

**2018/2019 Club Membership Dues are now due!!**

Please bring your **\$40** membership renewal dues to the September meeting, or mail them to: *Mark Hogan, 21-455 Hyde Park Road, London ON N6H 3R9*



# Shell Game

A Monthly Newsletter for the London Magic Community  
November 2018 Volume 14, Issue 3

## October's meeting

**Mike Fisher** - in a regular suit? That's what we saw when we walked into the October meeting, as we got to witness a portion of Mike's lecture "*From Fair to Foul: The Twisted Transitions of Magic and Magicians in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*". This is a lecture that can be tailored for both magicians and non-magicians interested in magic history.

Mike led us through the magic of the early 1800's, discussing classic magic effects, ventriloquism, bullet catches, feats of strength, scams and scandals, and much more. He also gave us insight into the careers and effects of such early pioneers as **John Rannie, Richard Potter, Jean Eugene Robert-Houdin, The Fox Sisters, The Davenport Brothers**, and many others.

Mike also performed a few effects of the time, including his version of *Cups and Balls*, a terrific routine using *Troublewit*, a very nice *card rise* using a box hanging from a ribbon, and several props used in some spirit effects, including a *ringing bell* and *unplugged light bulb* seemingly controlled by those in the great beyond!

### **Next Meeting:**

**Date: Wednesday, NOVEMBER 14**

**Time: 7:30 PM**

**Topic: LECTURE BY JON THE MAGIC GUY!**  
**Beal Secondary School**  
**525 Dundas Street, London**  
**Room 253**

This lecture is being performed by Mike in several venues both locally and in the U.S.. and has been well accepted to date. It was a very informative discussion about a period of magic history that is often ignored today, but was a launching pad for many classic effects (including technical effects) used to this day. It is sure to be a hit as Mike takes the lecture "on the road"!

**Mark Hogan** also performed a *rubber band routine* and demonstrated many of the effects, including penetrating through arms, fingers, card boxes, and rings – and effects with broken rubber bands, including broken and restored bands, and of course **Dan Harlan's** classic "*Travelling Cash*". Rubber bands were available for everyone so we could all try some old favourite rubber band effects and learn some new ones.

Thanks for Mike for his terrific lecture and Mark for his demonstration of rubber band effects.

Mark Hogan

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## November Meeting

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## TOPIC: LECTURE BY JON THE MAGIC GUY!

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**Jon the Magic Guy** has been a favourite on YouTube, with even Snoop Dog "digging" what the Magic Guy has to offer!

Now Jon the Magic Guy is offering to give a lecture for us! And he declares this won't be just ordinary stuff – he says it's going to be his "*good stuff*". So the bar is set high – one we're sure he can reach!

As well, our own **Serge Pereira** has landed his *first restaurant gig*! He is looking for advice on restaurant magic – and Jon (and all of us) can help him with that!

So come out in November and see some "good stuff" from a darn good magician! (Google "Jon the Magic Guy" and see some of his awesome online effects!) And let's all help Serge this month with some advice and tips to help with his first restaurant gig!

**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



## Browser's Bash 2019 - Paul Richards

(Browser's Den)

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

VIP Platinum tickets were already *sold out* after one day! But there are still *Gold* (\$149 + HST), *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 **Paul Richards**. Paul is the founder and former owner of Elmwood Magic, created and produced magic for a long list of magic notables: **Jay Sankey, Peter Duffie, Cameron Francis, Mark Elsdon, Joshua Jay, and Jon Allen**, just to name a few.

Paul Richards has entertained and amazed audiences at corporate functions, trade shows, private gatherings, and comedy clubs, as well as doing promotional magic for radio and television. His energetic and highly visual form of magical entertainment is in high demand and never fails to create unique, long lasting memories.



Paul has brought his award winning magic to hundreds of venues across the United States, including appearances in major cities like New York City, Las Vegas, New Orleans, Orlando, Houston, San Diego, and Los Angeles. He has also amazed and dazzled audiences in nearly a dozen countries.

Paul Richards also creates, develops, and markets magic that is used by leading magicians worldwide. He is also in high demand as a speaker and lecturer at conferences for professionals in his field.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit:

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

## Browser's Den anniversary party

(BrowsersDen.com)

**Date: Sunday, November 4, 2018**

**Time: 10:00 am to 5:00 pm**

**Location: Browser's Den of Magic, 3220 Dufferin St. Unit 19 A, Toronto**

**Cost to Attend: FREE**

The *Browser's Den* is celebrating their **44<sup>th</sup> year in business** on November 4<sup>th</sup>. There will be discounts on magic all day, a *mini magic auction*, coffee & snacks, a *magic trivia game* with a big prize, and a birthday cake.

There will also be the *Len Cooper Memorial Award*, where one person under 26 years of age who has shown a dedication to the art of magic will receive the complete collection of eight *Tarbell Course in Magic* books.

## Newspaper review of two New York magic shows

(Alexis Soloski - New York Times)

Recently, I saw back-to-back magic shows, willingly: **Joshua Jay's** darling "*Six Impossible Things*" and **Vitaly Beckman's** gawkier "*Vitaly: An Evening of Wonders*." Cutlery was mangled, socks were matched, psychic Pictionary was attempted and achieved. Just once, I chose a card.

Even in a moment when "*Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*" is a hot seller, it is vaguely shaming to like magic. I should have grown out of it by now. Like sour gummies or glitter nail polish. Magic feels so unevolved, so old-school. Its practitioners are mostly male and mostly white. Some of them try to be sexy, which is a disaster, or mysterious, which isn't any better. But here's the thing: Life has a lot of surprises, many are unpleasant. If you can guarantee an evening in which all the shocks are happy ones and somehow cup-and-ball related, I'm in.

I found Mr. Jay's show down a narrow flight of stairs at the tip of *Canal Street*. Twenty guests had assembled in a red-lit room that looked like the foyer of a hipster bordello. On a recent Friday, the mood was tremulous, the air scented with cinnamon and enigma. At show time, bedsheets the gray of a laundry accident were distributed and more or less willingly slipped on, ghost-style. (In this national moment, is dressing up in sheets a good look?) After only a little more inanity, Mr. Jay himself appeared.

Mr. Jay has a reputation as a scholar, an inventor and a champion of the kid magician set. Some unfortunate promotional photographs had suggested he might go the sexy route, but thankfully he arrived sporting a Henley shirt and a slightly goofy grin, looking like a fraternity pledge who'd just dashed in from crew practice. Following a wicked trust-building exercise, he sent the audience merrily marching through a series of small basement rooms, counting off the illusions, a few of them loosely inspired by "*Alice in Wonderland*." We're all mad here.

There are several nice things I could say about Mr. Jay. Here is the nicest: I spent a little over an hour in his company and *I never noticed his hands*. Mr. Jay does have hands, two of them, each with the average number of fingers. (One of those hands, briefly mangled in a boating accident, has since recovered.) But his sleights were accomplished so casually and expertly and with such cheerful misdirection that the hands themselves — what Mr. Jay calls "the secret ballet of fingers" — never caught the eye.

"*Six Impossible Things*," directed by **Luke Jermay**, is billed as an immersive magic show and there's some publicity claptrap about how each guest will "be admitted JUST ONCE." Really, it's only a touch more participatory than a typical parlor or close-up show. Most of the tricks are slight though clever variations on the usual card and coin and rope routines. A couple are perfectly possible. But Mr. Jay's affect is so friendly, his crowd work so gentle and his outfit so seemingly devoid of pockets that it does feel intimate.

Paradoxically, disenchantment flickered only during the coziest moment (O.K., that moment and also the bedsheet bit), a one-on-one performance in which he'd promised to deliver the "perfect illusion" that exists for each of us. Mine was a harmless bit of shadow puppetry, some low-key telekinesis that was over in an instant. Maybe if I sneak back in, we can try again.

If "*Six Impossible Things*" feels like an indie band's secret show, "*Vitaly: An Evening of Wonders*" feels more like classic rock for the cruise-ship set. Mr. Beckman also suffers from a misguided Playbill photo, part come hither, part leaf blower. But when he opens his mouth — after a wordless trick involving a bowl of apples that vibrates when he nears, much like a fruit-based theremin — he is toothy and jokey, charisma-proof, but somehow likable. "*I sound like Borat and I look like Seinfeld*," is how he puts it.

He likes to inhabit a place "where imagination meets reality," he said, but often it feels more like a place where off-strip Vegas meets past-sell-by standup. His actual place: *The Westside Theater*, a chutzpah-ish two blocks from the

"Harry Potter" crew. At a Saturday show, patter was straight-up terrible, with gags about controlling wives, doctors' handwriting and van Gogh's ear. (Those bits are co-credited to **Doug Bennett**. Accio script doctor!) If several of the tricks feel original, nearly all of them feel hokey.

Is that because of the workaday materials he uses? Just how magical can a paintbrush be? Or a water bottle? Or a fruit bowl? Well, Mr. Jay at one point puts a repurposed colander to dazzling effect, so probably pretty magical. Still, without giving too much away, you should know that Mr. Beckman has a deft and surprising way with Photoshop. If you are ever longing for a sorcerous way to improve the picture on your driver's license, he is definitely the magician to call.

Ultimately, it is less an evening of wonder, than an evening of "Hunh? O.K." Those boy wizards down the street can breathe easy.



## Magician bit by Cobra snake (LA Times)

Locked in a bitter political feud, the leaders of Egypt and Turkey can't agree on much these days. But when confronted with the plight of a stricken magician this week, they set aside their differences in a scramble to save his life.

On Sunday an Egyptian cobra bit the Turkish illusionist **Aref Ghafouri**, who bills himself as the "world's most extreme magician," as he prepared for a show in the resort city of Antalya, Turkey.

Mr. Ghafouri, 28, who became famous after appearing on a Turkish version of "America's Got Talent," likes dangerous animals. His Instagram page shows him cuddling a lion cub, hugging a crocodile and kissing a cobra.

After the Egyptian cobra, which was part of Mr. Ghafouri's act, sank its fangs into his right wrist, he tied a cloth around his arm to stanch the flow of blood. At a hospital, doctors started looking for an antivenin to save him from potential paralysis or death.

First they sought help from the *Pasteur Institute*, the global disease and vaccine research center in France. But the institute informed them it had stopped making the antidote for Egyptian-cobra venom three years earlier, Turkey's *Health Ministry* said in a statement.

So the Turks were forced to turn to Egypt — a diplomatically sensitive option.

On Monday morning, Mr. Ghafouri, who had started to suffer from breathing difficulties and blurred vision, according to one doctor, was transferred to an air ambulance at Antalya airport. He wanted to go to Cairo, fearing his condition would worsen. But he could not take off: As a Turkish citizen of Iranian-Azeri origin, he needed a visa.

For hours, diplomats from both countries wrangled over his fate, according to Turkey's pro-government newspaper *Daily Sabah*.

And then sense prevailed. Egyptian officials agreed to issue Mr. Ghafouri a visa on arrival, and by Monday afternoon he was at Cairo's *Qasr el-Aini Hospital*, where medics administered multiple vials of the lifesaving antivenin. By Thursday, he was on the mend.

"He's doing very well," **Dr. Nabil Abdel Maksoud**, a professor of clinical toxicology at *Cairo University*, said in an interview after he administered the final dose of antivenin. "He walks, he talks. I'm waiting for his enzymes and vitals to get back to normal, but he should be 100 percent fit in a couple of days."

Normally, Mr. Ghafouri cheats death with greater apparent ease. Known for his extreme illusions, he was in 2011 awarded a *Merlin*, magic's version of the Oscars, joining luminaries like David Copperfield and Britain's Paul Daniels.

Three years ago he shared a photo of a cobra on social media, with the caption: "I had never been this close to death."

He was the first magician to be treated by **Dr. Maksoud**, whose regular patients include farmers and children bitten by snakes in Egypt's vast Western Desert or its lush farmland along the Nile. When Dr. Maksoud was contacted by Turkish diplomats seeking urgent help last weekend, the case's political dimensions never occurred to him.

"He's a patient and we are doctors, and we have nothing do with politics," he said. "We are all human beings, and we care for everyone regardless of nationality or religion."

## Card Finder effect using Amazon Alexa

(Andy Makar)

Here is information on how to use the *Card Finder* Amazon Alexa card trick to have Alexa find one or more selected cards (i.e. "Alexa, ask Card Finder Name the first selection")

It's an easy free trick which can be enabled on any *Amazon Echo*, *Echo Dot* or Alexa enabled device. (The eBook costs \$2.83).

Here is the link to enable the skill (there are other Alexa magic tricks on this page):

<https://www.amazon.com/AMAKAR-LLC-Card-Finder/dp/B0755KJ25F/>

Here is a link to a portion of the eBook (click on the image of the book):

<https://www.amazon.com/Card-Finder-Amazon-Alexa-Magic-ebook/dp/B075748RL7/>

## Top 10 effects of 2018 (so far)

(Murphy's Magic)

Murphy's Magic is checking out the *Top 10 tricks of 2018 so far* (all sold by Murphy's, of course!) Here is a video showing and discussing all 10 tricks:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZY-zcTj4bk>

### Shell Game Vol. 14, Issue 3 November 2018

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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[magiclondon.brinkster.net](http://magiclondon.brinkster.net)

London Magicians Guild e-mail:  
[magic\\_london@yahoo.ca](mailto:magic_london@yahoo.ca)