



MAGICURRENTS

SAN DIEGO RING 76 FEBRUARY 2011

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Close-up Contest!

February 14th is going to be big this year.

Not only is it Valentine's Day, but it is also the annual Ring 76 Close-up Contest.

This year we are having it at our new venue, the Lion's Club on Utah street, but we will be using the same format we have been using for the last few years. We also must be out of the Lion's Club by nine O'clock so we must limit the number of contestants to be sure everyone gets enough time to perform and enough time to be seen by everyone.

The format is as follows:

There will be eight tables set up in the room. Each performer will have eight minutes to do their act, at which point they will have to move to the next table to perform again. Time is strict and at the end of the eight minutes you must be done with your routine.

We must limit the number of performers to twelve. Eight will be at the tables while four will wait for their round. At eight minutes each, plus two minutes to reset and move to the next table, this gives us ample time for a complete contest and to be out the door by curfew.



Members in good standing will vote on who they thought was the best performer. This includes skill level, presentation, and entertainment value. These votes will be collected by the V.P. of Entertainment, and the winners will be announced at the Installation Banquet in July.

There will be a First, Second, and Third Place winner for this contest. Each winner will receive a medal and a cash award of \$50 for First Place, \$25 for Second, and \$15 for Third.

All members in good standing may participate, but it is limited so you need to contact Belinda at magiclites@yahoo.com to be sure of having a place among the twelve contestants.

If you any questions about the contest please ask any of the Ring 76 Board members.

Good luck to all participants and see you there.

— Richard Ustick

January Meeting

January was our first meeting in our new location, the North Park Lions Club. To celebrate the real stage in our new digs, our theme was *Open Stage Night*. This evening is one of the events comprising the year-long competition for Entertainer of the Year. President Kenny Shelton called the meeting to order and, announcing the theme, repeatedly cautioned, "**No Card Tricks!**"

The meeting began on a somber note. The first order of business was a Broken Wand ceremony for long-time member, Jim Riley. In accordance with the family's wishes, the ceremony was performed by Dick

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HONEST SID GERHART RING 76

WWW.RING76.COM EDITOR JAMES THAYER — EDITOR@RING76.COM

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Dale, member, friend, and a Past President of the Ring.

Some were expecting a second Broken Wand ceremony for member Bob Elliott, who passed away in December. However, Happy Elliott was out of town, so Bob's ceremony was deferred to the February meeting. Jim and Bob were renowned members of the magic community, and they were our friends. They will both be missed.

On a far brighter side, Terry Lunceford announced that the opening weekend of the new Magic Lounge has been a success. Terry, Mike Stilwell, and Joe Mystic, all performers at JC Wagner's original Magic Lounge, are the operator/performers of the the Lounge. Jose Sanchez is also a regular performer, and Derek Ostavani performs close-up before and after the stage show.

Then, with President Kenny Shelton again warning "No Card Tricks!", the magic began.

Bob Meigs opened with Whit Haydn's Transportation Device routine. Interestingly, this first act didn't use our stage. In order to better interact with the audience, Bob performed at floor level.

Kenny Shelton then took the stage and performed – yes, you guessed it – a card trick. After Kenny was "given the hook," Richard Ustick became the first Ring member to properly perform on our new stage. He did a linking ring routine to one of his original compositions, *The*



Man Who Beat Alakazam, which he sang to the tune of *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*. Next up was Donna Greenbaum, with an original routine called *Lots of Knots*.

We then reinstituted our tradition – on hold for a couple years - of auditioning new members to the Ring. Applicant Leo Sy performed a very graceful Linking Rings routine (could he be the Man Who Beat Alakazam?), and Brian O'Gorman did several routines, including an excellent Cut and Restored Rope. Both performers were immediately,

unanimously, and enthusiastically voted into the Ring.

Member performances continued with Chuck Cook performing an expanded version of My Favorite Rope Trick, which he followed with an excellent Floating Ball routine.

Hank Braum, a visitor from the Vista Ring, did several routines, including the Lazy Magician and Dice Stacking.

Our members again took to the stage, with James Sloan performing a Sealed Prediction, and Derek Ostavani, an excellent Linking Rings routine. James Kellogg, Jr., did a very humorous Lemon Game.,

with the assistance of Richard Ustick, who was the perfect volunteer.

Tony Perrine closed our competition with a grand collage of stage flowers.

Traditionally, our group has moseyed over to Denny's, to

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Photos from the January Meeting



Bob Meigs



Richard Ustick



Kenny Shelton



Donna Greenbaun



Brian O'Gorman



Chuck Cook



Photos from the January Meeting



Leo Sy



Hank Braun



Derek Ostovani (right) with Sherry Luft



James Kellog, Jr. (left) with Richard Ustick



James Sloan



Toni Perrine

The Last Word on Three Card Monte

Three Volume DVD set from L&L Publishing

Reviewed by Joel A. Moskowitz M D

January 19, 2011

WARNING:

If you are a Canadian, know a Canadian, or hope to become a Canadian, don't read any further.

Wikipedia reports: "In Canada, under section 206(1) of the Criminal Code of Canada, it is illegal to do the following in relation to the three-card monte: Receive bets ;Induce any person to stake or hazard any money or other valuable property; Carry on or play or offer to carry on or play in a public place; Employ any person to carry on or play in a public place; Allow the game to take place (the owner of the premise). They are indictable offences, with the maximum penalty of two years in prison."

L&L despite the legal risks to our Northern neighbors, has compiled, in three DVDs, an encyclopedic collection of expert thinking on the how this gambling theme is performed in the conjuring venue. Ironically, the first volume leads off with the Canadian master of the pasteboards, The Professor, Dai Vernon. He sets the stage for the traditional moves from the time of the swindle on the Mississippi: "A little game from Hanky Poo, the black for me and the red for you. Bet 10 and get 20; bet 20...etc etc. In the street practice...the lyric is an empty promise - nobody ever wins.

This theme has interested conjurers back to Erdnase and before. It serves as one of the traditional effects that prestidigitators must master. Similarly to concert musicians measure their achievements by their mastering Rachmaninoff or the like.

The student of these DVDs will learn insights from, in addition to Dai Vernon, Fernando Keops, Steve Drawn (unique version with paper clips), Roy Walton (doing the hype or throw with three cards in the same hand), David Regal (clever use of double stick tape

enhancing the deception), Scotty York (a bartender bowing to Martin Lewis' routine), John Guastaferro (employing four cards and a special wallet), Gregory Wilson (on the sidewalk), Henry Evans (tipping his hat to his brother who created a Black Art method).

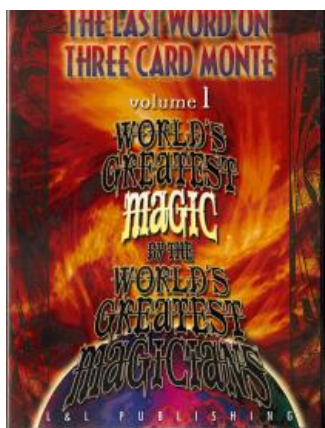
And all of that is just the first DVD. Bill Malone leads off the second DVD with Mike Skinner's "Ultimate Three Card Monte". Contrasting the humorous style of Malone is Boris Wild (He prefers a sticky back device with two red backed cards and a contrasting blue one). Alexander de Cova, not satisfied with just three cards,

employs twelve and several sleights including the Hammon Count, mechanic's grip, gambler's cop, Biddle grip, Ascanio spread, Flustration count, and a maneuver with bows to Daryl aka a Mexican turnover in the hand. Harry Lorayne eschews having the spectator become the 'fool'. Of all the performers, Harry has the best New York accent where non-magicians bilk marks on the streets. In one of Harry's methods, he relies on Anthony Lindner and J.K. Hartmann's "Secret Subtractions" for

elements in his wizardry.

In Harry's "Monte Plus Monte" Trevor Lewis' move and Ken Krenzel are complimented for aspects of the preferred handling. Also Peter Marshall for a Richard Vomer concept. Garrett Thomas modifies the Emerson & West Color Monte by using regular cards with a posted note to identify the 'winning' card. Michigan Monte by John Luka takes 'the best of Bob King's '4 card monte', Louis Falanga's "Virginia City Shuffle", with a reverse fan illustrated in Gene Castanala's "Surreal Monte" composing his contribu-

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continue the magic and camaraderie over coffee and desserts. We continued this tradition tonight, but at a new location – *Rudford's* - a local landmark on El Cajon Blvd.

— Bob Meigs

Ring Swap Meet

March may blow in like a Lion this year, but it will give YOU a chance to blow out all your storage areas. For March will be the annual Ring 76 Swap Meet.

This year we will hold the Swap Meet March 14th, at our new location at the Lion's Club on Utah street, and this gives the Ring a chance to host more tables, more magic and more incredible deals. AND, even though our location is larger and the tables will be longer, the price for Ring members is still the same. A full table will still be only \$10 for members and a half table will be only \$5. (Prices slightly higher for non-members wishing to participate. Contact the Treasurer, Richard Ustick at rustic@flash.net for details)

The Swap Meet is a great opportunity for you to offer those prime magic items you no longer use and for magicians to pick up fabulous magic at incredible prices. The Swap Meet is open to the public so you will have a better chance of selling those unwanted treasures, and newcomers to magic, and old pros, will have a chance to pick up fabulous deals.

While we will have a chance to offer more tables than the past few years, the space is not unlimited and reservations are mandatory. If you would like to

reserve a table (or half) then notify Richard Ustick, Treasurer, at rustic@flash.net.

— Richard Ustick

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tion. Finally, the ever popular Michael Ammar demonstrating "Virginia City Shuffle" tops off this second DVD.

Jon Armstrong comes on strong opening the third DVD with "Three Blank Monte".

This, in this reviewer's opinion, is one of the most entertaining in the collection. By this time, the viewer may suffer from toxic overdose of three card monte themes. But L & L continues with John Mendoza, Darwin Ortiz, Doc Eason, Dan Harland.

The icing on the cake comes from Patrick Page's bonus contribution: based on an old theme called The Dutch Looper. If you are not averse to gimmick cards, this will amaze and, best of all, will entertain.

There are those who will not be satisfied that this collection is comprehensive enough. Their dissatisfaction is misplaced. The publishers have offered virtuoso performances for those who might wish to emulate them. This plentitude of examples would benefit from an accompanying book from which the student would more easily learn. Absent that, repeated study will yield seeds from which the tree of expertise may grow.

What is underemphasized is the essential entertainment element. To paraphrase The Professor, bewilderment is not magic. Dryly performed three card monte will confuse but not pleasure. No better example of this premise is the Patrick Page 'bonus' which is without an audience except for you, the viewer. His charm is the trick.

The "Last Word on the Three Card Monte" may not be the last word, but it is the penultimate word. This three DVD set is recommended, Rx Rx Rx Rx (4/5).





Officer Elections

While it is only the second month of the year, time flies for Ring 76 and soon it will be June and time to elect a new Board of Directors.

Ring 76 does not run itself. It is one of the largest Rings in the country and prides itself on what it offers to its members and the magic community. Each year we host guest lectures, banquets and parties, magic contests, produce a widely recognized newsletter, and other activities to promote the craft we all love so much. These activities take time and effort to plan and present, and that work is done by your Board of Directors. A Board elected by you, the members of Ring 76.

Any member in good standing can be elected to the Board, and there are many different posts and jobs the board needs and does. From President, to Vice-President of Membership and Entertainment, to Secretary, Treasurer, Sargent at Arms, and Members at Large, each office has its duties and rewards.

“MagiToon”

by Jim Whiting & Ellen Friedman



“Yes, I AM thinking of a card . . .”

Ring 76 2011 Calendar

Feb 14* Close-up Competition

Mar 14 Swap Meet

Apr 11* Animal Theme Magic

May 09* Stage Competition

Jun 13 Lecture and Elections

Jul 10 Installation Banquet

* Opportunity for Members to Perform

With great power comes great responsibility (to quote Uncle Ben) and the Board of Ring 76 is no exception. Along with the regular meetings, the Board also meets separately about eleven times a year. It is at these meeting that the work of Ring 76 gets done (these are also held on Monday nights) so as a Board member you are expected to attend. Service has obligations, but as stated above, the Ring does not run itself.

If you are interested in running for a Board position, please contact any current Board member. They will be more than happy to answer your questions. But please hurry. It is already February and the June elections will be here before you know it.

— Richard Ustick

Magic Notes

Do you have any news (shows, travels, interesting happenings, etc.) that pertains to Ring 76, its members, the art of magic, etc. Please send it to editor@ring76.com



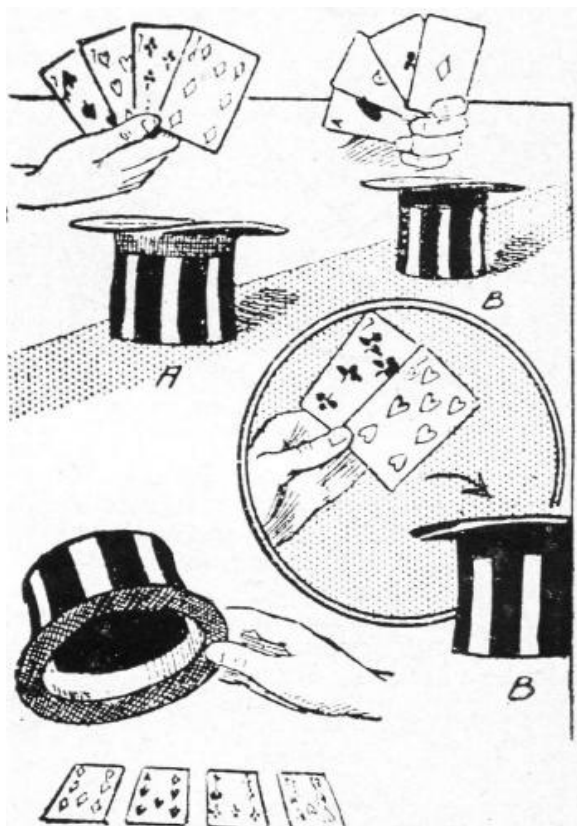
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Save the date! From April 28th through September 4th, the Skirball Cultural Center (up in Los Angeles) will be presenting an exhibit entitled *Houdini: Art and Magic*. The exhibit will combine biographical and historical artifacts with contemporary art inspired by Houdini's physical audacity and celebrity. It features film clips, period posters, theatric ephemera, rare documents, family photographs, and original props used in Houdini's astonishing performances.



Terry Lunceford and Mike Stilwell present the Magic Lounge at Rock Bottom Brewery (401 G St. — but enter on 4th Street) Doors open at 7pm and the Stage Show is at 8pm. Also appearing are: Joe Mystic, Jose Sanches and Derek Ostovani. Further information can be found at: www.magiclounge.weebly.com



"A Thaum is the basic unit of magical strength. It has been universally established as the amount of magic needed to create one small white pigeon or three normal-sized billiard balls." —Terry Pratchett



On February 23rd, David Stone will present a lecture. The lecture will take place at 7pm at 5050 Murphy Canyon Road. Contact Syd Segal at 619-300-1344 or BTL6380@aol.com for details.



Magic-Con will take place again this year, Mar 24-27 at the Mission Valley Double Tree Hotel. There is an exciting line-up of speakers including: Mike Caveney, Roberto Giobbi, Helder Guimaraes (recent FISM Winner), Lennart Green, Mac King, David Regal, Bob Sheets and David Williamson. Contact Syd Segal at 619-300-1344 or BTL6380@aol.com for information and rates. The website is www.magic-con.org.