



HEART OF THE MZ-RING



3 Big Events This Month!



Rick Maue



Ring Auction
March 8th
Fielding West Lecture
March 12th
Rick Maue & David London Lecture
March 28th

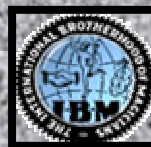
In This Issue:

- ◆ Fielding West Lecture [Page 4](#)
- ◆ Rick Maue & David London Lecture [Page 5](#)
- ◆ Ken Scott Lecture [Page 5](#)
- ◆ Last Month's Ring Report [Page 9](#)
- ◆ Upcoming Area Magic Shows [Page 10](#)
- ◆ Scott's Thoughts [Page 12](#)
- ◆ Kyle Peron [Page 14](#)
- ◆ Picture Spreads [Pages 16-17](#)



Page 6 -

A message from president, Julie Clark.



Page 6 -

Website of the Month is the I.B.M.'s New "Portal".



Page 7 & 8 -

This Saturday's Annual Ring 129 Magic Auction information.

Inside This Issue

Mark Your Calendars	2
Ring 129 Board Members	2
News and Announcements	3
Fielding West Lecture Information	4
Rick Maue & David London Lecture Information	5
Ken Scott Lecture Information	5
A Message From the President	6
Website of the Month	6
2008 Ring 129 Magic Auction Information	7-8
Last Month's Ring Report	9
Upcoming Area Magic Shows	10
Sick & Convalescent	10
Our Web Page	10
March Teach-a-Trick	10
Last Month's Magician of the Month Winners	11
Member Advertisements	11
Scott's Thoughts	12
Magician of the Month Winners	13
The Pizza Pie Analogy—Kyle Peron	14
Picture Spreads	16-17



Mark Your Calendars!

Thursday, March 6th

March Ring Meeting, 7:00 pm
Radisson Hotel, 95th & I-35, Lenexa, KS.

Saturday, March 8th

Ring Auction, 6:00 @ Roeland Park Community Center

Wednesday, March 12th

Fielding West Lecture, 7:00 @ US Toy

Thursday, March 13th

March Board Meeting, 7:00 pm
Denny's Restaurant, I-35 & Shawnee Mission Parkway

Friday, March 28th

Rick Maue & David London Lecture, 7:00 @ US Toy

Thursday, April 3rd

April Ring Meeting, 7:00 pm
Radisson Hotel, 95th & I-35, Lenexa, KS.

Thursday, April 10th

April Board Meeting, 7:00 pm
Denny's Restaurant, I-35 & Shawnee Mission Parkway

Sunday, April 13th

S.A.M. Assembly #38 - Spring Magic Show 1:30 pm
Fairmont Community Center, Independence, MO.

Tuesday, April 29th

Ken Scott Lecture, 7:00 @ US Toy

2008 Ring 129 Board Members



President - Julie Clark
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theclarkx@comcast.net



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Past President - Mike Blum
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NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



Welcome to New Members! - Emma Jo Blankenship is better known to ring members for her work as an assistant to Kyle Scheel. She also is a very talented singer!



Duane Roberts is no stranger to magic. He has been doing magic since his childhood and can be seen behind the counter on Saturdays at the Magic Supply Company in Blue Springs.



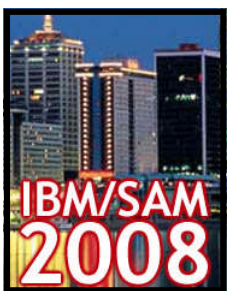
Mini-Lecture in May - Final details are currently being worked out with Gene Hernandez to conduct a “mini-lecture” at the regular club meeting in May. Stay tuned!



Members in the Linking Ring - Occasionally our ring will have one of their members mentioned in the I.B.M. national magazine, “The Linking Ring”. Our own ring member, Jason Dean has been mentioned in the last two issues! We also understand that because of his involvement in the creation of the new I.B.M. website, “The Portal”, ring treasurer, Kirk DeWeese will also be mentioned in this month’s issue. Congratulations to both!



Concerning Club Dues... If you have not paid your 2008 club dues, please contact Ring Treasurer, Kirk DeWeese. Dues can be paid at the next regular monthly meeting or by mail to Kirk DeWeese, 634 SW Walnut, Blue Springs, Mo., 64014.



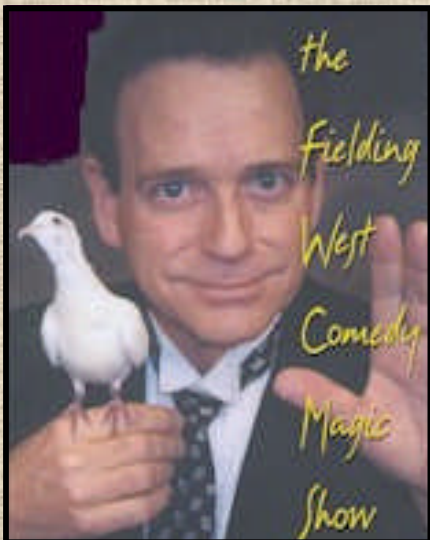
2008 IBM / SAM Combined Convention - If you are planning to attend the historic I.B.M & S.A.M. Combined Convention this coming summer in Louisville, Kentucky, and wish to share a room, contact Rod Sipe at 816.916.3655 rod@eatfire.com.



Close-up Contest Chair Needed - The ring is currently looking for someone to serve as chairman for the upcoming Ring 129 Close-up Magician of the Year Contest to be held in late June. If you have an interest in helping as chairman, please contact ring president, Julie Clark.

FIELDING WEST

7:00 pm, Friday, March 12th @ US Toy



Fielding West is not only a magician's magician, but he possesses that very rare and impeccable sense of comedic timing that has landed him the opening spot for some of the biggest names in show business.



A winner in the prestigious Desert Magic Seminar's Comedy Magic competition, Fielding has opened the show for such A-list celebrities as Liza Minelli, Glen Campbell and dozens more. His numerous network television appearances include spots on A&E's An Evening at the Improv, Caroline's Comedy Hour, and NBC's The World's Greatest Magic and World's Wildest Magic specials.

Fielding is also in demand as a writer, magic consultant and technical director and has worked with Lance Burton, Siegfried & Roy and many others. Fielding West continues to headline in major resort destinations all over the world and for the first time, he shares the secrets of his tremendous success.



Cost:

\$15.00 - General Public

\$ 6.00 - I.B.M. Ring 129 Members

\$ 5.00 - Sorcerers Circle Mem-

RICK MAUE WITH SPECIAL GUEST DAVID LONDON

7:00 pm, Friday, March 28th @ US Toy



Rick Maue has been creating theatrical deception for more than four decades and his specialty is getting inside the heads of his audience. His demonstrations range from controlling the decisions of others to reading their thoughts - but not really. After all, everything that Rick does is nothing more than theater, but sometimes he has a difficult time convincing everyone that sees him that he is simply creating illusions for the mind.

Rick's current lecture contains items from just about all of his releases. Routines range from mentalism, to standard magical effects, to haunted items. In addition, a number of utility moves and techniques are demonstrated. Other topics that are covered include: How to create magic routines, Making Your Magic More Personal, and How to Develop a Bond with your Audience.

The lecture runs over two hours, and it is structured very much like Rick's books with the emphasis on presentation. This means that he will discuss not only "how", but also "why" the routines are designed in the manner that they are. But do not fear, each point is illustrated with effects that are technically very easy to do, and they do not require special gimmicks or equipment.



David London is a magician, storyteller, filmmaker and all around strange fellow. His creations of live performance, combining his unique style of magic and offbeat humor, have been experienced and enjoyed by young and old alike. His venues include the National Theater, The Woodstock Opera House, the Live Bait Theater, The Warehouse Theater as well as colleges and museums nationwide. From Las Vegas to Washington, DC, New York to Austin, TX, his theatrical creations never cease to push the limits of magic and performance.

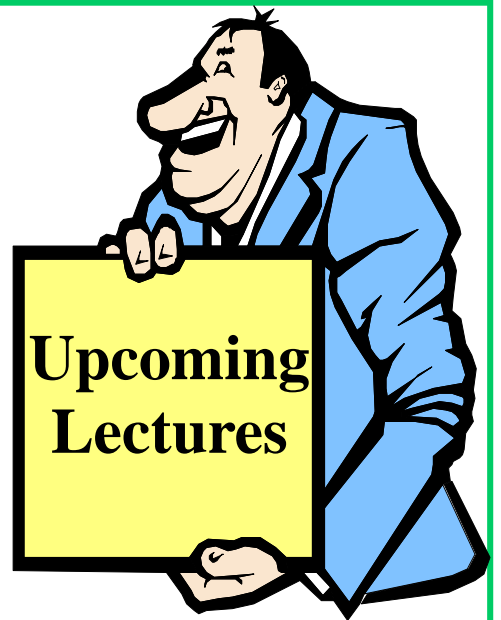
KEN SCOTT

7:00 pm, Tuesday, April 29th @ US Toy



Ken Scott has over 20 years of experience, performing over 350 shows a year. He has entertained over a million people with his unique cutting edge programs. He was voted Greater Atlanta Entertainer of the year. Ken was also featured on CNN Headline News, where he headlined their segment on A Day of Magic. Ken performs yearly in Hollywood, California at The World Famous Magic Castle, which is home to the Academy of Magical Arts. Ken has also been invited three times to perform at the White House.

Ken travels around the world teaching other entertainers his original ideas and routines that he has written and developed. Ken also writes monthly columns in children's performers publications called "The Funny Paper" and the Kidabra Journal.



A Message From The President

By Julie Clark



What a great February meeting! We had a full house and I hope to see it continue and grow each month all year! Thanks to everyone for making time in your schedules to participate! We had many magic performers, a terrific magic contest, a great teach-a-trick (thank you, Don!), a surprise Magic Bloopers video presentation & Newsletter trivia prize (thank you, Steve!), Tips from Duane Fields (thank you, Duane!) and as usual, much camaraderie, mentoring/sharing/teaching taking place before and after the meeting.

March Challenge: Work on a magic routine to share with the group and don't forget... This is the month of four leaf clovers, little green men, and giant rabbits who deliver baskets of candy filled eggs from Cavity Central! So...Hint Hint...Prepare now, have some fun & perform a "themed" routine! We will have a special drawing for those that participate!

Look closely at our calendar of special events, make plans to attend and support the club! We are sponsoring many "CAN'T MISS" activities this month, including a special game show at the regular magic meeting, our annual magic auction (clean out that closet and get rid of those unused items!), and last but not least, two FANTASTIC lecturers!

*Julie Clark can be
reached by
emailing her at
theclarkx@comcast.net*



Check This Site Out!

Website
of the Month
By Steve Steiner



The International Brotherhood of Magicians

The World's Largest Organization for the Magical Arts

This month's website of the month is the brand new International Brotherhood of Magicians "Portal" Website. You can find the site by going to the same address as before, magician.org, only now the click will take you to an entirely new and modern site.

The new website has been in the works for quite some time now and was officially unveiled on February 1st. Our own ring member, Kirk DeWeese was a major contributor to the development of the site. He is listed in the credits as "*The Keeper of the Bells and Whistles*".

The new "Portal" is much more user-friendly and expanded than before. When you pull up to the home page you will see a list of other pages on the left hand side of the screen that can lead you to a number of interesting things, including a Magic Calendar link. The link lists all of the major and local conventions and happenings occurring around the country. This list will only get better as time goes by. Clicking the link, "Magic Lectures" will also take you to a page listing of all the various lecture tour schedules.

Two of the coolest links on the "Portal" are videos. The first one is a performance by Arthur Benjamin titled "Mathemagic". You can get to the link by scrolling down to the bottom of the home page and clicking on the "Latest Media Magic" link. Each of you will have to watch this apparent genius do his math magic show! You will be amazed!

Continued on Page 8 - (see "Website")

Dig Through Those Closets!

Ring 129

Magic Auction

6:00 pm, Saturday, March 8th
Roeland Park Community Center



- ◆ Doors open at 5:00 PM for set-up. Auction will begin promptly at 6:00 PM.
- ◆ Admission fee for Buyers and Sellers is \$2.00. Everyone pays!!
- ◆ We encourage sellers to group less expensive items into lots valued at \$20.00 or more; items listed at less than \$20.00 will be sold at NO reserve price.
- ◆ Up to 5 items or lots per seller. If time allows, sellers may exceed this limit only after all sellers have had their first lot of five items on the auction block.
- ◆ Tag each item for sale with your name.
- ◆ All items for sale must be placed on the viewing tables prior to the auction.
- ◆ There will be a 10% sales commission for I.B.M. Ring #129 members (dues must be paid). There will be a 15% sales commission for non-members.
- ◆ Private sales before the auction forfeits seller's rights to participate in the auction.
- ◆ Dutch auctions are prohibited.
- ◆ Be prepared to offer a BRIEF description of the items you plan to sell.
- ◆ Buyers will be provided with bidding cards.
- ◆ Buyers must pay with cash or check before leaving or removing any merchandise.
- ◆ Minimum bids (if any) must be at least \$20.00 or more and shown on the seller's consignment sheet.
- ◆ You are responsible for your purchase as soon as you are declared the winning bidder.
- ◆ Ring #129 is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged items.
- ◆ All merchandise must be removed from the building by or before 10:30 PM the day of the auction

**Auction is open to those outside of Ring 129.
Invite a friend! The more - the merrier!**

RING 129 AUCTION

ALL THOSE INTERESTED IN SELLING ITEMS AT THE AUCTION SHOULD FILL OUT THE FOLLOWING SELLER CONSIGNMENT SHEET AND BRING IT WITH THEM TO THE AUCTION.



SELLER CONSIGNMENT SHEET

Bring this form to the auction along with your merchandise for sale. Photocopy if necessary. Only fill out the name of the item and the minimum bid (if any). DO NOT mark in the last three columns.

ITEM DESCRIPTION	MIN SALES	CLUB AMT.	BID PRICE	% DUE
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

Name: _____

“Website” (Continued from Page 6)

The second video can be found by typing in the name of Kirk DeWeese in the search box located on the home page. You will then see a search result talking about an amazing YouTube video link. Click on the link and watch the video of the guy doing amazing things backwards in time!

Although some aspects of the website will require you to log in with your I.B.M. Membership number and password, most of the site is free to view. Eventually, local rings and members will be able to submit news and articles for all the magic community to enjoy. I would strongly encourage each of you to check it out this week!

Steve Steiner can be reached by emailing him at steves7@microdsl.net

LAST MONTH'S RING REPORT

By Stu Lewis



As of the time of this writing, Hillary Clinton may be having trouble bridging the gender gap in U.S. politics, but Ring 129 has no such problem. Our first female president, Julie Clark,

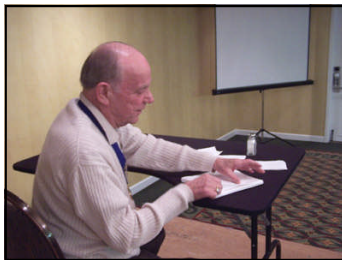
presided over her first ring meeting February 7, with a crowd of about forty-five in attendance. We welcomed two new members--Katie Miller and Duane Roberts. Julie presented trophies to the top three contestants in the recent Claude Enslow contest for stage magician of the year: champion Kyle Scheel (with assistant Emma Jo) and runners up Rod Sipe and Roger Miller. Since we are submitting a photo-spread of the show to *Linking Ring*, I won't go into detail about it here.



Following the business meeting, Duane Fields gave a mini-lecture on packing for a magic act. He demonstrated how he keeps a package of duplicate props in his car at all times just in case he would forget to pack a

key prop before leaving for a show.

Don Douglas handled the teach-a-trick segment, demonstrating the glass-through-table. Steve Steiner then showed us a DVD consisting of magic bloopers that he had gleaned from Youtube.



Several members were on hand to perform. John Hicks, who has quietly developed into one of our Ring's top card handlers, performed a number of routines. He matched the number of cards a specta-

tor cut at random, through the use of a faro shuffle, and did an impressive ace-cutting sequence. John not only has mastered a number of sleights; he is also a real student of the art. Chuck Macan followed with a gambling sequence, two-in-hand-one-in-pocket routine with dice and a poker deal. He also performed an amusing impression of Bill Clinton. Stu Lewis performed his version of the De Sousa endless-chain routine. Roger Miller performed a card location and a variation of "Out of This World." In the voting, John Hicks came out on top.



Dennis Burks, a safety expert in the real world, led off the stage show with a safety lecture using magic props such as the diminishing glove (to discuss safety gloves) and a rope routine to illustrate the importance of seat belts. New member Katie Miller performed the classic bill-in-lemon. Phil Franklin performed a mental effect in which he predicted which of four audience assistants would choose a particular colored ball from four that were offered. All the performances were impressive, but Dennis Burks was awarded first place.

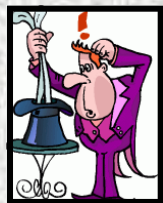


Four performers took part in the open, non-competitive segment. Stu Lewis returned to perform Simon Aronson's "Invisible Card" effect (no gaffed cards). Steve Steiner changed some strips of paper into dollar bills.

Shawn Rivera's presentation of Gregory Wilson's routine with a solid chop cup (a variation of the Paul Harris routine) was one of the highlights of the evening. Eric Woods performed a mental effect involving the selection of a colored ball. Finally, Dale Huffman performed his version of the Jennings chop-cup routine. All in all, we saw a dozen performances in a truly magical evening



Stu Lewis can be reached by emailing him at
ANDIAM@KC.RR.COM



Upcoming Area Magic Shows

S.A.M. Assembly #38 Presents

“The Ages of Magic”

Sunday April 13, 2008, 1:30 pm

Fairmount Community Center, 608 Ash, Independence, Mo.
The Catered Dinner & Show are only \$15.00 per person!

Performers:

Phil Franklin as The Human Lie Detector

Kidding Around With **Shaun Rivera**

Miss **Katie Miller** – Diva of Elementary Deception

The HuffDaddy - **Dale Huffman**

Barron Stringfellow – Edison’s Nightmare, Shocking

Classically Casual: **John Apperson**

Advance reservations are required by April 7th!!

Visa, MasterCard, and Discover accepted!

Call 816-461-4595 For Credit Card Reservations!!!

Make checks or money orders out to:

Society of American Magicians c/o

Klamm Magic 1412 Appleton, Independence, MO.

Please include your phone number for confirmation!

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MARCH Teach-a-Trick

will be taught by **Katie Miller** and is titled

“Quarter in the Egg”

from page 240 of the book:

Encyclopedia of Practical

Magic, aka *The Art of*

Magic and Sleight of

Hand, (Nicholas Einhorn).



To sign-up to do a “Teach-a-Trick”,

contact **Dale Huffman** at

elad509@yahoo.com

Sick and Convalescent Notice

This past month the ring was officially notified of the passing of Harry Stege, on May 4, 2006.

If you know of a ring member or their family member who is hospitalized or has passed away contact:

Carl Macan - 913-648-1465

crm130@aol.com

(If email is sent please contact Carl by phone to let him know to check his e-mail account)

Our Web Page



Much helpful information can be found on the Ring 129 Web Page:

www.ring129.com

The following passwords are needed for members to access special areas of the website:

User Name: ring129

Password: aj



If you have questions concerning the ring website, contact Ken Reedy at **816-734-1484** or email him at ... webdesigners@kc.rr.com.

Member Advertisements



I am extending an invitation to all Ring 129 Club members to attend the 2nd Annual Johnson County Men's Follies on March 9th. All acts consist of

men performers. There are singers, musical instrument acts, comedians and a dancer.

The Master of Ceremonies is our own club member, past IBM President and all around good guy, Roger Miller. The feature dancer is also our own club member, Don Douglas. Comedian, Hal Rapp has been performing his unusual style of comedy since the 1950's and will be hilarious!

The show is being held at the Carlson Center, located on the campus of the Johnson County Community Center(JCCC). Showtime begins at 2:00pm and the ticket price is \$5.00. There is ample parking just outside of the Carlson Center which is located on the south-west corner of College Boulevard and Quivera, immediately south of the I-435 exit.

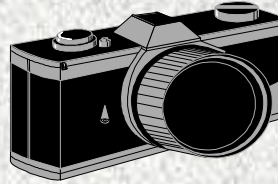
Don Douglas

The Heart of the Ring is published monthly as a service to the members of IBM Ring 129. Views and comments do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Ring 129 officers, the IBM, or the Editor.

Members are encouraged to submit articles and comments for publishing and earn additional Sorcerer's Circle Points.

Articles should be emailed to the editor, Steve Steiner by the 20th of the month.

steves7@microdsl.net



If you are in need of a head shot or a publicity photo then contact me for a photo session. \$25 for an hour sitting and all photos will be put on a CD for you to have printed. I can print them for additional fee.

Thanks, Ken Reedy

<http://newphotosbyme.com/>
816-734-1484

CONGRATULATIONS!

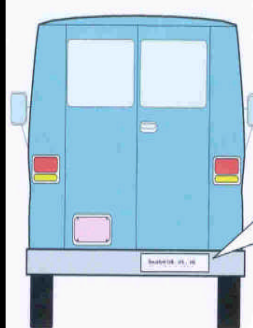


John Hicks - February's Close-up Magician of the Month!



Dennis Burks - February's Stage Magician of the Month!

MAGICIAN'S BUMPER STICKER?



Stoplights timed for 30 mph are also timed for 60 mph!



Tips From the “Cos”

I once saw Bill Cosby interviewed on a talk show, and what he had to say about comedians also pertains to magicians. The main two points that snapped my synapses were on audience responses and the use of “off color” material.

Gene Anderson suggests in his lecture that you audio tape your performances. There may be some good lines that were used by the audience or ad-libbed by you that may be lost and forgotten if it weren't taped. Equally important is for your own sake. Specifically, you may think that during your performance that you were not getting the response that you should have gotten. Perhaps you may have been concentrating on your performance rather than paying close attention to the audience's response to your routine. When you play back the tape of your show, you may be surprised to find out that the audience response was better than you thought at the time. Furthermore, you may learn what part of your routine caused your audience, in your opinion, to be rather non-responsive. Here is where Bill Cosby's advice comes in. But before I make my point, let me digress once more.

Many, many years ago Walter “Zany” Blaney performed in Omaha before a group largely comprised of magicians. In Walter's opinion, he bombed. There was little or no audience response. He was disappointed and discouraged to the point that he was concerned about his act and future and particularly about his act the next evening in Des Moines. Fortunately, he went on to his next engagement and presented the same show, word for word, for an audience where no magicians were present. He went over great! They loved him! His future (and self confidence) was secure. He just crossed off the unresponsiveness of the Omaha group and went on to success much the same way that a professional golfer must forget a bad shot and not let it get him down on the way to winning the tournament.

Bill Cosby said that there are no unresponsive audiences . . . only different levels of responsiveness. Some audiences will hoot, holler, clap and whistle while others may occasionally give you polite applause (or what I call a “golf clap”). Neither of these responses nor any range in between is bad, just different, and appropriate for that audience at that time. Little to moderate response does not mean that they don't like your show as you may be appealing to their intellectual level. Likewise you may not be the best thing that the hoot`n holler`n audience has ever seen as they may give the same response to a pig who can walk on his hind legs. Just as you have always heard it to be true for magic, so it is with audiences . . . timing. But an audience doesn't have to respond enthusiastically to enjoy your show. As a matter of fact, I usually elicit the best compliments after my show from those audiences that were the most reserved. I have always wanted to say to them, “gee, I wish that you would have shown how much you liked the show DURING the show.” As “Cos” says, there are no unresponsive audiences, just different levels of responsiveness. I have heard it said that you know if the audience is from Minnesota because they cast a shadow. Another level of appreciation, I guess.

I see audiences as a mass of people who can respond like a mob. It only takes a few “leaders” in the group to get the mob moving in your direction. Many things contribute to their reaction that may have nothing to do with your act . . . the size of the group, whether they know one another, are they comfortable with one another, the time of day/night, the environment/venue, how much (if any) alcohol has been consumed, how they are dressed, the temperature, and many other factors. Any one or more combinations of these factors can be in play when determining how your audience will respond and the thing is that you cannot do anything about these outside influences! You can only do your act and try to entertain them so that they can forget the troubles of the day . . . at least for a while. That's why it is so important to win over the audience from the moment that you start your act. You have to show them that you like them and that there is no place that you would rather be than entertaining them right then.

(Continued on Next Page)

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You must first like them before they will like you. And if you can get a few people “rolling” with you early in the show, then you have a better chance of getting the rest of the audience to join in and respond enthusiastically. We as performers always seem to feed off of the audience's reactions, and it's hard to give them your top performance when they set on their hands and just stare (in amazement?). This is where professionalism really enters in when, just like “Zany” Blaney did, you need to go beyond the moment and give your best show despite their reaction because you know from previous experiences that your show is solid.

As to Cosby's second point, off color, dirty, or “blue” material has no place in magic. “Cos” pointed out that in the days of vaudeville when the comedian didn't get the laughs from the audience that he thought he should get, then he dropped his pants and resorted to debased humor. Many of today's comedians and some magicians use “blue” material or “potty” humor as the mainstay in their act. His point was that if they start with this kind of humor and it doesn't work, then where do you have to go to get the audience to laugh, particularly if you have alienated most of them to the point of no retrieval? Their pants are already down so to speak and they have nowhere to go except to pull them up and go home.

Along this same line of thinking, once you have started working “dirty”, then it's difficult to change your image as you mature. People will remember the joke or trick you did or line you used and ask you to repeat it. You may have moved on from there and no longer want to be associated with that kind of humor or reputation. But an image has already been created and you are stuck with it. So the best thing is not to use it at all and not resort to “dropping your pants.”

Magic itself is funny enough. People laugh or smile as a natural reaction to being fooled. You can only make it more enjoyable by weaving a web of joviality with “clean”, family, G-rated humor. So be known as a “clean” entertainer that appeals to the widest variety of audiences regardless of their reactions. Take a tip from “Cos” because you can't knock success.

Magician of the Month Winners

The following monthly winners have qualified to compete in the
Stage Magician of the Year Contest

Month	Winner
January	Steve Steiner
February	Dennis Burks
March	
April	
May	
June	
July	
August	
September	
October	
November	
December	

The following monthly winners have qualified to compete in the
Close-Up Magician of the Year Contest

Month	Winner
July	Jim Hager
August	Josh Chaikin
September	Marty Isenberg
October	Harris Deutsch
November	Eric Woods
December	Mike Melito
January	Ken Reedy
February	John Hicks
March	
April	
May	
June	

Reminder for all members that would like to compete in the monthly contests and open performances:

- ◆ Please make sure that your performances are within the allotted time of 10 minutes.
- ◆ Make sure that you are aware of the fire policy.
- ◆ You can find all the details for performance rules on the ring website.

The Pizza Pie Analogy

By Kyle Peron



Creativity is like a pizza? Huh? I know by now this topic headline must have you shrugging your shoulders and wondering what the heck I am referring to or even talking about. The bottom line is creativity is lacking in magic today. Too many of us fall victim to creating acts or routines without any real substance for the audience. Allow me to dig deeper.

Let me start by saying that magicians usually fall into this bad habit of showing off skill or seeking a "wow" response in the magic that we do. Now do not get me wrong here. This eagerness to get a "wow" reaction is not a bad thing because it is at the nature of what magic is all about and probably why we got interested in magic in the first place. That amazing feeling and "rush" we feel when we have an audience spellbound is a very powerful thing.

Skill and seeking that "wow" response is not a bad thing at all. However what is bad is the fact that with too many magicians, that is ALL they ever seek. As a magician we see and understand that if I show skill, I can get a great reaction from my audience. However, we fail to realize that there exists so many other things we can add to our magic to give our audiences experiences totally different than anything they may have experienced before.

There is so much more out there to add to any routine, act or show. You can very easily fall victim to an act of skill alone because it has no depth to it. If the skill fails at any point, what is left? Nothing. If you are not superb in your skill then the audience is left with nothing else to enjoy about what you present.

The solution is the fact that anyone can learn to add "layers" (like a good pizza) to your act and routines to build substance and increase the creativity and enjoyment level.

An act of skill alone is not a bad thing much like a plain pizza is not bad either. It is good and people will enjoy it but could it be better? Sure it could, through toppings and seasonings others like. Many people like different things. Just like a pizza, many people enjoy different toppings and seasonings in their food. Like a magic act or routine, you can add "toppings or layers" to your act so as to allow creativity to flow and to build substance for the audience to grab a hold of. This creates more creative acts.

If we add these layers, we create an experience for the audience that is richer and deeper. Our audiences are now given multiple things to enjoy in the act we are presenting. Much like good food, a chef will add various seasoning and ingredients into the food so that each person can experience something a bit different and still enjoy what they eat. The same can be applied to the magic that you do.

So, what are some of these layers that can be added to the magic you create? Let me list only a few of them here to give you an idea of what I am referring to. Layers can be things such as theme, character, style, pacing, emotional response, music, movement and the list goes on. Each of these are what I refer to as layers. Each can be added to any magic that you do to build substance and increase entertainment value.

Give your audiences something more than just skill. Skill is fine, but allow yourself to not stop there. Like a great chef, give your audiences much more to grab a hold of and I guarantee you that your entertainment value will climb ten-fold.

An idea I have expressed in the past is to keep what I refer to as a "Creativity Journal". This is a concept derived from my art school days and I continue to do it to this day. It is an easy idea and one that is not new at all. However, I find it is new to a lot of magicians.

(Continued on Next Page)

(Continued from previous page)

The concept is to simply carry with you and keep a blank journal from which you can write down any and all creative thoughts and ideas. The goal is "free thinking". In free thinking there are no boundaries and there are no rules. You break down the barriers that hold you back. Any idea is a good idea and that needs to be written down by you.

It has often been said that the reason you write thoughts down is that there is power in the process. When you write ideas in your creativity journals, you are basically planting a seed in your mind. This seed can grow. It tells the mind and teaches it that it is OK to open the mind up to receiving these kinds of creative thought.

Like any exercise, the more you do, the better you get and the stronger you become. Think of the creativity journal as an exercise of the mind. It builds up the mind and makes it stronger.

But, what I have found lately is a new tool that brings the creativity journal to a new level and makes it even easier to be creative and to retain those creative thoughts. There is a free website out there online called www.jott.com. It is simply a wonderful tool I have been using a lot lately in the past few months. Now, before I proceed to tell you about it, please keep in mind that I am not affiliated in any way with the website nor do I get any compensation from it. It is just a very useful tool I have found that works for me and I wanted to share with you the readers.

Jott.com is a website that allows you to have the ability to send emails or text messages to yourself or anyone you want simply with the power of your own voice. The website is 100% free and very easy to set up initially. It takes only a matter of 5 minutes to set it up and away you go.

You can now be on the road at a show or anywhere and call the Jott number. It will ask you who you want to Jott and you can freely state any name set up in your database. If you Jott yourself then you just talk for up to 45 seconds of anything you want. When you are done, Jott will send your voice mes-

sage and transcribe it as text and send that text to your email address or even a text message on your cell phone. When you get home, you will have an email waiting for you that is everything you said in the phone but in a written format for you to print out or to save in your creativity journal. It is just that easy. You have the ability to Jott messages to any email you want.

This becomes a very powerful free tool if you think about it. Now I can be anywhere and if a creative idea comes to my mind, I can immediately send a Jott message to my email. When I get home it will be there waiting for me and I will have it all in a written format I can use. I no longer have to search for paper or try and recall an idea when I get home. I can do it the moment the idea comes to me.

Another way I use Jott is after a show is over. When I am in the truck I can send a Jott message home and tell about the show, how it went over, what tricks I performed and any notes I might want to have. I can do this while it is all fresh in my memory. It is a very powerful tool for any creative thinker and I hope you might give it a try. I have been using it for a few months now and have really found the power in it to broaden my creativity and to help me in the process. Let me know how it works for you.

As always, I encourage you, the readers to let me know your thoughts. So, if you have any thoughts on my articles or suggestions or comments, please feel free to e-mail me directly at magic4u02@aol.com. I would love to hear from you!

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PHOTOS AND PICS



Photos from the February Ring 129 Meeting





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Photos from the February 12th Duane Laflin Lecture @ US Toy

