



# Shell Game

A Monthly Newsletter for the London Magic Community  
November 2009

Volume 5, Issue 3

## October's meeting

October's meeting was all about messing with our minds!

First, Ron Keller blew our minds by turning liquid water into ice with his bare hands (which he showed to each person as they walked in!). He also performed his new favourite "No Comment", where the spectator narrows down the pack to one card, which is their selection! He also fulfilled his duty by admirably performing his version of "Hole Sensation", where a signed and sandwiched card visibly disappears and is found back in the deck.

The next mind-bender was our special lecturer for the evening: Andy Parr, doing a lecture of his favourite mentalism effects. He started with 'Perfect Match', where a selected coloured heart was the sole heart on a chain. He then jumped right into Danny Archer's "Outfoxed", a terrific effect where he reads the minds of five spectators who were only thinking of a card.

"It's a Match!" Was next, where a selected book of matches was from the same hotel as the room key! He then had a spectator think of a card, and that card was the only card to appear in the same place in two decks! He also used John Cornelius's "Thought Transmitter" to both determine a drawing done by a spectator, but for them to do the same!

His final effect was his own creation – a killer version of Survivor – where the final 10 castaways on the Survivor television show were eliminated by the audience – and the exact order of eliminations were inside a balloon!

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, November 11 7:30PM

Topic: FORCES, CONTROLS & REVEALS!

Beal Secondary School  
255 Dundas Street, London  
T-253

And if all this wasn't enough, Mike Fisher performed "Liar's Coins", where series of coins are secretly chosen by audience members, yet Mike was able to determine who had the gold coin!

Mike got Mark Hogan to show an effect where a marble is placed under one of three cups and mixed on the table, and yet Mark determined which cup contained the coin! Dan Narejko showed us "Die Cipher" (version 2), where Dan correctly guessed the face-up number on a die placed in a solid metal holder!

Steve Seguin performed "Deck Stress", told a spectator to pick any card out of the deck except the one he was thinking of, and the spectator couldn't do it! And Lorne Overholt ended the night by moving a block of wood with his mind with his presentation of "Telekinetic Timber".

A lot of magic for one night! Many thanks to Andy Parr for showing some terrific mentalism, and for everyone else who brought some mind-blowing effects to cap off a great evening!

Mark Hogan

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## November's Meeting

DATE: Wednesday, November 11  
TIME: 7:30 PM  
PLACE: Beal Secondary School  
T-253

Topic: FORCES, CONTROLS & REVEALS!

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Warm up those fingers and crack open that new deck of cards – it's time for some card magic! And this night should help everyone with their card tricks, as we're going to see everyone's favorite forces, card controls and final reveals!

Want to learn a new way to force a card? Need to control a card to the top or bottom and having difficulty? Looking for a new way to reveal the selected card? If you answered "Yes" to any one of these questions, then this night is for you.

Come ready to show off your favorites – then get ready to learn everyone else's!

<p>We Want Your Reviews and Tricks! Please send any original reviews, magic tricks or routines to: <a href="mailto:magic_london@yahoo.ca">magic_london@yahoo.ca</a></p>
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## IMPORTANT NOTE: Our web site has moved!!

The London Magicians Guild web site has moved to another address. Set your browser to this new address to get information on future meetings, recent newsletters, and other information about the club:

<http://magiclondon.brinkster.net>

## News Of Interest



### Busking It

(by: Jolyon Jenkins)

"What's your name?" barks the short, pugnacious man, addressing a member of his audience, who mumbles something back.

"You've got to speak up," he retorts, "you're not buying condoms." The man is Gazzo, a legend among street magicians, and at Cardiff's "School of Busking" he's teaching 20

would-be performers the arcane arts of attracting a crowd.

He marshals us, his spectators, moving us around to fill gaps in the crowd, while haranguing and bullying us. "Everyone take two steps backwards! Hands out of pockets: that's another game!"

Most of us here are amateur magicians, and some are captivated by the idea of making a living as a street performer. Gazzo tells us that you can make twice the average income from street magic but most people just love the thought of earning money from their hobby.

There's Douglas, a softly-spoken teacher, who dreams of chucking it all in to work the crowds at Covent Garden - although hasn't convinced his wife. "She's been really supportive but she doesn't really understand it."

Andy says he's never performed for more than five people. Then there's Neil, a housing officer, whose colleagues rib him about fire-eating. There's even Shel, who has flown here from Texas.

I can do magic and am confident enough in front of a willing audience, but the idea of performing on the street has been filling me with terror for weeks. Getting people to stop and watch, dealing with hecklers, moulding them into a cohesive audience, making them laugh, and then getting them to pay up - that's what I can't do, and that's what we're supposed to learn over three days.

Everyone here knows of Gazzo, and in particular his signature act of the "cups and balls", in which he makes little balls vanish and reappear from underneath three copper cups. He's polished it for nearly 30 years, and you can go to Covent Garden and watch a stream of his imitators reproduce it virtually word for word.

Most of the men on the course (and they are all men) have come with their cups and balls sets, intent on learning.

The course is run by Mario Morris, a Cardiff native who lives the dream, travelling round Europe much of the year, doing - yes - the cups and balls.

"This is a safe environment," he says frequently, but as I stand up in front of the other pupils to show them my act on the second day, it feels very unsafe. I can't do the cups and balls so I do a trick with ropes instead.

It's a disaster. It goes on far too long, and I forget my lines and gabble nervously. I am not engaging with the crowd, or making them like me. Rather the reverse, I suspect, for these are hard-bitten magicians who know how everything is done.

I finish. "Have you done now?" enquires Gazzo, sarcastically. "Your character wasn't defined, you wouldn't keep a crowd on the streets. I don't want to make you feel bad but I'm just going to tell you the truth, it was not very good."

Mario also thinks I'm rubbish. I feel a bit better when some other acts are butchered too.

We learn about "hat lines" that educate the audience that they are expected to pay up at the end. "I want you to open your wallet, take out a five pound note... and put the wallet in the hat."

Gazzo is selling a book of one-liners for use on the street. "Is that your wife or is it a business trip?" or "Save your breath, you'll need it to blow up your date later". I wonder whether anyone but Gazzo could get away with these without being punched.

The course is supposed to end with us all doing our act on the streets of Cardiff. Some people decide not to but I know I can't bottle out. With just an hour to go there's a problem - Mario really doesn't want me to do it.

"Not everybody becomes a busker as a result of the school," he says. "Busking is a calling - but long term it's not yours. You haven't even got a crowd build" - a method to attract people in. Teach me a crowd build, I say. He takes me out the back and shows me his technique but then says it's his act and I can't use it. I'm flummoxed.

Luckily another student, Owen, helps me. We ditch half the rope routine and add in a trick in which a marked coin mysteriously travels into a locked box. We head for the streets with the braver students. "You've got 10 minutes," Mario warns darkly. "After that I will cut you off."

I do a lot of shouting as I make a silk handkerchief vanish and reappear, but there's not really time to build a crowd, so I start on the ropes. About 15 people stop to watch, and some even seem to be enjoying it. I skip the menacing hat lines and throw myself on their mercy. "This is my first time," I say, "if you like it, give me some money."

Mario is right. It's not my calling, and I head home without waiting for more of his appraisal. The £4 in my hat seems OK for 10 minutes work, and is feedback enough.

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/magazine/8263065.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/8263065.stm)

## “...and I quote”

- "Using words to describe magic is like using a screwdriver to cut roast beef – Tom Robbins
- "The average man is not hard to mystify"- Howard Thurston
- "Every speaker has a mouth; An arrangement rather neat. Sometimes it's filled with wisdom. Sometimes it's filled with feet." – Robert Orben
- One man's "magic" is another man's engineering. "Supernatural" is a null word." - Robert A. Heinlein
- Don't think of it as failure. Think of it as time-released success
- –Robert Orben

## Did You Know?

- Harry Houdini died on Halloween in 1926
- Levitations of people were performed in Greek dramas as early as 431 B.C. and later in medieval churches! Early religious dramas, or passion plays, often featured individual and mass levitations.
- Magic has many names! It is also called conjuring, hocus pocus, prestidigitation, legerdemain, necromancy, sorcery, thaumaturgy and wizardry, to name some of the most common.
- The Magic Castle in Hollywood, California, is a private club for magicians, featuring magic acts every evening.
- The author of the 14 most recent James Bond thrillers is a magician, John Gardner. One of his novels, *The Confessor*, is a thriller about a master spy who is also a secret master magician.

## World Records!

Highest Paid Magical Performer: David Copperfield

Largest Magic Club: International Magicians Society  
(Over 23,000 members)

Fastest Magician: Eldon D. Wigton  
(Performed 225 different tricks in 2 minutes)

## Motor City Convention in November

This year the 13th Annual Motor City Convention will take place the weekend of November 13-15, 2009 at the Ramada Inn located in Taylor, Michigan (Metro Detroit Area).

This year's featured performers are: Joshua Jay, David Neighbors, Oscar Munoz, and Helder Guimarães. There will also be some other surprises.

As usual, you will have an opportunity to meet and mingle with these performers, ask questions, and share some of your ideas with them. You can find more convention information, including the schedule of events, by going to the convention website. <http://www.johnlukamagic.com/>

You can also register quickly and easily on line via PayPal.

Some of the dealers signed up already include: Hank Moorehouse, Gordon Miller, The Wunderground, The Wunderground West, PMS Magic, and Shawn & Ed's Magic. There will be more dealers to follow.

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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.

London Magicians Guild web site:  
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