



MagicBunny.co.uk

TOP HAT

January 2004 - Edition 22

Welcome to the belated January edition of the ezine. It's nice to know that people appreciate the ezine and all of the hard work that contributors put into their articles from the concern about the delay (from <http://www.magicbunny.co.uk/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?t=10763> and other emails.) The last email was very successful in bringing in articles so thank you to all new contributors and of course to the ongoing support of our usual columnists. And so, on with the ezine...

This month in MagicBunny News, Nigel Shelton unveils our new mascot bunny, created by Huw Collingbourne which I personally think is fantastic. Also, we are reminded of the wealth of attractions MagicBunny currently offers. In Peter Marucci's column, he works on presentation with the good ol' droopy wand and stretches it's uses for comedy beyond the regular kid's show.

David J. Bodycombe follows, with an effect of his that creates a fun mentalism routine. He not only gives the idea for presentation but also works with many techniques to ensure everyone is entertained. We've all; one time or another, walked into a magic shop with no idea what to buy and walked out with a load of junk we'll never use. Timothy Arends has the solution though, as he offers practical advice on how to decide what to buy and what not to buy, whether it's from the shop or catalogue.

Next, Michael Saint Louis suggests alternatives to business cards, namely personalized pencils. He gives a magic idea too which will make sure it stays in their minds. For more ideas on handing out business cards, see Issue 12 for Peter Marucci's article on them. Finally, Argentinean Daniel de Urquiza gives his take on the famous Triumph effect. It's all great stuff.

Until next time,

~Jon Snoops~
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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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The Latest From MagicBunny

The Latest From MagicBunny

Website News

By Nigel Shelton



Many of the more astute members may have already noticed that the old Magic Bunny icon (the toothpick holder) has now been replaced by a similar, but revised, new logo shown on the left. These boards have now been formed for a total of nearly two years and during that time they have moved from a private meeting place for a selected few into the UK's premier magic site. It was felt that the use of a second-hand icon, taken from elsewhere on the Internet, was incompatible with an Internet leader in magic.

The last two years have seen an incredible change (as well as an incredible growth) of these discussion boards. Not only has the icon been updated but the ethos of the boards has developed too. On visiting Magic Bunny you cannot fail to notice the sense of camaraderie and friendship that has existed from the very start and also the huge range of background and knowledge base that exists. As well as young magicians taking their very first tentative steps in the field of magic, you will find seasoned professionals with years of experience and skilled

dexterous magicians who have gained a considerable level of skill. This combination goes to create an active and lively discussion base where members can offer advice and support as appropriate or seek out new skills and develop fresh areas of interest.

Many new members often comment upon the spirit of friendship and support that they first notice on the boards but there are a wealth of projects that underpin this and help create the right conditions for this ethos to develop. Of course, all members will be familiar with the variety of bulletin boards on the site, both for public access and members only access too. These contain a wide variety of excellent articles and discussion forums, but there is so much more to Magic Bunny than this.

If you take time to browse around, you will also find (in addition to this ezine that you are reading now);

- a discounted online shop for members only,
- a questionnaire for your private feedback comments,
- a board to meet special guests and to ask them questions,
- the chance to make new friends on MSN Messenger,
- a page to read interviews with famous magicians,
- magic support for schools and youth clubs,
- an off-topic discussions board full of puzzles and other topics of interest,
- a site to buy and sell and swap miscellaneous magical items,
- a professional reference library,
- a forum in which you may upload files of your own,
- a forum full of reviews of magic tricks,
- books and CD-ROMs, a page of off-site links to other areas of magical interest,
- a members only secret area,
- ...as well as other projects that are currently being explored and developed. (Further news regarding these will be released when appropriate.)

The Governing Body of Magic Bunny hope that you may be able to make good use of these facilities and that you may find them invaluable in gaining new skills, discovering more of the world of magic or in assisting others to realise their full potential in the art of magic. Here's wishing you all the very best for the year 2004 and any exciting new projects that may come your way.

Nigel Shelton.

Mr. Wonderful

Mr. Wonderful
Wand Work

By Peter Marucci

Time was when almost every performing magician used a magic wand somewhere in his act.

Today they are few and far between. And that's unfortunate, partly because it's a symbolic thing that identifies you as a magician, even if it doesn't do anything.

But also because there is so much that can be done with a wand in the context of performing, both for children and adults.

And there are about a zillion gimmicked wands out there -- from nesting wands, to appearing wands, to you-name-it wands.

One of my favorites is the old standby, the spring wand. It appears to be solid but, when you hand it to a helper, it droops and wobbles. (To the surprise of no one, it is also marketed as the Droopy Wand and the Wobbly Wand.)

Unfortunately, that's just about all most performers do with it: They pull it out, stick it in a kid's hand, it wobbles, everyone laughs, and the magi goes on with the show.

C'mon, folks; you can do better than that. It's more than just a gag and it's for more than just kids' shows. Here's an adult-show presentation to get you thinking about a great prop.

EFFECT:

During the course of a routine, the magi hands an audience volunteer a magic wand. The wand appears solid but, when the spectator takes it, it goes limp.

Okay, that's the bare bones of it. Now, consider a little showmanship:

PRESENTATION:

An audience volunteer is already on stage when you bring out the wand.

"Have you ever used a magic wand before?" you ask.

If she says "yes," you reply: "Well, folks, it's nice to work with experts." If she says "no," you continue: "Well, you won't be able to say that tomorrow, will you?"

In both cases, the object is to put the volunteer at ease and to familiarize her and the audience with the wand.

"Wands are an important part of magic -- and both wands and magic have played a major role in great literature.

"Consider some of the books -- like the children's classic *Wand In The Willows*. Or the great Civil War epic *Gone With The Wand*. Or the more recent *Wands Of War*. And, of course, we can't overlook that great novel by Charles Dickens -- (pause here while everyone tries to think of a Dickens book that would fit the theme) - - *David Copperfield!*"

Wait for the gales of uproarious laughter (we hope) to die down, and present the wand to the spectator, saying: "This magic wand has been in our family for three generations, so please don't let anything happen to it."

As she takes it, step back and DO NOTHING. The wand will droop, wobble and spring about.

Mr. Wonderful (cont.)

If you have done a good job of picking the right spectator, she will instinctively play this for all it's worth.

Again, DO NOTHING. Let your volunteer have the spotlight for as long as she can hold the audience's attention and keep them laughing.

Finally, when the two of you (and your volunteer is very much a partner in this routine -- as they should be in all routines) have milked this for all it's worth, take the wand back, wobbling it yourself.

"Boy," you say, "that is one sick wand. I guess that's where the old saying comes from: It's an ill wand that blows no good."

Pause, wait for the laugh (again, we hope), put the wand away and continue with whatever routine you were about to do.

SECOND THOUGHTS:

In case you missed it above, when the spectator takes the wand and it starts to droop and wobble, DO NOTHING!

This is critical; under NO circumstances should you try to upstage the volunteer at this point. You will certainly kill the laugh, probably kill the routine, and possibly kill your whole act.

Why? Well, there is absolutely nothing you could do that would be funnier than what the right volunteer will do. If you try to stop her, or upstage here, the audience will resent it and, in turn, you.

Of course, there is always that rare occasion (although I've never come across it) when you might get a volunteer who can't pick up on the gag. Then -- and only then -- step in to "get them off the hook," by taking the wand and going directly into the final gag.

You've probably noticed that I referred to the volunteer as a female throughout. That's intentional. In hundreds of shows where I have used this, a female volunteer will get far more laughs and have more fun with this than a male.

For a female magician, I suspect the reverse might be true, but -- not being a female magician -- I can't speak with authority on that (although I'd like to hear from some female magis on the matter).

This routine, obviously, is for adult shows; younger audiences wouldn't get the puns. But the point of this is to get you thinking about the spring wand -- and wands in general.

So, dig into the back of your closet, dust off that spring wand (or any other trick wand), and come up with your own, personal routine for kids' shows.

And have fun doing it!

By Peter Marucci
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Cops and Robbers

Cops and Robbers

Market Mentalism

By David J. Bodycombe

In my opinion, mentalism effects can lead the performer to look a little smug. This is my attempt at creating a large-scale routine where the participants do the magic yet they won't be able to work out how since no stooges are required. It can be easily adapted to many themes and hopefully has laughs along the way. It requires little set-up and uses cheap props as part of the act.

EFFECT:

The magician says that he can't go on with his next trick because someone has stolen it! The magician demonstrates that his shopping bag is empty. Eight people are brought up onto the stage for 'questioning'. The magician places eight pieces of paper into the shopping bag, and allows each suspect to take one piece of paper until everyone has one and the bag is empty once more.

The colour of the paper taken divides the people into 4 police and 4 suspects. The police work together to finger the correct suspect in an unusual manner!

PREPARATION:

The props are deliberately low-key, as if the magician has cobbled them together at the last minute to replace the stolen trick.

- A shopping bag of the sturdy card variety. This has a centre division, making it into a force bag. Failing this, a large A3 envelope with a centre division glued into the middle will do, or any other opaque force bag.
- On four pieces of white A4 paper, write one word each that you know will describe several people in your audience. For example, if before the show you note that there are a few men wearing green ties, write "MAN" on one piece of paper, "WEARING" on another, "GREEN" on the third and "TIE" on the fourth. Fold these papers into four.
- On three pieces of YELLOW A4 paper, write "INNOCENT". Fold these papers into four and mix them up with the four pieces of white paper from the previous step. Set these aside for the moment.
- On five pieces of YELLOW A4 paper, write "NICKED!". Fold these papers into four THEN place them into one side of your force bag then 'close up' that side so that the bag appears empty.

METHOD:

1. The mentalist explains that his newest and most expensive trick has been stolen. He shows his "empty" shopping bag to the audience. (In truth, it contains the five yellow "NICKED!" papers but those are in the compartment that is currently shut.)
2. The mentalist asks eight people from the audience to come onto the stage for questioning. This can be anyone but exactly ONE person must match the prepared description (i.e. a man in a green tie in our example). The people can be picked individually, but is probably quicker to get a table of eight people (including Green Tie man) if it's a typical dinner situation.
3. The mentalist says that he needs to assign roles to each person. He loosely fans the pieces of paper saying "Here are eight paper slips..." (actually there are only seven - four white, three yellow) "...which I'm going to put into my bag" (which he does, into the currently empty side of the change bag).
4. Mentalist goes up to any of the questionees (but NOT the man in the green tie) and asks them to pick out any ONE of the slips. Though not vital, the mentalist should try to hold the bag up high so that the picker cannot see inside. The piece of paper chosen must not be opened just yet.
5. Mentalist repeats step 4 for two more people (but NOT the green tie man). The order in which the mentalist visits each person is probably best if randomised, rather than going down the line.
6. Before going to the FOURTH person, the mentalist looks into his bag and says "That's three people done, I think there's five paper slips left." As he does so, he has the opportunity to change the flap inside the change

Cops and Robbers (cont.)

bag.

7. The mentalist now goes up to the man in the green tie and also asks him to pick any ONE paper slip. No matter what he picks, it will be a yellow piece of paper (which in fact has NICKED! on it, but we don't know that yet). Note that they will not suspect anything by touch because there are indeed five pieces of paper inside that section of the force bag.

8. The mentalist changes the flap inside the change bag once more and repeats step 4 for anyone who hasn't got a slip yet. (The mentalist can even ask "Who wants the next one?" if wanted - the order of picking is no longer important.) Note that by the time we get to the last person, there is only one slip left which is what you'd expect. This works because the mentalist only put seven slips into that side of the bag initially - the 8th one came from the force side of the bag. The mentalist can now demonstrate that the bag is once more empty, and scrumple it up and throw it away if he so wishes, leaving the situation fairly 'clean'.

9. The mentalist now explains that the four people with WHITE pieces of paper are the police, and they should walk to one side of the stage. (He can get them to walk in a police-like manner, and say "Evenin' all" etc.!) The other four questionees holding YELLOW pieces of paper are suspected cat burglars (make them all say "Meow!") and they should walk to the opposite side of the stage.

10. The mentalist goes up to each of the police in turn and asks them to reveal what's on their piece of paper. The mentalist improvises as necessary, for example:

(1st policeman reveals their word: MAN) "So, we have the word MAN. We're looking for a man. Well, aren't we all? OK (to 2nd policeman), what have you got? (unfolds piece of paper) Ah, you have the word GREEN. We're looking for a green man. ET perhaps?! Policeman number three, please unfold your piece of paper (she does so). Your word is... TIE. We're going to tie up ET?! I didn't think aliens were into that kind of thing!"

...and so on.

11. The mentalist eventually 'realises' that the four words revealed by the police can be rearranged into the sentence MAN WEARING GREEN TIE (the mentalist gets the police to shuffle around so that the sentence forms correctly.)

12. The mentalist now walks over to the other side of the stage and says, in a sing-song voice, "Well, where on earth are we going to find a man in a green tie?" (places hand on the shoulder of our prime suspect!) The man in the green tie is asked to "accompany" the mentalist to the centre of the stage. The mentalist could even read him his rights!

13. The mentalist and green tie man turn to face the three remaining suspects, who are holding yellow pieces of paper. In turn the mentalist asks them to unfold their pieces of paper. They will all say "INNOCENT".

14. Finally, the mentalist asks the prime suspect (wearing a green tie) in the centre stage to open his yellow piece of paper. It says "NICKED!" We have our man! But how did the police work it out?...

FURTHER NOTES:

- Don't rely on one particular person in the audience, in case the only person in a gold dress refuses to participate or has nipped to the loo!

- The 'victim' (our man in the green tie) should pick a slip of paper fourth because if it was any later, it's possible that all the yellow slips had already been taken. It is possible to rejig the trick so that he comes earlier in the sequence, but this would increase the number of NICKED! slips you'd need in the closed section of your force bag (to make it "feel" right to the touch).

- The front of the shopping bag (the one that's initially empty) could have a transparent window in it so long as there was a way to use your body or angles to hide this when the fourth person (green tie man) chooses

Cops and Robbers (cont.)

their paper slip.

- Instead of the word NICKED! you could use a picture of handcuffs, some jail bars or other graphic.
- When the sentence has been revealed (after step 11), you could address the audience and appeal to them for information in the Crimewatch style, giving the description of the suspect that's just been revealed (man in green tie). You might even consider giving out a number for the audience to call – the number of a readily available Pay As You Go mobile phone in your pocket. Hopefully one of the audience will do so, and you can have fun talking on the mobile to someone who is just a few tables away! Get them to point out the 'suspect' (man in green tie or whoever) and continue on with the routine.
- At the end of the routine, if you're comfortable with physically handling your 'nicked' spectator and CERTAIN they won't mind, you could handcuff yourselves together. Now proceed to gesture wildly as you introduce the next act/trick/where the emergency exits are/whatever, taking the hapless spectator's arm with you!

If you wanted to print up the words in advance in nice typeset lettering (rather than writing them with a felt-tip), you could pre-print a whole stack of different words and take them all with you to the venue, then just pick out the four you need on the night. For example, they might be: WORD 1: MAN, WOMAN, BOY, GIRL; WORD 2: WEARING, IN; WORD 3: RED, BLUE, GREEN, YELLOW, BLACK, WHITE, BROWN, PURPLE, SILVER, GOLD, TARTAN, SPOTTED, STRIPED; WORD 4: SKIRT, HAT, TIE, TROUSERS, SUIT, GLASSES, SHIRT, DRESS, SHOES, JACKET

www.labyrinthgames.com

By David J. Bodycombe

How to Buy Magic

How to Buy Magic

By Timothy Arends

Shopping for new props is one of the joys of being a magician. We love browsing through catalogs, sending our orders, and opening the packages when they arrive, like Christmas all over again. Unfortunately, this experience is marred when we receive items of poor quality.

Marvin Kaye, author of the Stein and Day Handbook of Magic, years ago wrote a book of magic reviews. He said magicians are poorly served by magic dealers. First of all, the illustrations in magic catalogs are usually inadequate. The trick descriptions, as Kaye put it, make every trick "sound like a new incarnation of Aaron's rod." Vital details about the effect are often left out, and if you should find out that a trick is not for you, too bad--you can't take it back!

As Kaye pointed out, magic reviews in magazines tend to be quite benign, because the paraphernalia is supplied to the reviewer by the dealers. If the reviewer pans too many tricks, dealers will stop providing them for consideration.

Let's look at the issue of illustrations first. Some of them were drawn over 50 years ago, and while this does give magic catalogs a certain charm (!), it is hardly a good way to get an idea of what an effect is like when you get it. Manufacturing methods change, but the illustrations remain the same. I once purchased a silk-to-flag trick through the mail and was very disappointed to find that the flag supplied was one-fourth the size of the one implied by the illustration.

Now let's consider trick descriptions. Usually, vital facts are left out. I once purchased a vanishing quarter trick that was performed by Doug Henning on one of his TV specials. While the trick was great for television,

How to Buy Magic (cont.)

it required setup in advance, then for the performer to walk on stage in front of the audience with his arm held out in exactly the right position, to perform the effect, then to walk offstage so the setup could be disengaged in private. In other words, this effect was hardly practical for anything but television!

In this age of the Internet, the situation for magicians may be a little better, but it can still be confusing. Often Web-based magic shops do not take advantage of the full potential of the Internet. The Web allows for clear, full-color photographs of apparatus that can give the purchaser a good idea of what he is buying. However, the bandwidth to post large color photos can quickly mount, so few dealers may take advantage of this capability. Often, the images of tricks on websites are almost as bad as the ones in printed magic catalogs!

Of course, the Internet makes it easier to shop around for a better value. One must remember, however, that getting the lowest price often runs counter to getting the highest-quality equipment. Dealers who post the clearest photographs and descriptions of their apparatus may charge more for their magic, in order to pay for the bandwidth required to provide these services. You could check out the tricks you want at a dealer who has clear photographs, then buy the effect from another dealer with a lower price, but there's no guarantee that what you're seeing on the one website is what you are ordering from the other site.

One option is to buy all your magic in a shop. I once purchased a "locking" card box by mail order. The "locking" mechanism was supposed to allow the spectator to casually examine the box, but the box was made of lightweight plastic and the gimmick inside was made of metal. Anyone picking up the box could easily tell it was gimmicked by the weight. Had I the chance to inspect it (in a shop) before buying it, I would have rejected it.

However, young magicians who do not have a magic shop in their hometown and are not yet able to drive may not often be able to benefit from this opportunity. Even buying a trick from a shop is no guarantee of satisfaction. The demonstrator may be poorly prepared to show an effect. He may push an effect that is not suited to the buyer's abilities. And often, magic shops are able to stock only a small percentage of the items sold by mail-order houses.

In light of all these difficulties, how to get the best value in magic? Here are a few tips:

Put your act together first, then consult the catalog or visit the magic shop. If you go to the magic shop first, you may be dazzled by the magic shown there and buy a lot of stuff you don't really need, or that you later discover you already have the instructions to in a book. If you put your routine together first, based on your books, you know exactly what props you need to complete your act.

Have a list of pertinent questions that you ask when buying any piece of magic apparatus:

How difficult is the effect to master? If you have little desire to spend long hours practicing a trick before you can perform it, you should avoid those requiring a high skill level.

Does the trick require set up prior to each performance? If so, it can be removed from consideration for your strolling routine.

Can the trick be done surrounded, or must the spectators be at exactly the right angle when witnessing it? If so, it can also be removed from consideration for your walkaround act.

Can the trick be performed while standing or does it require use of a table?

What size are the props? Can they be seen from the distance you intend to show them?

Are the props of good quality and do they look professional, or do they look like they were lifted from a children's magic set? If you see an unbelievably low price on a prop, you should immediately suspect lower-quality. Bill tubes are sold in plastic as well as brass. You'll be prouder of the brass piece, look more professional handling it, and be able to use it longer than the one made of plastic.

Eventually, you will learn to read between the lines of magic catalog descriptions. If a description does not

How to Buy Magic (cont.)

say the apparatus can be inspected, you can bet ten-to-one that it can't be. (When apparatus can be inspected--or performed surrounded, or immediately reset, etc.--the description invariably trumpets this to the world.)

In no case should you buy an effect if you think you can figure it out just by reading the description. I made the mistake of doing this once or twice just to see if my guess was right, and it was! (Really smart move on my part, I know, but curiosity is so powerful it can make us buy even when we know we shouldn't.) If you can guess the modus operandi of a trick just from reading the description, your audience can probably guess it from seeing it performed.

If you have any questions at all that can't be surmised from the description, you should contact the magic shop and ask. In these days of the Internet it is easier and cheaper than in the old days. It is much easier to fire off an email than to write a letter, and it is cheaper than a phone call.

Consult the magic review forums on the Internet. However, keep in mind that these are often poorly organized, and magic enthusiasts are much more likely to write about effects they are happy with than those with which they are unhappy (people don't like to dwell on the negative). You must also keep in mind that the review you are reading may not be of the exact same piece of apparatus you may be considering for purchase.

Hopefully, these tips will be of use to you in getting the greatest value for your money. Remember, magic is a tricky business, and that includes buying the props with which to do the magic!

Timothy Arends, who lives in the greater Chicago area, has been a student of magic for over 30 years. He posts on the Magic Bunny forums under the handle of Cybernetter. You may send responses to this article to timarends@aol.com.

Let's Build Magic

Let's Build Magic **The Moneymaking Pencil**

By Michael Saint Louis

Whew! This is a first, I'll admit: I am actually making good on a promise I made on the Forums. I know, I know... I can barely believe it myself. After all, I have a horrible track record and am a notorious (and self-confessed) liar. But it is a new year and a time for fresh starts, right? While it isn't exactly my New Year's Resolution to be more reliable, it seems like as good as time as any to start. Besides, the kids are asleep and my wife is deeply engrossed in Home and Garden Television so I don't have anything better to do.

It all started with a question about how to hand out business cards. But first, let me tell you a story. It may not be true, but I will tell you the way I was told. My great-grampa told this to me and as far as I know, he was a notorious liar too. After all, I had to get it from somewhere, right?

A long time ago when my great-grampa's people still chased the buffalo herds throughout the Great Plains but not so long ago that they had to walk the whole time there was a beautiful Crow maiden called Stars-in-Sky. As with most beautiful girls in Indian stories, it was about time for her father to marry her off and all the young men knew it. When a young Crow man wanted to win a girl from her father the key to dad's heart was usually a nice horse or two. And if you needed a horse, you might as well go steal one from the Lakota because then even if you didn't get the girl at least you ruined some poor dumb Lakota's day and he probably stole the horse from your cousin anyway.

Let's Build Magic (cont.)

So before long Stars-in-Sky's daddy had more horses than the Kentucky Derby. Fat ones, thin ones, young ones, strong ones, ugly ones... he had plenty of horses. Then one day a young man called Looking Backwards rode into the camp. He was laughing hysterically and had a huge bundle of skins under his arm. Star-in-Sky's daddy looked up at Looking Backwards and said, "So I suppose you are coming with that horse?"

"No, this is my horse. I brought you these," and he tossed all the skins down and slid off his horse. "I went to go try to steal some Lakota horses so you might think of giving me Stars-in-Sky and I rode for a day until I found some. All of the Lakota were swimming in this creek and I was trying to figure out how I was going to get the horses back to the camp because there were like 30 horses and only one of me. And then I saw all of their pants sitting on the rocks, so I took them instead."

"Looking Backwards, what am I going to do with all of their pants?"

"I didn't think of that! I was more concerned with what all those Lakota were going to do without them!"

Of course, Stars-in-Sky married Looking Backwards. When she asked her daddy why he picked Looking Backwards he told her "Of all the young men that came looking for your hand, I don't remember which boy brought which damn horse, but I do remember who made me laugh at a bunch of naked Lakota!"

That's how great-grampa told it to me. I don't know if it is true or not, but it always made me wonder how we came to marry great-gramma.

Great-grampa didn't do magic and he didn't have business cards, either, so he never worried about how to use magic to hand out business cards. But I do and his old story made me think long and hard about business cards back when I was selling life insurance and handing out business cards. I didn't do magic with them because people barely want to buy life insurance as it is and they especially don't want to buy it from a kid (I was a kid at the time) doing his best Doug Henning, do they? So I had other ways to tackle that situation but as I magician I can assure you of one thing: I would not hand out business cards. Kind of like Stars-in-Sky's daddy and the horses, people don't remember getting business cards.

Business cards suck. They are so boring and business like and not magical. Life insurance salesmen hand out business cards. Magicians should hand out magic with their telephone number on it! So back when I was considering going pro I came up with this instead and I think it is a nice little bit.

First, get some pencils or pens printed up with your name and number on them. This is more expensive than cheap business cards but less expensive than really fancy tri-fold metallic print embossed business cards with your photo on them and they make better impromptu wands. There are a million places that do this and it shouldn't cost you too much. I highly recommend pencils because they are cheaper and easier to gimmick (although gimmicking is not a must). It doesn't matter if they are round or hexagonal, just get the really cheap ones that only have your name and number printed on one side (this is important... if you want to get the fancy double printed ones then just go ahead and skip to the tri-fold metallic print business card brochures).

Sharpen your pencils. Find some sandpaper or a file and flatten the sharpened area slightly in two places: where your name and number are printed on the pencil and the 180-degree exact opposite side from where you name and number are printed. You are almost ready. Now, find an out of sight place (meaning one that is not seen not one that is totally far out) where you can keep the pencils and be sure that when you bring the pencil into view that the blank side is showing. If you carry a briefcase or some kind of bag routinely this is fairly easy. If you are going to keep your hand-outs in a pocket you may want to build a holder out of stiff cardboard or plastic and elastic that will hold your pencils in the correct position (see, that whole Pocket Pegboard thing is already rearing its ugly head ahead... that is, you'll find all the info you need on how to do something like this in my last couple of Top Hat articles).

I'll leave the patter up to you and what works with your style and the situation, but here's the basic idea: Oh, well if you ever need a magician call me, I'll give you my number. Have any paper? I have a pencil (it comes out of the pocket blank, show "both sides" with a paddle move)... tell you what, forget about the paper (magical wave and the name and number appears).

Okay, I'll admit that that reads pretty corny... all it is really lacking is some of that there "woofle dust" all

Let's Build Magic (cont.)

the worst patter seems to love, but I don't expect you to use that. Like I said, I'll leave the patter up to you... you know, it's kind of like the story of Looking Backwards. It works well for me, but I don't see it coming off nearly as well when told with a British accent! But you what? Y'all feel free to use it too! Just go out there and get yourself some business however you can!

By Michael Saint Louis

Argentinean Triumph

Argentinean Triumph Mixed Magic

By Daniel de Urquiza

Hi, everybody. First of all, I'm from Argentina, so if my spelling is bad, please be gentle with this old chap. Toying with the half pass I've found an idea (to the extent of my knowledge, original) to perform an impromptu Triumph effect in the hands, without table.

EFFECT:

The spectator sees a card. The magician gives the deck a few cuts, and, to make things even more impossible, the artist proceeds to shuffle...yes, you know how, cards face down and face up. Nevertheless, the magician manages to produce the chosen card in a very magical (magician, magical, yes, I'm not very good with adjectives) way. Then, he spreads the deck in his hand, and...all the faces are looking the same way (I bet you didn't see that one coming).

METHOD:

Please, please, please, read carefully the explanation. Every technique is selected to fit inside the handling and appearance of the routine. If you want to change or adapt to yourself a technique, have the above mentioned always in mind.

Having the deck face down in dealer's grip, half pass it, turning face up its bottom half. The classical way to do this is Henry Crist's Half Pass.

Riffle the outer corner of the deck with your thumb (you shouldn't have any difficulties with this move), proposing to the spectator that he may stop you when he wishes. Of course, you are so wise and clever that you will manage to stop BEFORE the upturned half of the deck. When you are stopped, lift the packets of cards, show to the spectator the face card of the packet, return it to the deck and square. Of course, while pretending to square, you are side stealing the card, bringing it to the top.

I see your smiles: now you understand the philosophical reason behind the method of the card selection. Yes, it was planned to fit the side steal.

Before you end your squaring/fumbling with the card, you will take a break below the two top cards of the deck: the chosen one, and one indifferent. Now, perform a double undercut, leaving in this way both cards at the bottom of the deck, the indifferent one at the face, followed by the chosen card. Position check: you have, from top to bottom: half deck face down, half deck face up, selected card face down, indifferent card face up.

In the spectator view, he has selected a card, then the card is losted in the deck, and the deck is given a few cuts to utterly lost the painted pasteboard. Note, please, that the undercuts shows backs of the card cutted at random (seemingly) so you are reinforcing the idea that all the cards are face down, without having to resort to more direct methods, like saying: "See that all the cards are face down". Beyond the joke, I've

Argentinean Triumph (cont.)

have suffered this kind of patter/presentation/pathetism, so it is a joke, but no so much.

Pick up the deck, showing its face to the spectator. Say something along the lines of "And now, to make even more difficult the feat you are about to behold, I'm going to mix the cards so!". Cut at the natural bridge forme by the two opposing halves of the deck. Everything matches (oh, God, I'm so clever!), because spectator sees face down indifferent card and face down half of the deck. Turn over ostensibly the face down half.

Faro shuffle both halves, leaving intact the bottom two cards. You are shuffling cards all facing the same way. Square the deck. Say "From this mess of cards, I'm going to produce a miracle", or watever your fancy tells you to say, or ask Melpomene (she's one of the Muses, you ignorant!). Take the deck as if you were to perform Erdnase's first color change. But instead of doing so, make a one card pass, taking the indifferent card to the (now) bottom of the deck. The selected card is thus magically produced. Give the card to the spectator, so he can corroborate the identity of the card. Proceed to extend in your hands the deck (taking care of no expose the face up card at bottom) showing all cards face down. If you are rich, give the selection to the spectator, as a souvenir. If you are not rich, also give the selection away, and take it as an investment. So don't be cheap!!!!.

NOTES:

No notes at all. But it seems fashion to have some note, or afterthoughts, so if nobody reads this, it will look like I have notes. If you are one of those nerds who actually reads this type of thing, please keep the secret. After all, that's what we magicians do, ain't we?

*By Daniel de Urquiza
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Thanks for reading, I hope you've enjoyed everything these worthy contributors have had to offer. Please send any (yes, any) articles you'd like included next month to TOPHAT@magicbunny.co.uk before the 15th February.

Many thanks,

Jon Snoops