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Trying New Things

Getting in front of an audience is scary. Stepping in front of an audience and proclaiming that you are going to do magic can be outright terrifying.

Why is that? Why is it so tough, even for seasoned professionals, to walk out in front of an audience sometimes?

I think part of it has to do with the fact that we claim that we are going to perform “magic”. That’s a pretty big claim. The audience may not be able to define exactly what magic is, but they know what it looks like and what it feels like to experience.

As magicians, we know that when we perform magic we are walking a thin line. With a magic trick, it’s sink or swim. There is no middle ground. You either pull it off, or you don’t. The audience is going to judge your magic skills on whether the trick fooled them or it didn’t.

Other styles of performing aren’t usually so cut and dry. If you are a good actor you can have an off night and still do a good job. If you sing, you can have a night where you only bring 80% of your “A game” and get away with it. Not so with magic.

So, how do you overcome stage fright?

- 1) Embrace it and understand that it is normal and good for your energy level
- 2) Lots of flight time
- 3) Incorporate other theatrical elements into it-comedy, etc.

Embrace it. Oh, that’s a tough one. How do you embrace something that is so scary?

For me, I realized one day that the audiences who watch a magic show are there to see me succeed. They really do want your performance to be good! Learn to embrace your nerves as normal and a good way to get your energy level up before you walk on stage. Then go out and entertain a group that is thrilled that you are sharing fun and amazement with them.

Lots of flight time. The best way to overcome stage fright is to get out in front of as many audiences as possible. The more you do it, the easier it gets.

Other theatrical elements.

Incorporate comedy, tension, adlibs, and other theatrical elements into your routine to give it additional layers. A magic trick combined with some other theatrical element is usually more entertaining than without it.

And keep in mind what Marissa Mayer (of Google) said...

“I always did something that I was a little not ready to do. I think that’s how you grow. When there’s that moment of ‘Wow, I’m not really sure I can do this,’ and you push through those moments, that’s when you have a breakthrough.”

Bargatze's Musings – Can You Teach Someone to Be Funny?



“So what happens when you put a guy you know, in a comedy club, in front of an audience that doesn’t know he isn’t known as being a funny guy?”

Well, I am typing this from my phone, so my hopes are not too high.

I have heard most of my life that you can’t teach funny. I have seen people try to be funny in ways that if a “funny” person did them would have brought the house down. Unfortunately the “not funny” people that tried those jokes either died a slow death or offended half the audience.

I have seen David Copperfield get great laughs. Do I think Copperfield is funny? No, I do not. I do think that he can do things that are funny though.

Last weekend I worked a comedy club with a guy most of us know. Those of us who have seen him work

wouldn’t say that he’s a funny guy. I am not saying he isn’t funny, but in his work he is not known as a funny guy.

So, what happens when you put a guy you know, in a comedy club, in front of an audience that doesn’t know that he isn’t known as being a funny guy? In fact, for all this audience knows this guy is a full time comedian. Would they laugh? Would he live up to their expectations?

They did laugh and that night, not only was he funny, he did nothing to prove that he wasn’t a comedian. Best of all, he did not turn on a tape recorder and didn’t have to have a banana or a bandanna to be funny.

He did material that he has used in his act for quite a few years. In his current show the pieces are funny but when done as a comedy club set those routines from his act stood up well with the other comedians on the show.

In fact the guy killed. That night our mystery guy was not a magician first, he was a comedian first, that also did magic.

Was I surprised? If I am honest I would have to say yes, I was. I knew it would be good. I knew they would like it, but it was surprisingly better than good. They loved it.

Good for him. Good for magic in comedy clubs. Should Kevin King be afraid? Yes Kevin, be afraid. Be very afraid.

So, can you teach someone to be funny?

Go ask Jason Michaels.

Upcoming Meetings, Shows, Lectures and Conventions

Nashville Magic Club, May Meeting – Thursday, May 28th, 2015 beginning at 7:00 p.m. at Andrew Price United Methodist Church, 2846 Lebanon Pike, Nashville, TN.

www.nashvillemagicclub.com

The Magic All Stars at The Magic Lounge – May 30th from 8 pm until ??? at Bongo After Hours Theatre, 2007 Belmont Avenue, Nashville, TN.

The Magic All Stars floor show will begin at 8 pm and the theatre will transform into The Magic Lounge where performers will share interactive close-up magic with guests immediately following the show at approximately 9:30 pm.

www.facebook.com/magicalstars

For tickets:

www.bongoafterhours.com

This month's Magic All Stars will feature Stephen Bargatze's and Jason Michaels's show they are taking overseas to entertain our armed forces. You won't want to miss it!

Middle TN Magic Club, June Meeting – SWAP AND SELL and ANNUAL PICNIC – Saturday, June 13 with doors opening at 4:30 pm.

There will be no Business meeting or Activity but there will be Open Time so bring some magic to share (any style). And don't forget to bring some food to share as well. The Ring will supply the hot dogs & hamburgers (to be served around 6 PM). **SPECIAL LOCATION:** this will be held at the Florence Church of Christ located at 6732 Old Nashville Highway in Murfreesboro.

www.ibmring252.com



May's Meeting Theme is...Rope Magic

Let yourself get "roped-in" this month and show us something with a rope theme.

In Concert: Alan Fisher

Mini Lecture: Chris Rayman – Music Control Systems and Sound for Performers; Eric Tyree – Lapping, Steals, and Servantes

Help Us Reach More Magic Enthusiasts

If you are receiving this newsletter, you qualify as a magic enthusiast. I know I certainly am.

I want this newsletter to get out to as many people who enjoy the art and craft of magic as possible.

We need your help! Make sure we have your correct email address, mailing address, etc. Right now, the newsletter is strictly electronic, but who knows, maybe one day we'll even send out a hard copy newsletter as well.

You can also help the cause by forwarding these newsletters to anyone you know that might be interested in magic. That's right, anyone!

We all have to get started somehow. It's my hope that these little newsletters may help spark the interest, then fan the flame of this great art that we enjoy sharing with each other.

Don't hesitate! Forward this newsletter to some of your friends, then make

sure you invite them out to the next club meeting.

We want to make as many new friends as possible and spread the fun!

-JM

Classified Ads Tricks for Sale

Do you have magic to sell something to your fellow club members?

Email

president@nashvillemagicclub.com
the details of what you want to sell and your stuff might appear in this spot.

From the East by Tom Vorjohan



This past weekend I had the privilege and honor of being on stage with three other magicians: Jason Murphy from Cookeville, and two of your members – Jason Michaels and Stephen Bargatze. We were doing a show to benefit the Christian Counseling Center of Cumberland County (also known as C-5), and we had a very receptive and appreciative audience of more than 600 people in Crossville...we even ended with a heart-warming standing ovation.

The show went great! I'd like to say I did an admirable job along with the two Jasons. But I have to be honest: Stephen Bargatze is in a class all by himself. Stephen closed the show, and it's a good thing because very few entertainers are capable of following him. He has a sense of comedic timing and a proven set of routines that flow together to make the audience howl with laughter from start to finish. It is amazing to watch! I love to watch him – heck, I hired him to perform at my own 50th birthday a year ago. I mention this because I want you to realize how great you have it in Ring 37.

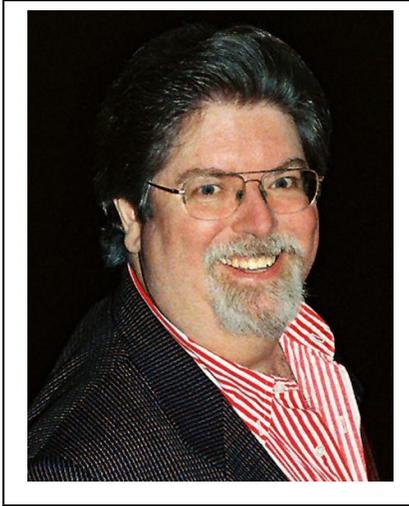
I wrote the "Linking the Rings" column in *The Linking Ring* for just over 13 years, and I would read the Ring reports every month looking for ideas to share with the membership. Very, very few Rings are blessed enough to have a professional who takes the time to make it to the Ring meetings every month. I've been told it's because many pros look down on the Rings and consider the meetings beneath them. So, I would rarely see the names of professionals unless they were visiting the Ring for a lecture.

In any Ring situation, I think it is one of the perks of membership to be able to hang out with friends and to find someone you can look up to and learn from. While I think it would be cool to have a gaggle of magicians following Bargatze around like the joggers did to Tom Hanks in the *Forest Gump* movie, that's not what I am suggesting. But I do think you are foolish if you don't take advantage of the time you have at Ring meetings or meals to socialize with some of the members that you can learn from.

Here in Knoxville, we have a different market than you do in Nashville. Michael Messing and I have been the only "full-time" magicians in the area for quite some time, and now a recent college grad, Ben Young, is trying to make a go of it. Ben got a great break at the Winter Carnival of Magic because he was Murray Sawchuck's personal assistant, and Murray took a liking to Ben and had him out to Las Vegas to do a guest spot. I have enjoyed mentoring Ben about his act and the business of magic, but this was a huge benefit to Ben to befriend a Las Vegas performer!

The bottom line to me is that you need to take advantage of your assets in Nashville, and Stephen Bargatze is most definitely one of them. He is great to work with, and I treasure the fact that I can call him a friend. I envy those of you who live closer and can learn from a magician of his caliber.

Down in the Boro - by Alan Fisher



This month I thought I'd hand over the reins of the column to one of Ring 252's newest members, Paula McGarry. Paula attended *Winter Carnival* in March and it was her first magic convention. She wrote about her experience for our Ring's newsletter and after reading it I think you'll agree it's a great article. Enjoy!

Memories of a Winter Carnival of MAGIC by Paula McGarry

I was fortunate enough to attend the 41st annual *Winter Carnival of Magic* this year in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. Having never been to a magic convention, I did not know quite what to expect other than as much magic as could possibly be packed into the span of three days.

In the months leading up to the convention, previous attendees regaled me with amazing tales of *Carnivals* past. I was promised an intimate setting beneath a larger-than-life King Kong replica, an angry mummy, and a steak the size of my face! For all the hype, the only thing that disappointed me about the *WCM* was leaving much too soon on Sunday morning.

Now that the dust has settled and I have been able to catch up on some much needed sleep, I have come to realize something interesting. While I was busy learning techniques and picking up new toys at the *Carnival*, I also inadvertently stumbled upon the true meaning of a word that is near and dear to all of our hearts; brotherhood.

When I joined the International Brotherhood of Magicians this past autumn, I pondered what it meant to be part of a 'brotherhood'. The dictionary defines the word as a group of people who share a particular interest, profession, fellowship or alliance. While these words may technically be true, I do not believe they fully encompass what 'brotherhood' actually represents.

Upon entering the lobby of the Country Tonite Theatre for the first time it was immediately apparent that everyone at the convention was having a great time. The noise level was through the roof as the room was covered wall to wall with excited people reminiscing about magic. My companions and I could not move across the room without spotting a familiar person walking toward us, grinning from ear-to-ear. From the time we registered until our final group photo, the energy in the air was palpable.

While I had a fantastic time at the *Carnival* itself, my most cherished memories are those I shared with the wonderful people of Ring 252. There were those of us who witnessed unspeakable horrors between man and mannequin at the Hollywood Wax Museum. Some of us even dared to challenge Pharaoh, or more accurately, 'the poor guy who got stuck leading our tour' at The Tomb (somewhere within those hidden rooms there is a door which will never shut squarely again thanks to the talents of Mongo). We supported Ring members Gary Flegal, Blaine Little, and Alan Fisher as they competed in the convention's various competitions. Then, we celebrated with Gary over his 1st place win & People's Choice award for stage as we did with Blaine and Alan whose performances in stage and close-up were just as award winning to us.

Though I have only been a part of the magic community for a short period of time, I have come to discover that there is a unique bond shared between people who are passionate about the art of magic. It is an amazing thing to be welcomed by a stranger like an old friend because of a tacit kinship. I was a newcomer to the *Carnival*, but I never felt like one.

It is difficult to define 'brotherhood' with mere words because it is a feeling. Brotherhood is more than what we do or say – it is who we are. Brotherhood is an unspoken connection which breaks down barriers and allows for a depth of shared experience. Brotherhood is coming together as individuals, knowing what we build together is more powerful and more meaningful than anything that can be built by any one of us on our own. I truly felt I was a part of something greater than myself at the *Winter Carnival of Magic*, and for that I thank you, one and all. See you next year, right?

BAMBOOZLERS – KIDS COINS

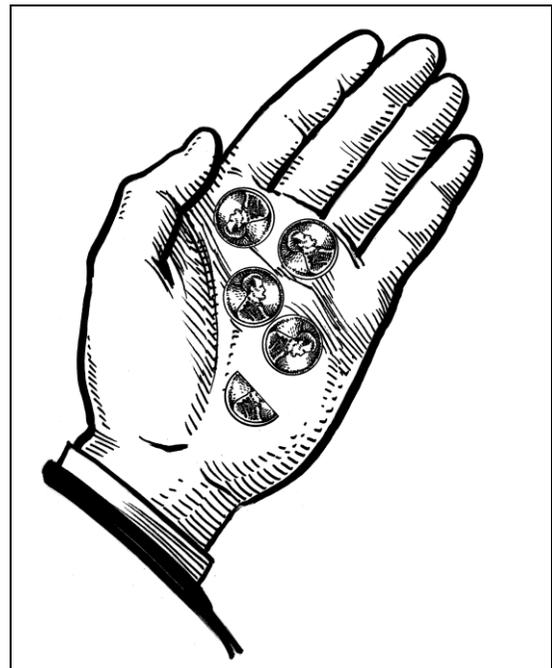
By Diamond Jim Tyler

BRAIN TEASER: Line up a penny, nickel and dime on the tabletop. Say, “Ken’s mother has three children.” Point to the penny as you say, “The first one’s name is Penny.” Continue as you point to the nickel. “The second one’s name is Nicholas.” Finish while inquiring and pointing to the dime, “So the last one’s name is?” Spectators typically reply with a name that begins with the letter D. Repeat the brain teaser again and make it clear that they do know the answer. Normally, they will call out “Dime” or “Dimitrius” and in my case most will say “Diamond”! Ask one of the bewildered spectators to repeat the riddle while pointing to the coins. Sometimes your audience will rack their brains for ten minutes calling out everything but the right answer. Do you know the answer?

SECRET: It’s not Eisenhower. It is Ken. It is obvious now. What we don’t know is the mother’s name. *If someone guesses the answer too quickly just play deaf and pretend like you didn’t hear them.*

Bamboozlers- The Book of Bankable Bar Betchas, Brain Beggars, Belly Busters & Bewitchery: Volume Three by Diamond Jim Tyler is available directly from Diamond Jim Tyler’s website – <http://diamond-jim.com>

Expect the same classy style pocket-sized book. It contains 75 effects with over 100 illustrations and is bound in green faux leather, with silver gilt edges, silver foiled stamping and has a ribbon marker. The foreword of the book is by Mac King. The book is sold for \$19.95.



Jason Michaels and Ken Bernstein Proudly Present

MAGIC ALL STARS

AT THE MAGIC LOUNGE

Sat. May 30th at 8p.m.
After the show, experience interactive
close up magic with the stars!

\$20 General Admission/\$25 VIP Seating
VIP includes complimentary coffee, water,
meet and greet, and premium seating.

f **magicalstars** 

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