to ensure your spot at what is certain to be one of the most epic magic events ever.

To register for the I.B.M. convention in Pittsburgh, visit <https://www.magician.org/convention/online-registration>

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Yes, youth members (ages 13-19) can attend the *Lance Burton Teen Seminar at the I.B.M convention* for free as well! The Seminar will be facilitated by none other than **Jeff McBride** and **Dr. Lawrence Hass**, the Founder and the Dean of the world-famous *Magic & Mystery School* in Las Vegas. It will also feature special guests.

Dates for the Seminar are from the *evening of July 6th, through lunchtime on July 8th*. There will also be a *Teen Scene* facilitated for one hour per day during the convention by the facilitators.

The *McBride Magic and Mystery School* has been facilitating *Lance Burton's Teen Seminar* since its inception in 2003. In the past our special guest instructors have included **Jeff McBride, Eugene Burger, Suzanne, Oscar Munoz, Joe M Turner, Larry Hass, Joshua Jay, Jessica Jane, and Shawn Farquhar**.



To find out more about the qualifications necessary for this amazing life-changing event, visit:

<http://ibmconvention.com/lance-burton-teen-seminar/>

## How do they really feel?

(Joshua Jay)

In September 2016, **Joshua Jay** published an article called "*What Do Audiences Really Think?*". He collaborated with **Dr. Lisa Grimm**, a researcher and professor from *The College of New Jersey*, involving 526 participants from ages 18 through 80.

Clips of Joshua's performances, and well-known clips from other magicians, were shown to the participants and used to gain valuable information about what audiences think of magic, what they love (and hate), how we can more easily get volunteers, etc. The following excerpt is from this study.

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We already explored people's existing feelings about magic, then took a brief detour into what cards and colors and symbols people are most likely to think of. So far, our study has been concerned with preconceived notions of magic. Now we dive into what aspects of magic people enjoy most after they see it. *What do they remember most? What do they forget? Are they as fooled as we think they are?*

The first experiment we did concerned the *framing of magic performances*. It was another A/B test; we divided the population into two testing groups. Both groups were shown the same video: **Shawn Farquhar's** FISM-winning routine, "*Shape of My Heart*." The first group was simply asked to watch the video. They weren't told anything specific about Shawn or his effect. The second group was told that they were about to watch the *World Champion in Sleight-of-Hand Magic* perform the routine that helped him win magic's highest honor. Everyone from each group was then asked to rate their enjoyment of the clip, and to talk about their experiences.

Were people more amazed when they thought the magician was a world champion? Do accolades matter?

Yes and no. Shockingly, there was very little difference in how much people enjoyed Shawn's magic. Those who knew his background enjoyed it about the same as those who didn't. But that's not the full story.

Those who knew his accolades attributed him more credit and skill than those who didn't. People were nearly four times more likely to click to see more magic from Shawn if they were presented with his credentials. The accolades led to a deeper appreciation.

We did a similar A/B experiment with **Benjamin Earl's** fantastic *Fool Us* video. In the video, he locates four Aces from a shuffled deck, each in an increasingly impossible way. Group A was shown the video without any introduction. Group B read this before watching: "*The following magic trick is performed by magician Ben Earl, one of the finest sleight-of-hand artists in the*

world. He is one of only four magicians with the skill required to perform this effect perfectly."

With **Shawn Farquhar's** video, we were testing whether peer selection affected people's enjoyment. In other words, if other people think this guy is good, he must be good. With **Ben Earl's** video, we tested for skill. If people perceive someone as having virtuosic skill, would they appreciate and enjoy the show more?

In the case of **Ben Earl's** video, participants did enjoy the clip more *if they were told in advance that what he was doing was extremely difficult*. They attributed to Ben more skill, surprise, complexity, and enjoyment when they perceived his talent to be world class. *Eighty-five percent of those who thought what they were seeing was difficult wanted to see Ben perform more material. Only 33 percent of those who were told nothing about Ben's skill wanted to see more material.*

Certain accolades matter more than others, it turns out. What is more impressive to an audience: great skill, performing on television, winning awards, performing for celebrities, or being expensive?

We tested for different accolades in each clip. Audiences are most impressed by television performances. The other accolades are appreciated about the same. However, magicians introduced with some kind of accolade (anything at all impressive) were more deeply appreciated.

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Rating (Ben Earl)</b>
Has performed on national TV	6.1
Is expensive	5.8
Possesses great skill	5.3
No accolades	5.1

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Rating (Shawn Farquhar)</b>
Performed for celebrities	5.8
Preselected by others	5.8
Has won awards	5.3
No accolades	5.1

The takeaway here is that introductions matter. As a convention organizer, I've introduced many magicians. When I ask how they would like to be introduced, the majority of performers say things like, "*Whatever you want,*" or "*Just keep it short,*" or "*It doesn't matter.*" If you care about how deeply your audience appreciates you, it does matter.

Quick caveat: This isn't a license to invent credits, just encouragement to use the ones you've already earned. Sure, you were in the audience for a taping of *The Tonight Show*. That doesn't mean you were on *The Tonight Show*.

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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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