

Top Hat E-Zine presents...



Chatter on Patter

Think before you open your mouth

ISSUE 7: THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS
BY PETER MARUCCI

A Treatise on Presentation from a Practical Point of View

A Supplement Dedicated to the Advancement of Good Presentation

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Welcome

Hello! This is issue seven of Chatter on Patter and its time to get the scissors and Pritt Stick out! This month's issue contains a piece of very visual magic that obviously contains all the qualities of a good opening effect. It's quick, it's visual and if you want it to be, it will be very strong magic. As with all of the effects and ideas contained in Chatter on Patter, they are nothing without you. You are the magic and it's up to you to create strong magic using the material provided here. If you don't think that's true, just ask any of the people who have been kind enough to contribute their work to Chatter on Patter. These effects are not pipe dreams and in many cases, the authors have been performing them for years and years, using them to entertain hundreds of people.

This month's contributor will be familiar to many of you, as he is a regular columnist in Chatter on Patter's parent publication, Top Hat. He is also a regular columnist in many other magical publications as well a highly influential contributor to the Magic Bunny forums. Peter Marucci, is a seasoned performer with many years of professional performance under his belt. The effect that he has been kind enough to pass on here is one he has been using to open his close up act for some time and it's the type of magic that attracts stunned silences when he performs it.

I must admit here that it will take you some effort to put the necessary gimmick together, and you will need a few basic craft materials as well as a specialist reflective material, Mylar. Peter has also been kind enough to include his contact details at the end of this effect and if you have any trouble putting the gimmick together, I'm sure he would only be too happy to help.

Another thing I'd like to mention in this issue relates to the effect that was included in Chatter on Patter Issue 5. Craig Leonard's Backup-ulation was a brilliant triple prediction effect which was a very strong piece of mentalism. However, for it you will have needed to construct your own blank Svengali deck. I'm happy to announce that just such a deck can now be purchased from Chris Jones' site www.NothingUpMySleeve.co.uk. The product in question is Cardgali, and can be found in the Marketplace section of the Nothing Up My Sleeve site.

Good luck and have fun with this month's great magical extension of a puzzling conundrum and I hope you check out Nothing Up My Sleeve for the Cardgali gimmick.

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Through the Looking Glass

By Peter Marucci

If you're doing a stage or club act, you'll give a great deal of thought to your opening routine; that's the one that grabs the audience's attentions and sets you up in their minds as a magician. However, most magicians don't seem to give the same thought to their close-up acts. All too often, these acts are a hodge-podge of cards, coins, and balls, with little thought given to a routine and even less to an effective opener.

I've been using the following for some time as the first effect in my table-hopping act and am still amazed at the reaction this quickie gets from lay people. It's based on a puzzle attributed to Alan Ward in the August, 1991 issue of *Magigram*. He called it an "interesting challenge" and a "solution looking for a problem" But, with a little routining and the right patter, I think I've made it into an effective opener. (The originator of this effect is Bob Neal, It's called the Trap Door Card and was published as a booklet by Karl Fulves in 1983. Terri Rogers and David Britland have also published variations.)

Effect

A playing card turns itself inside out, while in a spectator's hand, to the story line of Alice in Wonderland, as she magical passes "through the looking glass."

Preparation

You'll need a Queen of Hearts (the measurements given here are for a bridge-size card; you'll have to adjust if you're using poker size or jumbos) and a piece of silver, self-adhesive Mylar big enough to cover the back of the card.

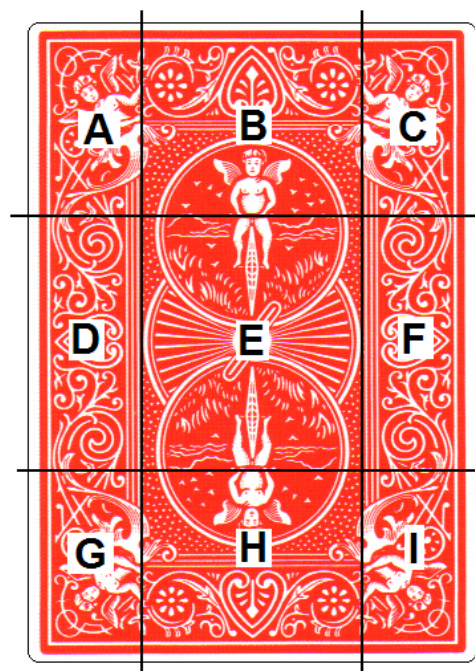


Figure 1

Before you attach the Mylar to the back of the card, score the face with a sharp knife or razor blade along the lines in Figure 1 [for more detailed measurements of these lines, see Appendix 1 – Editor]. Cut through the card on three sides of the middle rectangle (marked E in Figure 1) to create a flap. Attach the Mylar on the back of the card and cut through it on three sides of section E.

You now have a card – Queen of Hearts on one side, mirrored on the back, divided into nine sections with the middle section looking like a trap door. Fold the card along the creases both ways several times, so that it can fold easily.

Presentation

Take out the card with the mirrored side facing the spectator and the hinge of the flap at the top.

“I’d like to take you on a short journey into a magic world. Just as Alice in Wonderland went through the looking-glass, I’m going to take you through this mirror and into another realm.”

Have the spectator hold the open (bottom) end of the flap tightly between her index finger and thumb and caution her not to let go. This is also the time to reassure her that nothing “bad” is going to happen to her; this is a magic trick, not a practical joke.

Fold section ABC back toward you, then fold sections DG and FI back toward you. Finally, fold section H up and back toward you. The spectator is now holding onto flap E with the rest of the card is folded back and behind that flap. Remember, so far, all that the spectator has seen is a mirrored card with a flap in it, which she is holding.

Now, if you release the folded packet you are holding, it will almost automatically unfold itself – but not back to its original position; it will now unfold so that the Queen is facing the spectator. As you release your hold on the packet and unfold it, continue: “Just like Alice, you have mysteriously passed through the mirror and have entered the magic realm of the red Queen!”

Take your hands away from the card and leave the spectator holding the flap and staring at the red Queen. Don’t expect any reaction at this point; believe me, they will be stunned. Give your audience a few moments to think about what has happened, take the card back, thank your assistant for her help and continue with the rest of your act “in the magic realm of the red Queen.”

Note

At the finish, you will notice that the spectator is still holding the flap but the hinge is now at the bottom instead of the top. This does not matter. It's almost certain they won't notice that anomaly and, if they do, I can assure you they will not care!

This is a bit tricky to make up – and that's a good thing, because the few who will go to the trouble will have a killer opening that takes up no room, can be examined (although it shouldn't be; it slows things down), resets immediately, and fits into to almost any ding of close-up act.

What more could one ask for, short of a thumb tip that will vanish a rabbit?

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Appendix 1: Measurements

Looking at the card lengthwise, as in Figure 1 above, the horizontal lines should be one inch from their respective ends (i.e. the line running along sections ABC is one inch from the top edge of the card, and the line running along sections GHI is one inch from the bottom edge of the card). The vertical lines should be half an inch from their respective edges (i.e. the line running through sections ADG should be half an inch from the left hand edge of the card and the line running through sections CFI should be half an inch from the right hand edge of the card). This will leave you with a rectangular section in the centre of the card (labeled E in Figure 1) which should measure $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches wide and $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches tall.

Appendix 2: Mylar Sources in the U.K.

“Mylar® and Melinex® polyester films are flexible, exceptionally strong and durable transparent films produced by DuPont. They have a high tensile, tear and impact strength. They remain tough and flexible at temperatures from -70°C to 150°C .”

The above is a quick definition of what Mylar (and Melinex) films are designed for. However, for our purposes, all we need for this is a flexible, reflective material that will stick to the back of a playing card. In the U.K. Mylar can be found online on many Hydroponics websites and costs very little for the amount you will need. A quick search on Google.co.uk will bring up all the results you will need. Good Luck.