



MagicBunny.co.uk

TOP HAT

June 2003 - Edition 15

Hello everybody and welcome to the June edition. This month sees an issue packed full of magic articles and effect from regular contributors as well as some new writers whom I hope will become more frequent writers in issues to come.

Highlights are two articles on getting on in the world of magic and mentalism at times when you may be discouraged by being younger than your audience, the final part of Michael Jay's truly amazing series on misdirection (which we've received numerous emails about the quality of) and more "Thought From Mid-West America" by Michael Saint Louis. We've also got new from Admin about the goings-on at MagicBunny and some news on David Berglas' book from Ian Rowland. Finally, we have another great interview from Lady Laura, this time with top entertainer, Paul Daniels and the first offering of a two-part series about the "Way of the Neophyte" by Craig Browning.

I'd like to take this moment to thank all contributors to this month's ezine and anyone who has sent articles into any edition - it's you guys who have made this ezine a success.

Finally, a warning to say that articles for July should be in by the 10th so I can hopefully get the ezine out nice and early.

~Jon Snoops~
Editor of MagicBunny.co.uk's TOP HAT Monthly e-zine
jonsnoops@hotmail.com

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Every issue of the TOP HAT contains original effects and articles written by readers and members of MagicBunny.co.uk. If you have a submission, please email TOPHAT@magicbunny.co.uk

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Message From Admin

Welcome to the June edition of Top Hat.

One of the most recent projects on the Magic Bunny site has been one that you will have probably seen the least of - the arrival of a new category called "Regional Magic Clubs" This new collection of forums was deliberately made hidden so that, as more and more members requested this feature, other Magic Bunny members would not have to browse through an index page consisting of hundreds of minor forums to which they had no interest.

Currently, there are three new forums in this category and you are always welcome to monitor the arrival of any further additions by visiting the "Usergroup" option at the top of each page. This function will indicate what regional magic clubs there are at any given time and it will also allow you to browse the membership of each of these new groups if you wish.

If you live in the east Norfolk/Suffolk area you may like to consider asking for access to "The Waveney Valley Magic Club" that meets once a month in the Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft area. Further details regarding this forum and the associated magic club are available directly from myself.

If you live in the Thames area please approach daleshrimpton regarding access to the "[Thames Valley Association Of Magicians](#)" forum and details of the associated magic club that meets regularly in the Thames Valley area.

If you would like to regularly meet up with Magic Bunny members in London then please approach Gary Scott for details of the "Capital Association of Magic" hidden forum. Members of this forum regularly visit the capital to meet together at Davenport's and International Magic and are now planning an extension of the programme of events that they wish to participate in.

Of course, other members are also free to approach me at admin@magicbunny.co.uk and ask for this feature to be extended to their locality too. All that is needed is the endorsement of at least two other members; so that time is not wasted building a forum that is not required. This new project is an excellent way of supporting a new or existing magic club in your own locality and a potentially powerful way in drawing experienced new members to these forums too. Currently, the existing forums have seen a great deal of activity and have proved useful in dealing with the day-to-day running of these clubs, as well as giving members an opportunity to air discussions of a local or regional nature too.

If you would like see this facility for your own club, please talk about this with your members and then approach me and I shall be only too pleased to offer further support and feedback to any issues that you may wish to raise.

Very best wishes,

Admin.

Calling All Young People

You're walking along and the poster reads:

"Magician needed for Thursday nights – apply within"

"Excuse me, I'd like to apply for the Magicians job"

After the ensuing hilarity, the inevitable reply comes *"Sorry son, that's only for grown ups"*

So, you're under 18, and feel like you can't do anything. You desperately want to be a magician and want to perform for an audience having practiced and prepared for years, but you can't because of your age. It has nothing to do with how good you are, or even how skilled or experienced you are, it's because you look young. Why is this? Why do people feel that you can't do it just because you're young? It's because to most people, age means experience, and in most cases it does. I am now 17 so I no longer really find myself with the predicament that people just think I'm a kid, but I did when I was younger and know many others do too.

I recently brought up the very same issue in the Magicbunny.co.uk forums, and got the reaction I was anticipating. It's only human nature to trust and respect an older figure more than a younger one, but is this fair? Well, no, but like I said, it's human nature. The situation was compared to that of a doctor. Would you trust an 18 year old doctor as much as you would say a 50 year old one? Maybe the 18 year old has been reading and studying medicine since he was 10 and the 50 year old only started last year, but without knowing that, you would automatically assume the 50 year old was more experienced.

So, how can you demonstrate to the world that you're a great magician and can perform in front of a crowd of spectators? How do you prove to the world that you're just not a little kid with a Paul Daniels magic set going through a phase thinking he wants to be David Blaine? How can you show to the world the thing that you love and know you can do? Easy, get out there and do it! Let people see people how good you are, and then they'll take you a lot more seriously!

"But I can't do it, no-one will let me! What should I do!?"

Never underestimate the significance of something when it's free! Offer your services and don't ask for any money. Go back to that same place that was advertising the magician's job, and offer to do half an hour for free. They'll probably laugh, but more than likely they will let you have a go, probably at an off peak time, but you'll still get a go. It's no cost to them and you're getting an opening to try to make an impression and showcase your ability.

Now the owner has had a chance to see exactly what you can do. If they like you, don't ask for money immediately but instead, maybe suggest a trial period. Tell them that you could do an hour a week for say the next 3 weeks for free, and if the customers like you then you can negotiate a permanent placement. It can progress from there and you will become well known and possibly have a regular weekly gig doing something you love. What's better than that!?

"Sure, that's one scenario, but no places near me want magicians!"

Who says it has to be anything like that? It doesn't have to be the normal places you'd think off. You don't have to work in a pub or a restaurant. You'd be astonished how many other venues would welcome your services. Volunteer at hospitals, schools, retirement homes, youth clubs, or anything of that type. They all have a lot of people and most of them won't have a lot of money so volunteering your services will give them something great for free, and will give you great practice in front of an audience. Word of mouth then spreads and before you know it, you've got phone calls asking if you can do birthday parties or get-togethers.

Calling All Young People (cont.)

Once that ball starts rolling, there's really no stopping it. Once you do your first few gigs, if they come off well, you will get more. You can continue volunteering at other places to keep getting more practice and more recognition.

So now, a few months down the road, you are now a paid magician getting regular gigs, when before you thought you couldn't do it because you were too young. Of course, not everyone's scenario will work out as well as the one above, and there will be dry spells when you get no work at all, but you just need to keep doing it. The best advice is to get yourself out there. Show people what you can do, don't just say you can't do it because no-one will take you seriously. MAKE them take you seriously, SHOW them you can do and most of all, have fun!

By Sean McQuade

Youth and Mentalism

When I first began to study mentalism, I came in as an amateur magician. I was only about 13 years old at that time, so it wasn't too long ago, only about 3 years.

When I first began studying mentalism, it wasn't easy for a young person to get into the 'circle' if you will. I would ask for advice, but the only advice I would be given was to forget about mentalism. I would constantly be told that I was too young, and unable to pull it off.

But back then I was stubborn and instead of listening to them, I began learning mentalism. First with what little was in Mark Wilson's "Cyclopedia of Magic", and then Fulves' "Self Working Mental Magic". I learned and I studied, and I moved on to a few other books, but I was still faced with the same problem.

Now, many people believe that it is a good idea to be well rounded, so instead of singling out everything except mentalism, I kept studying mentalism. This, I believe, is one thing that helped me earn some respect. I wasn't just diving in headfirst; I was also becoming well rounded. And it paid off, because now I'm working with (bizarre) magic as well.

Now with all of this going on, I was able to handle myself when it came to 'standard' magic, and I was becoming fairly knowledgeable in mentalism as well. I wasn't just some kid wanting to figure things out; I was someone wanting to actually study the ins and outs of this 'circle'. I had earned some respect, and wasn't just a push over. But now I am often faced, yet again, with the ideas that younger people should stay away from mentalism. Does it discourage me? Not as much as it used to. But then again, it is more often directed at others, not me. But still, it is upsetting.

Now, I've already gone through the hassle, I've earned some respect, and I know what it is like. Any younger person that may want to study mentalism, to you I say "Forget the senile old farts (and younger farts too) and go for it!" But there are a few things that you should learn first.

First off, being young isn't all that great in mentalism. Yes, a number of people have made it big while at a young age, but many others haven't. It isn't easy to pull it off, but it can be done. If it's something you really want, you'll find a way around this little problem.

Another thing? Don't exclude the other branches of magic! Familiarize yourself with the basics of sleight of hand, and other areas of magic if you aren't already familiar with them. It really will help; trust me. It will help you with the study of mentalism *as well* as gaining the respect of the old timers.

There are different styles of presentations. The two most popular are, and have been, psychological, and psychic. And even then, those two are just the very basic parts of the style of presentation, by adding your own

Youth and Mentalism (cont.)

little quirks and your own unique character; there are thousands of possibilities! If one doesn't fit you, try another!

Remember, a presentation style that works for a 65 year old man with a gray beard in a tuxedo and receding hairline probably won't work for a 17 year old with pierced ears and wearing a pair of baggy jeans and a t-shirt. Also, if you haven't quite picked up on this idea yet, don't just focus on the methods! Presentation is quite a big factor in mentalism, maybe even more so if you are younger. Creativity will also come into play fairly often! A few more quick suggestions?

Taking courses in acting and drama would be a good idea, they will help you build a *believable* character, and give you a big boost in mentalism, since it relies so much on presentation. (Are you seeing a trend here?) As I said earlier, creativity is a big factor also, so keep an open mind when you're learning an effect! Don't steal the patter word for word, and if the presentation doesn't fit you, by all means, **CHANGE IT!** Anyone who has been in the magic community for a short time will know how much the clone-magicians are detested. It goes the same way in mentalism. Be original!

Also, you may want to consider that there is a difference in mentalism, and mental magic. Essentially, the idea is the same: You are recreating psychic-like phenomena. However, in mental magic, you are performing simple illusions; in mentalism, you're doing something more complex. It may be easier if you start in mental magic, and then transition into mentalism at an older age.

But no matter what, the whole point of magic and mentalism is to entertain others as well as yourself. If you aren't having fun, no one else will be either, and there is no point in doing it. So one of the most important suggestions I could possibly give you is: Have fun!

Now, to close it all off, I just want to say that if mentalism is what you want, go for it! Don't be discouraged by anyone trying to put you down. Just keep trying. And who knows, you might even change someone's opinion about, or at least make them more open to the idea of youth in mentalism!

By Ty Anthony

The Art and Science of Misdirection Part 5

The Art and Science of Misdirection Pt. 5

Just to recap, we have discussed 10 different points of misdirection. They are as follows:

- 1) The Ricochet
- 2) Entertainment
- 3) Temporal
- 4) Subtlety
- 5) Repetition
- 6) Prevarication
- 7) Eye Movement
- 8) Hand Movement
- 9) Control of Interest
- 10) Continuous Direction

At this point I urge you, go back, reread the entire article, from beginning to end. Refresh your memory on these

The Art and Science of Misdirection Part 5 (cont.)

10 points and consider the additional information and insight that I have given throughout the pages of those articles. Do that before you continue on.

While you read those articles one more time, I want you to consider your magic as it pertains to your routines. I want you to consider everything in your routines that you feel is weak, whether it is a spot that doesn't smoothly flow to the next or a part that you feel is weak in the story telling. Use those thoughts, in conjunction with all of the information that I've given you and consider where you can use this set of columns to strengthen those weak spots. Not only that, but I give you a challenge. Take your routines apart, write them down on paper so that you can read your routine, beginning to end and annotate that routine. Reconstruct the entire thing using the pointers given throughout this set of articles to strengthen that routine. If you don't feel that what you've read can be applied, then I'll give you your money back.

Let's have a look at another form of misdirection, but one that should be used in small doses.

11) The Mix Up - Called the "Wrong-Leg Technique" by Tommy Wonder, this form of misdirection relies on the performer to tell the audience that one thing will happen, when, in fact, something else does. A good example of this is the old "Salt Shaker Through the Table" bit. You place a coin on the table and tell the spectators you're going to make it penetrate the table. You then place a napkin over a salt shaker and slam your hand down onto the salt shaker (placed over the coin) and the salt shaker penetrates while the coin remains in place. Most all magicians know this old shtick.

This is the mix up. You say one thing will happen, and while the spectators are watching closely, you are able to do your dirty work unnoticed. This is a very powerful technique, but, once again, it must be done in very small doses. If you abuse this technique, you will find that your audience will quit watching where you want them to and begin watching everything else. You will lose their trust. To take the sting out of this technique, a good thing to do is act like you had not intended such a thing to begin with. When the salt shaker penetrates the table, do not take credit for it - act as surprised about it as the audience will be. In this way, you look innocent as to what happened (even though, deep down, the spectators will know you did it on purpose) and the sting of blatantly lying will be taken away from your audience.

Another form of this misdirection can be used in a top change. You'll find that if you are going to physically change a card, you can claim that it will be the spectator's card that changes. All eyes will be on the card that you claimed will change and will give you great leverage as to what can be done with the card that will really change - the one in your hand. Again, though, you don't want to abuse this very powerful form of misdirection. Use it sparingly, keep it in mind when you have something that is very difficult to pull off (again, while putting together your routine, rather than waiting until the end and putting it in as an after thought), and it will always come through for you in a pinch.

Tommy Wonder talks about the "Chain of Shadows." These are areas in your routine that naturally create spots where misdirection is automatic. If you have your routine written down on paper, you can easily spot these areas and use them. By using these "shadow" areas, you are keeping your misdirection to the point of your routine. As I've stated, the best you can hope to accomplish is to build your misdirection into your routine right from the beginning, rather than as an afterthought. Because these spots are built right into your routine from the beginning, you should pay special attention to these shadow areas that are naturally built into your routine, without the need to create them. These are strong areas of misdirection, since it is a natural spot of direction in your routine and not placed there by device. Learn to find them and start using them (go over the list of misdirectional techniques above and find the spots in your routine that have these techniques built in, without having actually put them in yourself).

After having read these last 5 articles, I would hope that what I've given you will be of help. Keep in mind that if you can use more than one form of misdirection at a time, this will strengthen the misdirection exponentially. Consider misdirection in all its forms and read anything and everything that you can on this fascinating subject.

I'll see you all in the next issue of Top Hat. Take care and keep 'em guessing!

By Michael Jay

Thoughts From Mid-West America

LET'S BUILD MAGIC!

SPITTIN' EGGS!

It's an oldie but a goodie and can fit into all kinds of acts. Whether you are a medieval court jester, kids' show worker or a table walker, spitting eggs is an easy to build and perform addition to your act.

The effect is simple enough: the magician looks startled, coughs a bit and starts to push something round and white out of his lips! He removes first one, then two eggs! This can go on as long as the magician wants. The most bare-bone version requires an easy gimmick and a couple of eggs. If you wish to produce more than two eggs, then you will have to add a ball dropper or two. Finally, y'all clumsy magicians may want to use wooden or plastic eggs! But first Crazy Uncle Michael wants to make sure you all know how to spit eggs.

Before we even build anything, go grab your cheapest set of multiplying balls. Use the cheap plastic super ball-sized ones, not the Vernet Disco Balls because you will be putting things on your mouth and those little Vernet nubs tear up your lips (ummm, at least that's what I heard). Finger or classic palm a ball in each hand and put the shell in your mouth. Open your eyes real wide and looked surprised; cough and puff out your cheeks like Dizzy Gillespie. Push the shell partially through the lips and just as you think it will pop out place one of your hands over your mouth. While your mouth is hidden from view by your hand (and this is quick) retract the shell and place the ball in your lips. Hold your hand out and spit the ball out by squeezing your lips together. Repeat process with other hand. Congratulations! You just spit out two balls (I'm trying to be good, so insert your own ball joke here, okay?!). Add two ball droppers and you can spit out as many balls as you wish. Too bad you can't talk with a half-shell in your mouth, eh? Actually, you are lucky if the stupid thing doesn't have you fighting your gag reflex the entire time it is in your mouth!

Luckily, with a little acting you can use a lot smaller gimmick than the half-shell. You can cut that half shell down about 50% (so that it forms a shallower bowl, not so that it looks like an orange slice) and you'll have a nice gimmick you can hide in the roof of your mouth. If you can spare ball, then cut one of the balls down to use as the gimmick because it will be smaller than the shell (the shells fit over the balls, so they are bigger). Just don't swallow it! A really simple way to show your mouth and hide the gimmick (I'm going to call it a feke from now on 'cause its a shorter word than gimmick) is to tuck it up into the roof of your mouth and stick out your tongue, then, raise your tongue to touch the roof of your mouth and tilt your head back so folks see under your tongue. Close your mouth and begin the coughing.... Do I even have to mention you shouldn't say, "Nothing in my mouth," but just stick out the tongue, lift and start spittin' stuff up?

So if spitting up ping pong balls will work in your act you are pretty much done and can stop reading, but if you want to build yourself an egg set than forge ahead! If you want, fell free to use real eggs. A carton of eggs has everything you need (except for egg droppers) as long as you buy a white foam (not that funky recycled cardboard) carton. Obviously, the eggs will be used as eggs and you can cut one of the rounded corners off the carton to be your feke! Abracadabra, you're done! The foam will have to be replaced every performance or so, though, 'cause it'll get nasty.

Because I am known for having the odd drink, I don't like to use real eggs (insert your own drunken magician joke here). Wooden eggs from ye olde magick shoppe get steep quick (a couple of bucks a piece) so I head for the craft store and get a bag of wooden or plastic eggs and a can of white spray paint. Last time I checked, plastic eggs (not Easter eggs, but you could sure use them) were \$2 for 6 or 10 or something like that and wooden eggs were 3 for \$2. If you luck out, you can get plastic eggs a bit larger than wooden eggs and make a nice multiplying egg set. Anyway, get your eggs. If you got plastic ones, cut the tip off one to make your feke. If you got wooden ones than paint'em white and while you are waiting for them to dry go find a ping-pong ball to cut down into a feke. There, I think we are done.

You need ball droppers? Okay, we'll make this really quick. You'll need some black velvet-like material, cord elastic (or a rubber band), a couple of safety pins and some thread. Cut a rectangle of material 3" or 4"

Thoughts From Mid-West America (cont.)

wide and about a foot long. Fold the rectangle in half (lengthwise) so that the soft velvety part is outside. Sew along each side so you have a bag 6" long and 3" or 4" wide. Turn it inside out so that the velvety part is on the inside (it will help the eggs slide out easier). Grab your rubber band or elastic and wrap it once around the widest part of your egg. Cut this piece (one wrap around) off and tie it in a loop... it should now be too small for the egg to fit through unless pressure is applied (to stretch it). Place this loop over the bag about a half or 3/4 of an inch from the end. Fold the fabric of the bag over the loop and sew it into place (so that the elastic loop puckers the opening of the bag). Put a safety pin through each of the corners opposite the mouth to clip to the inside of your shirt or jacket. Presto! You just built an egg dropper. It's been a busy day, huh?

Just for the record, I figure that you could build everything mentioned for about \$15 tops (plastic and wooden eggs, white spray paint, enough material and elastic for two egg droppers) and get it all in one trip at a decent sized craft store. Heck, you might even have a buck or two left over to buy a traveling sewing kit because it's like Crazy Uncle Michael always says, "Every magician needs a sewing kit!"

By Michael Saint Louis

David Berglas Book Still Available

Some people may have seen copies of the Berglas Book offered on eBay and elsewhere for more than the original asking price.

If any is interested in this book, I just wanted to point out that there's no need to pay over the odds. There are still a few copies available at the original price.

I've posted full details on my website (www.ianrowland.com) under Items To Buy - in the section on 'Items available from other people'.

I've also typed out the entire contents list, just so that potential purchasers can get a better idea of exactly what they're getting.

Just in case you're wondering... no, I have absolutely ZERO commercial interest here and I make no money at all from this book.

Kindest regards,

- Ian

Ian Rowland

Visit www.ian-rowland.com today. Now selling 'Ahead Of The Pack' by Jack Avis & Lewis Jones, the finest book on card magic you'll see this year. Full, incredible contents on my website.

The Wand With Three Ends

How do you finish your show? Does it just slowly peter out -- or is there a definite closing that signals the audience that the performance has ended?

For years now, I have been closing my children's shows with the magical production of an old Tannen "The End" silk, showing the tail-end of a rabbit with the words "The End" in huge letters.

Some time back, I recall reading an article in a magic magazine where the writer derided the used of The End banners, silks and the like, arguing that the act should finish in such a way that the audience knew it was over, without the magician's telling them.

An apparently valid point -- but I doubt that the author had done many kids' shows. Youngsters need everything clearly spelled out, especially in a venue where they are wound up and working at a high energy level -- like a Christmas or birthday party.

Thus the use of a The End sign, to let them know the show is over and the next stage of the party is going to begin.

But, for repeat performances, I wanted something that they hadn't seen the year before (i.e. the silk). And so I came up with:

THE WAND WITH THREE ENDS

by Peter Marucci

Effect: To close the show, the magic shows a long black wand, which he describes as being "a wand with three ends." He points to one end: "This is the end;" he points to the other end: "This is the end;" and, he says, "This is the end," as the wand unfurls into a banner that says "The End," leaving the magi with arms extended, holding the banner, in the applause stance.

Working: You'll need an automobile sun shade, sold at most auto-accessory stores. It's a black rod about a foot and a half long and an inch or so around. It works just like a roller blind; you grab the tab in the middle of the rod and pull out a shade -- black on one side, white on the other and perforated with holes. (The theory is that you can see through it while it blocks the sun from the inside of your car. Well, that's the theory.)

There are two suction cups on the rod, to attach it to the side window of your car, and a Velcro tab to pull out the blind and hook it to another Velcro tab attached to your car door.

That sounds complicated but it doesn't matter -- because you get rid of all that extra hardware, keeping just the rod with the roller blind inside.

Pull the blind out and lay it on a flat surface, white side up. Pin it down, or use weights, to keep it from rolling up, while you letter the design on the white side. Using Sharpie markers, outline the words The End in black and then fill the letters in with red or orange.

When you let the blind roll up, paint the ends of the rod white and you have a passable looking wand.

Proceed as above in Effect.

Second Thoughts: Okay, you don't have a whole lot of magic here, but it's not a bad gag -- especially for kids.

The whole point of the thing is that it brings your show to a logical end in a funny manner.

And, as I said above, if you do kids' shows, you need something that clearly tells your audience that the show is

The Wand With Three Ends (cont.)

over. If you leave them unsure of whether there's more coming -- and there isn't -- they feel cheated. (Believe me, I have seen enough magicians do that at kids' shows to know it is the absolute truth -- and the last thing you want is a bunch of unhappy children, since that makes for unhappy parents -- who are paying you.)

The finger-flingers may "pooh-pooh" this; the dilettantes won't understand it; but the working magician who does children's shows will know what I'm talking about and realize the importance of it.

So, if you're in the latter category, make this up and have fun with it. I did.

Peter Marucci
270 St. Andrew St. East
Fergus, Ontario, Canada
N1M 1R1
e-mail: showtimecol@aol.com

An Interview With Paul Daniels

Mr. Paul Daniels, thank you for taking the time to answer these questions for 'Top Hat'. Our members really like to see interviews with some of the big names out there, and as big names go, they don't get much bigger than yours.

With your recent tour of 'An evening with Paul Daniels' and your lecture tour 'Paul Daniels Master Class' you have been very busy lately. It was widely reported that you became ill and were taken to hospital at the end of March. I hope that you are now feeling 100% again. How hard is it on you and your health to keep on doing so much work year in and year out?

I have worked flat out for the last 35 years and I prefer to do that. People who don't work get sick too! I caught a serious virus that could have come from anywhere and hit on anyone. In January I was in polluted water up to my armpits; in February I was in the rain forests in Australia; I came back via Singapore so they were worried about SARS and in March I was in Birmingham. My money is on Birmingham.

Did you enjoy your lecture tour? And how do you think it went? Several of our members attended one of the days and gave it very favourable reviews on the forum.

I enjoy doing something that is new and this was so well organised for me by Andrew Lock that it could not be anything other than enjoyable. What surprised me was to see so many working pros taking notes, both here and in America. The only 'criticism' I got was from someone complaining about the price of coffee in the hotel, over which I have no control, and I also pondered upon where he had been for the last ten years. All hotels charge a lot for coffee. There were one or two who thought the stuff would only work if you were famous, but that simply isn't true. What has been great was to get emails from magicians who have gone out and applied the stuff and got work and publicity.

An Interview With Paul Daniels (cont.)

I have recently started getting the convention bug and attended my first Blackpool convention earlier in the year. The Blackpool convention attracts a lot of big names in magic, both as a convention lecturer and as attendees. Have you ever been as either, and if so, did you enjoy it?

UK conventions were ruined for me by bitchiness and jealousy, which is a real shame because that was where I met so many of my friends. Now I only go to foreign conventions where, to be honest, I am greeted with respect and civility AND I have tons of 'foreign' magician friends.

You have won many awards during your career as a magician, perhaps most notably the 'Magician of the year Award' presented by Hollywood's Academy of Magical Arts in 1983. How did it feel to be the first magician outside of the USA to have won this?

All awards and recognition, here and abroad, are to be cherished as recognition by your peers of what you have done in and out of magic.

What do you feel is your biggest magical achievement?

Staying on top for so long!

Do you still have any magical ambitions, or have you got to the point now where you have done everything you want to do magic wise?

I don't particularly have any magical ambitions, but then, I never did. I just enjoyed the game.

Everybody has a particular favourite effect that you perform, for me your chop cup routine is absolutely superb. How long did it take you to master that?

20 months.

What do you feel was your big break into the magic world?

I never wanted to 'break into the magic world'; I wanted to break into the world of entertainment for the public. I know you can make a living entertaining other magicians and that is a different skill to the one that I have.

What has been, out of all the big illusions you have performed, you favourite to present?

I get asked this about tricks of all sizes and I don't have a favourite anything. I just enjoy all the stuff that I do, have done and am going to do, whilst I am doing it.

Out of all the magical effects you have seen performed, what has been the one that sticks in your mind the most, and why?

Blimey. I have one of those brains that remembers every performance in great detail and can recite even the moves that the performers made. Here I am talking about full time professional performances, not convention competitions.

How do you feel the general public views your public persona?

Some like me. Some don't. That applies to everyone. I think more like me than don't, from the reaction I get when I 'appear' in public. I hope so.

What do you think are the defining qualities of a magician?

I suppose you mean a good one. That is a person who knows EXACTLY what they are doing and are going to do. They know ALL about the effects they are performing and WHY they are performing them. They know about stagecraft and acting and must be likeable.

An Interview With Paul Daniels (cont.)

What is the best thing about being a magician?

You can work anywhere anytime and always make a living.

There has been a lot of debate on the Magic Bunny forum about what to call the things that magicians do. Are they *tricks* or *effects*?

Who cares?

With the advance of the Internet and with programs such as 'Secrets of magic revealed', how do you feel about magic exposure shows and sites? And how do you feel the magic fraternity, as a whole should deal with it?

I am not being rude when I say at your level, ignore it. By all means join WAM and let the big boys do the fighting for you.

Now you have been in the magic business for a long time, what is it you are still getting out of doing it?

I like it. Is that too simple? There are other things that I think now that I am moving towards, but I will always enjoy creating the magic of amazement on someone's face.

What is the most difficult slight you have mastered?

All sleights are difficult when you start, and easy when you have practised. I do hope that you truly, deeply, slowly, analyse EVERY sleight as to why it exists, where to do it, and WHEN.

Is there any effect that you have not been able to master?

Nope.

Where does the inspiration for you big illusions come from?

The more you read about illusions and their designs, the more your brain starts to look at stuff and think up new ones.

We saw you last year doing short interviews for 'Lads Army' talking about your days during national service. Did you enjoy you national service? I know you spent a lot of time in the evenings showing your magic to the American service men stationed with you, do you think this helped you with your patter and presentation?

Oddly, because some resented going away for two years, I finished up loving it. I have never been so fit and this showed me what I was capable of doing. As for helping me with patter and presentation, I don't think it had any more influence than any other part of my career. I am still working on patter and presentation.

Where does the catch phrase 'You'll like this, not a lot' come from?

A heckler shouted out 'I don't like your suit' and I bounced back with 'That's a shame, 'cos I like yours, not a lot, but I like it' and the audience laughed. I kept it in the act and it even went into the Oxford Dictionary of Slang and Popular Language.

When I was younger I seem to recall a children's T.V. show called 'Wizbit'. I have to confess; the only thing I can remember about it was that he was a yellow cone who was three feet tall, about the size of 3 cornflake packets! Where on earth did you come up with that idea? And did you have fun making it?

It was the brainchild of Barry Murray and I get about 10 emails a week about Wizbit. I thought it was great.

An Interview With Paul Daniels (cont.)

What's your best line for hecklers?

That is too simple a question. I don't get many hecklers now but answering them is an art form in itself. I used to sit down, imagine someone shouting at me, and then I would write/create 'stoppers'. Find some old Robert Orben books and read them to give you inspiration.

And finally, what is the most valuable bit of advice you have received during your career as a magician?

From Ken Brooke when I didn't win a magic competition at a convention: 'Don't change son. You've got it right for the public, and the silly buggers don't know.'

Thank you once again for taking the time to answer these questions. I know our members will enjoy reading the answers.

By Lady Laura

Way of the Neophyte - Cultivating a Reputation Part 1

Whenever you take upon yourself to do something different there exist a "starting point." Now I'll not go into the deeper recesses as to where the actual starting point is e.g. the point in which we gain the initial thought and interest in this or that venture and decided to begin the research. Rather, we will look at the proverbial "next step" e.g. when we chose to get of the pot and make things happen and thus, begin cultivating the who and what we are as a performer... in this case a Psychic/Bizarre performer.

First off, I loathe the idea of being known as a "magician". Not because it's a negative or bad thing, but because the term is inundated with certain stigma and limitations that we can do without. Secondly, as was proven by Doug Henning long ago, when you use an alternative descriptive your salary increases above that of the average variety entertainer bearing the title of "magician" by as much as 200%. Then too, as someone known for creating Psychic or Bizarre-like phenomena that is experiential, you become more than someone that does tricks and that's where we want to be. More than a mere court jester!

The question is "*How do I create such a personae?*"

The answer is disturbingly logical... baby steps!

Now given that many are uncomfortable with the idea of doing a *Reading* or anything that even remotely hints at such abilities, we'll look at other alternatives first. Before doing so however, we must weigh one issue carefully "*How to be different as well as memorable.*"

Why will people remember you above any other performer of the "impossible" they encounter?

If you are doing any of the current "trendy" routines like *Healed & Sealed* or a variant on *Death Trap* you are a clone! The public will have a difficult time separating you in their mind from any number of other performers doing the same schtick. So rule #1 is to either avoid doing commercially available "recognizable" and/or popular bits, or else change the handling and manner of use so much as to make it appear as something more unique. (An excellent example of this is how my friend Richard Lavengood transformed the handling of Lee Earle's popular "*No Brainer Bags*". His handling has transformed the basic effect into a genuine mind-bender – a miracle of the mind and a most awesome intrigue!)

With this in mind we have to consider the kind of opportunities we have available to us based on age, interest groups were involved with, personal character (e.g. what is natural and appropriate/comfortable to us as an

Way of the Neophyte - Cultivating a Reputation Part 1 (cont.)

everyday guy/gal in everyday life) as well as general ability. Within this point of reference we must consider one other issue "What do we do best that will lend itself to specific circumstances and too, are we able to replicate the demonstration via alternate methods?"

In that we are talking about baby steps and using the most basic rudiments of our craft's technology to our advantage for building a reputation then we are limited to non-gimmicked methods for the most part and as much "natural" (as in mental processing and the exploitation of natural phenomena e.g. Psychological Forces; Muscle Reading; Billet & Bending/Slight of Hand methodologies; Mathematical Demonstrations/Forces, etc. In other words, we are using the bare bones found in Corrinda and Annemann with only limited augmentation by more up to date perspectives such as have been shared in recent years by the likes of Banachek, Busch, Riggs, Osterland, and Bob Cassidy. (Especially Cassidy's notes on Billet work and Banachek's insights on metal bending and psychological probability.)

Let me give you an example of a very powerful routine I use when making a pitch for my "Ghost Stories" shows...

The setting is typically one that has the facility owners (husband & wife most of the time) as well as two or three other patrons present. During the course of a general business discussion I offer to prove to the man (the husband is usually the more skeptical) that their B&B is haunted and too, that people will enjoy the kind of intrigues I'm capable of delivering. It is at this point two or three things begin to take form. Firstly, I've borrowed two of the house's business cards and quite nonchalantly folded them together with the blank sides facing one another and very casually set this to the side. I also turn the conversation towards my childhood and the relationship I shared with my grandfather, ultimately leading into my version of the PK Touches tale and related demonstration.

Before I do PK Touches I do the Haunted Key so as to see if my grandfather's spirit is present and if or not he'll be willing to assist in the "little game" we play. Because of the psychology that's been put into place at this point regarding ghosts, haunted houses, etc. the key alone sends obvious shivers along the spine. Add the PK Touch routine and that little set of nested business cards which now bare a message for the patrons who weren't even a part of the entire bit and voila! You just delivered the kind of impromptu experience they'll never forget (and will talk about for years to come.)

For those that don't recognize it, the Business Card message is accomplished via two different courses of action. Firstly, I gain some kind of personal "dirt" on the guests by eavesdropping long before I begin my pitch. This data is jotted onto a card I previously pocketed via Pocket Writing and later set into play via Rick Maue's spirit writing routine found in *The Book of Haunted Magick*.

As you can see everything in this routine is exceptionally simple and the application lends to it the kind of "originality" that's required for creating a memory anchor. Nine times out of ten those that witness this demonstration will ask for my name and card. That's what you're after!

But let's take this same basic concept and set it into a bar or frat house party... Sure, it's not much. But it is enough to make people talk and to build your reputation for doing strange things. Build on that by doing similar bits at other mixers or gatherings such as the Voodoo Doll that raises in the hand. When blended with a few other bits such as a nail writer and maybe ashes in the hand, you've got one heck of an eerie piece of business. Think about it... you tell the tale of a mysterious Voodoo Lady from the deep Bijou (possibly even blending Docc Hilford's excellent "Swamp Water" routine to the mix – see Hilford's "Band of the Hand" mnspt.). In the telling of the tale you introduce the Voodoo Doll and explain how sympathetic magick works by introducing a printed silhouette of a human form. You hand the doll to someone in the group along with a pin and instruct them to place it anywhere they wish into the doll after you've made a prediction of sorts via an x mark on the picture; hauntingly the person places the pin exactly where you said they would... the very place you wanted them too (insert Twilight Zone music here).

Way of the Neophyte - Cultivating a Reputation Part 1 (cont.)

This is followed by any number of things such as the Swamp Water legend and Reading or *Burger's Ashes on the Hand* or even both... the point is, at the end of the bit the little Voodoo Doll raises up in your bare hands then collapses, almost as if unexpected, as the final sequence to the next bit reaches its climax.

These are but a few examples of how you can get started in creating a potent reputation as a bizarrest. I've intentionally stressed the more bizarre aspect here because I believe the macabre element enhances the psychic or magickle feel included in each routine. The objective isn't to dupe the viewing completely but to leave them hanging and uncertain. This is what Dunninger and others taught and practiced for years and a side of our craft many of our critics would rather us not insist upon. Fortunately it is the way of things to come.

"But I'm really just now getting started, I don't have access to all that stuff yet..."

Not to worry! You can use a similar "innocent" approach in most any social gathering of most any size to create similar impact. Let's say you know nothing but Muscle Reading. Then do some simple demonstrations as bar betchyas or whatever. You could have five shot glasses lined up and covered with napkins (similar to "Death Trap" but safer)... a coin is placed under one of the drinks to identify it and using MR you locate the drink. Now via this method you could either get very drunk for free or put some sound cash into your pocket, the choice is yours. Either direction is fun and it will prove a riot to those participating.

"Other Bar Games with Muscle Reading?" You ask.

Do the Psychic Mail Delivery by taking drinks to the individuals they belong to... locate a hidden drink set somewhere in the bar just as Kreskin locates his pay check. Pour the right drinks for the right person... the list is endless (when you use your imagination).

Using Pocket Writing... well, the sky is the limit! The same can be said about a *Swami Gimmick* but the idea here is to be able to work without any special devices or items that can't be easily obtained. Preferably, you should be able to work prop-less for nearly 20 full minutes without extreme discomfort or personal doubt, while keeping people interested as well as entertained.

I hope that this introduction inspires you to play around with things and challenge yourself a bit. When we learn to no longer be co-dependent on magic shops or having the latest things to hit the market, we empower ourselves at a significant level. The more we do this the greater the odds are that people we start remembering us and too, the sooner our own peers will be asking us how we do this or that. In other words our "novelty" of being ourselves and doing our own thing will cause us to stand out in the crowd and become noticed and that's the key when it comes to building the career.

Best of luck!

Craig Browning

[Surrealist Entertainer](#)

And so ends another very successful ezine which is mainly down to the excellent contributions we've had this month.

Please send submissions for the July issue in by the 10th of July to TOPHAT@magicbunny.co.uk I appreciate that this doesn't give you long but I want to try to get it out nice and early.

Jon Snoops