



# Shell Game

A Monthly Newsletter for the London Magic Community  
March 2026  
Volume 19, Issue 7

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## February's meeting

The February meeting theme was "*Your Out Of Your Hands!*", where we performed effects where the magic happens out of the magician's hands!

**Mark Hogan** received a text from a *mystery magician*, asking him to follow a series of steps using a deck of cards (that magically appeared in his pocket!) that lead to a card being finally selected – which just happened to appear on **Peter Mennie's** phone! (We're all still wondering who the mystery magician is!). Peter also performed **Jim Steinmeyer's** "*The Nine Card Problem*" with a clever twist on how the revealed card is initially selected.

**Sam General** showed us **Nathan Rantala's** "*Jacks Rob a Bank*" - an *Ace Assembly* effect he has recently been working on with a fun plot (learn it below!). Four bank robbers (the four Jacks) went into four different "bank vaults", each containing 3 cards of high value. But the Security guard (the Joker) foiled their robbery plot and found all the bank robbers caught together in one vault.

**Scott Hood** presented a 3-D puzzle of a deck of cards, then magically changed it into a regular deck! He then had four cards randomly selected, which turned out to be the four Queens, and all the other cards were shown to be blank!

**Peter Skells** used his favorite new technique (courtesy of **Si Stebbins!**) to have a card selected and lost into a shuffled packet – yet Peter was able to

### Next Meeting:

**Date: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11**

**Time: 7:00 PM**

**Topic: ANOTHER TALENT IN YOUR MAGIC!**

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

hunt it down! Plus he did his pet ACAAN effect where he knows the position of any thought-of card in a deck!

**Andrew Olmstead** performed the best trick of the entire night – he made **Leo Martins** a *Canadian citizen!* (Congratulations, Leo – and that Canadian tie looks good on you!). Andrew also performed a **Jon Racherbaumer** and **Hideo Kato** effect where a random card selected and re-inserted into the deck behind the spectator’s back was known to Andrew – plus the card ended up reversed in the deck!

**Mark Hogan** showed off his newest purchase – **Caleb Wiles’s F.A.C.T.**, where the spectator plays the part of a magician - not only finding a selected card, but also all its mates, plus showing the spectator knew the selection before the trick even started!

Thanks to everyone who came out to have magic happen out of your hands!

Mark Hogan

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### *March’s meeting*

**DATE: Wednesday, March 11**

**TIME: 7:00 PM**

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

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### **TOPIC: ANOTHER TALENT IN YOUR MAGIC!**

Many of us have other talents or skills that you incorporate into your magic. It might be music, or ventriloquism, or balloons, or juggling, or singing, or a good memory, or ...

If you do something well and are able to incorporate it into your magic, we’d love to see it!

And if not, perhaps you perform an effect that makes you *appear* to have a certain talent or skill (i.e., a trick that makes you look like a gambling shark, or have a master memory, or have x-ray vision, or ...)

Hope to see you on **Wednesday, March 11!**

**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



### Club exchange with Hamilton's Ring 49 - DATES CONFIRMED

(Ring49magic.com)

The *London Magicians Guild* has accepted an invitation from the Hamilton magic club (*I.B.M Ring 49 – the Doug Henning Magic Wand Club*) to do an **exchange** this spring.

As in the past, members of the Hamilton club will visit London on our regular meeting and perform/lecture for us, and members of the London club will return the favour on one of the Hamilton club's regular meetings to do the same.

Dates for these visits have now been CONFIRMED:

- The Hamilton magicians will come to London on **Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>**. This is our regular meeting date for April.
- London magicians would then visit Hamilton on **Tuesday May 12<sup>th</sup>**. This is the regular Hamilton club meeting night for April.

We are looking for London magicians (that's us!) who would like to travel to Hamilton to perform/lecture on Tuesday May 12<sup>th</sup>. We would figure out carpooling arrangements once we know who is interested.

Please consider joining us in a trip to Hamilton. More information will be available as the date approaches.

**NOTE:** There was a suggestion put forward for London to considering hosting *both Hamilton and Windsor clubs* at a future club exchange event (perhaps sometime next year). People in attendance at the February meeting thought it was a great idea.



Conjuring Cocktails show in St.  
Thomas on Saturday March 28  
(Eventbrite)

Get ready to experience the ultimate mix of magic and comedy at Captains, Conjuring and Cocktails – it's going to be spellbinding!

**DATE:** Saturday, March 28  
**TIME:** 8:00 PM  
**PLACE:** Bass Notez Cocktail Lounge  
703 Talbot Street, St. Thomas

Get ready for a night packed with laughs and magic at Bass Notez! Join us in person for unforgettable and mind-blowing conjuring, all while sipping on your favorite cocktails. It's the perfect way to unwind and share some good vibes with friends. Don't miss out on this unique experience that's sure to tickle your funny bone and amaze your senses!

On tap will be two great club performers: **Mike Fisher** (as the *Amazing Corbin*) and **Peter Mennie** (*Canada's Family Friendly Fooler*)!

Tickets are only \$17.31! Get yours now by visiting:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/conjuring-and-cocktails-tickets-1981443227031>

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## Learn Sam's trick "*Jacks Rob a Bank*" from last month

(Sam General)

Last month **Sam General** did a terrific *Ace Assembly* effect from **Nathan Rantala**, which is a fun variation of **Bill Malone's** *Shipwrecked*.

Four bank robbers (the four Jacks) go into four different "bank vaults", each containing 3 cards of high value. But the Security guard (the Joker) foil their robbery plot and find all the bank robbers caught together in one vault.

To learn the effect, visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9fj48oRRbk>

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## What Daniel Garcia says about creating strong effects

(ConjurorCommunity.com)

Most magicians have had the experience of performing something that *should* have been strong — solid method, clear effect — and watching it land softer than expected.

And then, just as confusing, seeing something built on an almost trivial method bring the house down.

When that happens often enough, it raises an uncomfortable question:

## **What's actually doing the work here?**

Years ago, CC Coach **Alex Slemmer** and I were invited to the Dominican Republic to take part in a magic project put together by our friend — the brilliant **BJ Bueno**.

BJ brought together a group of exceptional magicians, and one of the great privileges of that trip was getting to spend time working and learning with **Danny Garcia**. Danny understands how magic works on television better than almost anyone I've ever met.

As Alex and I were doing our best to contribute alongside a lot of powerful minds, Danny kept repeating the same simple formula:

***Force and reveal.***

**Force and reveal.  
That's what it's all about.**

At the time, it struck me because it echoed something much older.

I remembered the early '90s, when I first got truly excited about magic. This was still a couple of years before I found *The Royal Road to Card Magic* and started to think of myself as a magician — or at least someone aspiring to be one.

Back then, I remember watching a **Penn & Teller** PBS special and being completely hooked.

The very first piece opened with Penn apparently explaining exactly how the trick worked. After a card was selected, Penn turned to the audience and said something like:

*"Teller — they saw you **force** the card. So don't let Teller force you to take a card."*

The routine continued with Penn "exposing" elements of the trick step by step — all of it building toward a card stab that went terribly wrong. In the end, Teller didn't stab the selection at all. The knife went through his hand, and the chosen card was impaled on his bloody palm.

It was shocking. It was funny. It was unforgettable.

And underneath all of that presentation, Danny's simple formula was doing the real work.

Force.

Reveal.

Later in the same special, **Penn and Teller** offered to teach a trick you could do at home. The setup involved taping a fake newscast — Penn playing the anchor — and arranging it so a friend thought they were watching a normal broadcast.

You force a card. You fail to find it. Later, the news comes on.

The anchor is reading the day's headlines when a note comes in from off-camera.

"*This just in,*" he says — holding up a jumbo Three of Clubs.

"*Is that your card?*"

That same year, I bought the **Penn & Teller** book and learned a lot of strong material. Looking back now, most of it followed that exact pattern.

As we get drawn into the maze of learning magic — methods, sleights, routines, presentation lines — we have a tendency to lose sight of some of the very first and strongest structures we ever encounter.

That trip with **Danny Garcia**, and almost every day since, I've tried to keep this idea in mind and share it with students and clients — especially those who come to me after accumulating a tremendous amount of knowledge.

They're often at the same uncomfortable (but universal) stage: trying to translate everything they've learned into actual magic they're going to start **doing** for people in the world.

At its core, *force and reveal* isn't about method.

It's about **impact**.

One Halloween, I dressed as a playing card — the back design printed on the front of my costume.

I had a card selected. I failed to find it. And then I walked away.

Of course, I was the card.

Nothing about the method was complicated. But the reveal was decisive, physical, and unavoidable. The strength of the effect came entirely from the choice of revelation.

That's the part people forget.

*Force and reveal* is one of the most direct, powerful, and instantly transmissible ideas in card magic — maybe in all of magic. And the effect is only as strong as the revelation you decide to build toward.

There's an infinite amount of room, as **Penn & Teller** have demonstrated for decades, to explore almost any idea or presentation you can imagine inside that structure.

So when you're making decisions about which effects are strong enough — with methods simple and practical enough — that you'll know, when the moment comes, that you've chosen material you **can** do, **should** do, and that people will genuinely respond to...

Start here.

Find your most reliable, free-seeming force.

And choose reveals that actually *matter*.

Because in the end, **impact is a choice — not a byproduct of cleverness.**

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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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