



# MAGICURRENTS

SAN DIEGO RING 76

OCTOBER 2011

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## Spooky Magic

*When the crypt goes creak,  
And the tombstones quake.  
Spooks come out for a swinging wake.  
Happy haunts materialize,  
And begin to vocalize.  
Grim grinning ghosts come out to socialize.*

It is October and that is traditionally the month when Ring 76 celebrates with Halloween themed magic. That is the theme for this month's meeting on the 10th.

All of our magical members are encouraged to roll out their festive fall illusions, trick, slights, and misdirection.



*So, upon a midnight dreary,  
while you pondered weak and weary,  
Over many a quaint and curious volume of magic lore,  
Decide a bit for fellow members  
To scare and shake them to their tenders  
With your feats of mystery at the next meeting on stage or close-up floor.*

*This we ask of all our members,  
Just to scare and shake our tenders,  
Only this, and nothing more.*

And of course, if you have a new trick, or something you are just ravin' to show us, that is NOT Halloween themed, that is all right also. It is, after all, the magic we seek.

— Richard Ustick

## Random Selection Works!

Who'd have thought? When the Board put this on the calendar, there was some fear the September meeting would be a very poorly attended. We were trying something we've never tried before. At the beginning of the meeting, we selected at random the performers for the evening. Everyone in attendance was expected to come prepared to perform. Just in case this didn't work, we allowed five "definitely scheduled" performers to sign up in advance.

President Kenny Shelton called the meeting was called to order at 7PM. JP Jackson announced that Betty Armstrong would be hosting a Celebration of Life for her recently deceased husband, Roy Armstrong, on September 24. JP also announced that he and Jack White were having a Magic Fair, Flea Market, Swap Meet, and Auction at Jack's Magic Place on the weekend of September 24 and 25.

Sal Barajas announced upcoming lectures by Tony Clark and Doug Brewer, and two shows by Sebastian, at the Red Spade Theater in Old Town. Syd Segal announced that the Ring would rent tables to merchandise sellers for the 45 minutes prior to meetings, at a cost of \$10. Finally, Bob Meigs

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HONEST SID GERHART RING 76

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announced that the Ring had arranged for use of the adjacent parking lot, and, therefore, would continue meeting at the North Park Lions Club for the foreseeable future.

Now, onto the magic!

We selected five performers at random from our attending member. However, the performances began with the members who had signed up in advance, giving the newly selected performers a few minutes to prepare.

Bob Meigs opened with a “boardless” version of Mental Epic, much of which he credited to a recent performance by Derek Hughes, at the San Diego Magic-Con. Alex Greenbaum then performed a Coins through Silk Penetration, and Joe Mystic showed us a Styrofoam Cup Coil, which was one of his favorite acquisitions this year’s Magic Live!

Jeff Marcus also performed a couple Magic Live! finds, including a card transformation version of Find the Lady, and some “Coffee House Magic” that can be performed entirely with props found in any Starbucks. Alfonso Vasquez finished out our scheduled performers with a great adaptation of The 7 Keys of Baldpate.

We then moved on to the performances of our randomly selected performers. Robin Freeland opened with Professor’s Nightmare, followed by Jim Sloan doing a routine he called Souvenir Bubbles. Chuck Cook then did his version of Shoot Ogawa’s Ninja Rings. Gary Dismukes did a baffling three card location Don Holcumb closed our “command performances” with a coin-to-box transposition.

Two more performers then were announced, who I assume requested an opportunity to perform. Hey – if you’re going to go to the trouble of rehearsing, OF COURSE you want to perform! These were Kenny Shelton, who did a card revelation, and Loch David Crane, who performed a card stab with a story line.

The meeting ended a little earlier than usual, as randomly selected performers tend to do pretty short routines. But we caravanned over to

Rudford’s, where our “magicians’ night out” continued for another couple hours.

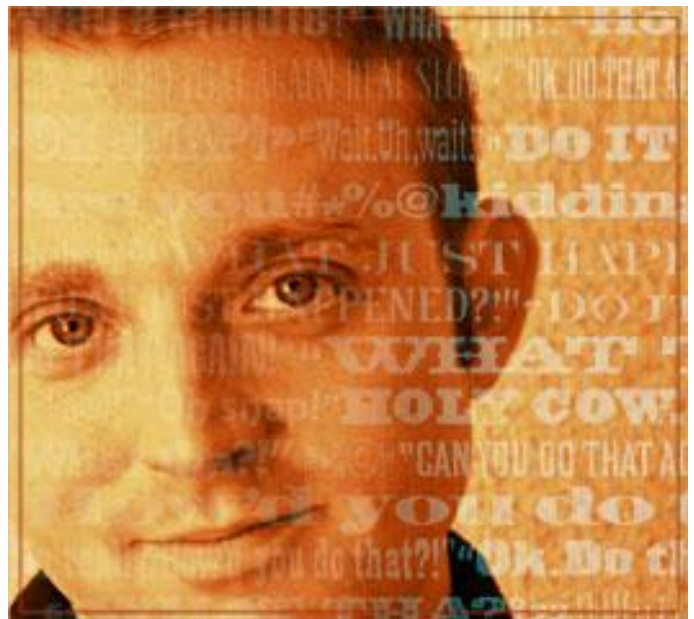
— Bob Meigs

## *Aaron Fisher to Lecture!*

For our November meeting (November 14th), the ring is honored to have one of the best close-up card magicians in the world coming in for a lecture. This is none other than Aaron Fisher.

The 2002 publication of Aaron’s critically acclaimed book, *The Paper Engine: Tension, Focus & Design in Card Magic* cemented his reputation as one of today’s most influential thinkers and writers in card magic. A professional entertainer specializing in corporate events, nightclubs and bar magic, Aaron’s spend’s his non-performing time on his other passion - helping magicians around the world unleash their true potential.

Over the last ten years, Aaron’s taught literally thousands of magicians around the world at lectures, workshops and one on one. Over the last three years, his DVD’s have earned him the reputation as not only one of the best sleight of hand artists working, but also one of the best magic teachers working today.





## *Photos from the September Meeting*



*Bob Meigs*



*Alex Greenbaum*



*Jeff Marcus*



*Alfonso Vasquez (l)*



## *Photos from the September Meeting*



*Jim Sloan*



*Joe Mystic*



*Chuck Cook*



*Gary Dismukes*



## *Photos from the September Meeting*



*Don Holcomb (r)*



*Kenny Shelton (r)*



*Loch David Crane*



*September Performers*

## A Polymath Writes About Mental Magic

*"Easy-to-Master Mental Magic"*  
Reviewed by Joel A Moskowitz M D  
August 15 2011

The author of "Easy-to-Master Mental Magic" describes himself as a 'polymath'. Those who may be unfamiliar with that term may get a clue if other notable polymaths are: da Vinci, Galileo, Pascal, Imhotep, Goethe, and Thomas Jefferson among others. Clark also lists his interests/accomplishments as humanitarian, consultant, entertainer, photographer, videographer, designer and marketer. This reviewer cannot comment upon Clark's other areas of expertise, but as regards writing a readable, and useful book about Mental Magic, he is to be complimented.

James L. Clark begins his "Easy-to-Master Mental Magic" by a personal divulging autobiography of his introduction to magic - not too dissimilar from many who are reading this review I would venture. He goes on to share his impression that books about mentalism are ill written, poorly produced, overpriced in contrast to books about magic. Most libraries don't have informative books about mentalism. In 20 years, he has been suckered by hypesters who promise the quintessential mental miracle, but this book, which he has written with the sad experiences to his wallet, he hopes will be different.

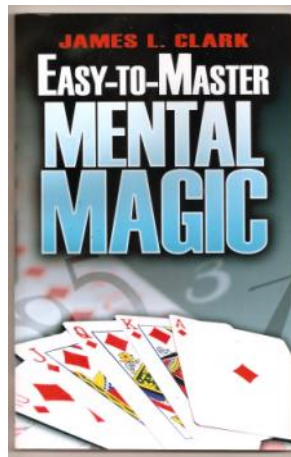
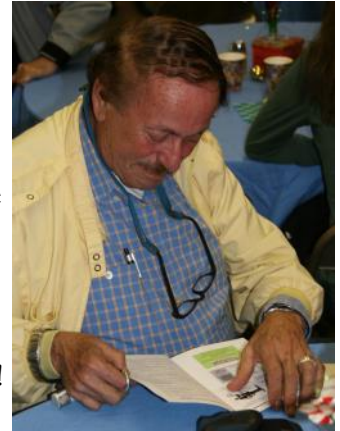
First, on his side of the positive ledger, the book is a Dover publication. Their track record is excellent. After all they published Anneman's "Practical Mental Magic". And secondly, your investment of only \$6.95 is a bargain.

The general public concept of a weird looking, (think Mephistopheles), is unnecessary. Annemann, Clark quotes, is reported to have said that mentalism is a grown up form of magic. "Mentalism is using natural means to create the illusion of having supernatural

abilities" is Clark's premise. He readily admits that mentalists are charlatans, frauds, deceivers but audience like the miracles. Hokey and boring and forgettable is his descriptive contempt for those who magish. Learning how to read the minds of others' can be addicting. Beware!

After 26 pages of rants, the author considers (his view) about exposure; to disclaim or not to disclaim; the ancient origins of Delphic oracles or the Italian Pineetti who brought a blend of magic and mentalism to audiences in 1784 (London's Haymarket Theater). Clark advocates "be yourself" and "practice" ; and (within reason) do whatever it takes i.e. partner or stooge and forget that the audience is a block of passive spectators, he prefers that we think of them as participants.

And then the effects: "What Color" uses crayons or colored pencils - some will recognize this when I use the word "thumb". "Advanced Maths" are a variety of magic squares. "Sie Detection" is his term for using a stacked deck (Si Stebbens) to catch people in lies. The author shares some of his dialogue to enhance the presentation. "Let Me Text You" depends on your Blackberry or more modern device and the PATEO force (Pick Any Two Eliminate One) a clever maneuver to have your mark choose the item that you prefer. He cautions that the motive may be to get the phone number of an attractive member of the opposite sex, it should only be used in honorable settings. "Sending a Thought" i.e. thought transference. "That's It" is a way to devine one of a dozen items with your back turned (Not the stooge's of course).



(Continued on page 7)

(Aaron Fisher — Continued from page 2)

Over the course of this powerful evening of top notch magic, you'll be fooled and amazed by some of Aaron's most powerful effects. You'll be thrilled and pleased when you discover how easy these effects will be for you to learn yourself. Be sure to bring a deck of cards to this lecture. You'll have opportunities to learn simple, powerful concepts along with Aaron during the talk. These won't be 'hard core' sleights. Rather, simple concepts and approaches that will literally transform the way you approach your magic.

This lecture is free to all ring members, however, if you are not a ring member or would like to bring a non-member (spouses/family are included as members), the fee to attend is \$20 per person.

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## "MagiToon"

by Jim Whiting & Ellen Friedman



"And please notice, ladies and gentlemen . . . there is absolutely nothing up this sleeve!"

(James L. Clark — Continued from page 6)

"It Figures" - the audience participant lists several three digit numbers and you predict the total.  
 "Here's My Number" - how to flirt and obtain the object of your amore. James Clark gives interesting genesis of the principal used (Apocalypse; Theater of the Mind by Barrie Richardson) and others..

"Whats Your Favorite" - a stunt in a restaurant where you 'know' the favorite book of your waitress and amaze your co-lunchers. Tony Andruzzi - a bizarrist - displayed the "Pulse Stop" illlusion. Reading this section permits you to do it as well. Don't annoy the paramedics however.

"The Center Tear" comes to almost the end of the book but it is accompanied with revealing photographs. To avoid the injunction that no book would be complete with a book test explanation, here is "Faust's Deal".

His version of the "Invisible Deck" is touted as one of best effects ever. That is uses a gimmicked deck, is not all you learn. Clark accents his revelations with dialogues (not to be copied but as a starting point). "Subtly Psychological" embarrasses the author because of its simplicity and the acclaim that it receives. You are able to read the two geometric shapes that your audience participant has constructed in her mind. Clark bows to Banachek and John Fisher for the theories behind this. The concluding "Mobile Mental" is based on the seminal work of Stanley Collins, Ray Grismer, Max Maven and Michael Webber and James L. Clark himself. |nbsp; This attests to Clark's familiarity with the field of mental magic and readers of his book will become enlightened, stimulated and, if motivated, will develop useful concepts to become mental magicians.

The Review Doctor prescribes you buy/read this book Rx Rx Rx Rx Rx (5/5)



(Aaron Fisher— Continued from page 7)

Also, if you are interested in a hands-on, exclusive workshop the following night with Aaron, please contact Syd Segal for details at [btl6380@aol.com](mailto:btl6380@aol.com). This additional workshop is \$30 per person and includes over 2 hours of detailed discussion and instruction in a private setting with Aaron and only a few others.

— Syd Segal

## Table Sales

Just a reminder that if you wish to reserve a selling table you need to contact Richard Ustick, Treasurer, at [rustick@flash.net](mailto:rustick@flash.net).

Tables are \$10 each and will be set up at the rear of the meeting hall. You can sell what you want until the meeting starts at 7:00. Each month we will have three tables available for Ring Members, but you must sign up early as they go fast.

This is a new experiment and the Board is trying this instead of a yearly swap meet. So if you have treasures some one else might be interested in, contact Richard Ustick.

— Richard Ustick

## 'Net Connections

In my day job, I'm a Fright Attendant – that is, I run a haunted house. Specifically, the Haunted Hotel, in the 100 year-old Germania Hotel, in Pioneer Park, Olivenhain. That's in the same park as the site of our Holiday Banquet two years ago. (I used to run a second haunt as well, until the spooks turned on the staff.) The Haunted Hotel is the intellectual property of Boy Scout Troop 2000, but being a practiced Fright Attendant, I've been the Scout-Parent in Charge, Igor, for the past seven years. (As my son, Mike, has "eagled-out" of scouting, Igor's future is somewhat in doubt.

For anyone interested in attending, the Haunted Hotel is a pro-level, actor-based Haunt. There are more than 20 actors involved, both boys and girls,

## Ring 76 2011-12 Calendar

Oct. 10	Halloween Magic*
Nov. 14	Lecture
Dec. 13	Holiday Banquet
Jan. 9	Classic Magic (no card tricks)*
Feb. 13	Close-Up competition*
Mar. 12	Auction
Apr. 9	Teach-A-Trick Night
Apr. 10	Lecture
May 14	Stage Competition*
June 11	Hi-Tech Magic*
July 8	Installation Banquet

\* Opportunity for Members to Perform

all between the ages of 11 and 17. The Hotel is open of the two Friday and Saturday nights preceding Halloween – Oct. 21, 22, 28, and 29 – from 6:30PM to 9:30PM. Entry is \$5 – to survive is priceless. For little ones, perhaps not ready to venture into the Hotel itself, we offer free Halloween cartoons in our Theater in the Woods.

Anyway, as a result of all of this, I love Halloween sites, not all of which are magical, but all of which I find frightfully entertaining.

To get into the mood, visit Haunt World, at [http://www.hauntworld.com/haunted\\_houses](http://www.hauntworld.com/haunted_houses) Then progress to the tradeshow page, at [http://www.hauntworld.com/haunted\\_house\\_tradeshows.cfm](http://www.hauntworld.com/haunted_house_tradeshows.cfm) I've been trying to get to Transworld for years, and 2012 is going to be the year. Anyone want to come along?

A fun spot for Frankenstein Fanatics is Stelter Creative at [http://www.steltercreativewoodworks.com/STELTER1/Frankenstein\\_x.html](http://www.steltercreativewoodworks.com/STELTER1/Frankenstein_x.html) I've directed you to the Frankenstein's Lab page, which is how I first found them, but take a few minutes and explore the site!

Then there's Haunted Props, <http://www.hauntedprops.com> We use their Monster

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(*Magic Links — Continued from page 8*)

Morph at the Haunted Hotel. Fortunately, they sell to us Fright Attendants at something less than their retail prices.

A somewhat more traditional Halloween site is Halloween Asylum, at [http://www.halloweenasylum.com/spinning\\_head\\_baby\\_animated\\_halloween\\_prop.html](http://www.halloweenasylum.com/spinning_head_baby_animated_halloween_prop.html) I used to haunt the William Heath Davis House in the Gaslamp District, until I placed the prop you see on this site in a crib. It so frightened the employee who opened this historical landmark the next morning that they no longer use my services.

Some grand animatronics are found at Poison Props, <http://poisonprops.com/index.php>, and my favorite costumes, Stalkarounds, at Ex-Mortis, <http://www.exmortis.com/stalkarounds.html>. Then there's the fellow who reads our Haunt Rules; find him at <http://skulltronix.com/deadringer.html> To hear him read the "rules" of the Haunted Hotel, click on "View Gallery" on the left, and scroll down to "Haunt Rules." You gotta love it!

And for fire props, as well as some great "haunted table" effects. Check out Rick Haslett's House of Fire, <http://www.ahouseoffire.com/>

In closing, I'll mention again two sites from last month's column, which have some excellent Halloween magic. These are Rick Rothbart's Outlaw Effects, <http://www.outlaw-effects.com/store/>; and Dan Baines' Lebanon Circle, at <http://www.lebanoncircle.co.uk/magic.html>.

— Bob Meigs

## Ecuadorian Street Magic

Last month, Marieke and I journeyed south of the equator to visit Peru and Ecuador. In the old city of Cuenca we encountered a classic stage suspension re-purposed as street magic. See photo on right.

In addition, we discovered an instance of "magic" that was not presented as magic. Instead, the presentation was that of a legitimate scientific principle. What was unusual was that the appearance

of a



scientific principle was achieved by devious means. Thus, an example of using "magic" to demonstrate science. (A bit of a twist on the much more common approach of using scientific principles to create the appearance of magic.

Presentation: A basin of water is placed on a line that is labeled as The Equator — Latitude 0° 0' 0". Water is placed in the basin. When it drains, the water drains straight out without swirling in either direction. The basin is moved five feet north of the equator line and the water now drains out forming a clockwise whirlpool. The basin is moved five feet south of the equator line. Now the water drains out forming a counter-clockwise whirlpool. Voila! A



*(Ecuadorean Magic — Continued from page 9)*

nice straightforward demonstration of the Coriolis Effect, right?

Not so fast, bucko. There are a couple of things wrong here. The Coriolis Effect is a very weak effect. It requires huge amounts of mass — an entire ocean for instance. Also, the forces generate increase with the distance from the equator. Five feet from the equator is simply not enough to generate a noticeable effect. Even more damning, however, is the fact that the line that is labeled as "The Equator" is not the actual equator. It's close enough for the punters to get their pictures taken while straddling the line, but my GPS unit reveals that the line is approximately 600 feet south of the actual equator. So five feet north of the line is still almost 600 feet south of the equator.

So how is it done? First, the basin is asymmetric. Second, a careful examination of the respective paving stones where the basin is placed reveals that each paving stone will impart a slightly different tilt to the basin — just enough to impart the desired swirl on demand. Almost as if by magic!

— James Thayer

## ***Magic Notes***

On October 26th (Wednesday), Cameron Francis will be making his way down to San Diego to present a limited person workshop (15 people maximum).

Cameron is an actor and magician currently living in Gainesville, Florida. As an actor he has appeared professionally on stage in New York, Baltimore,, Philadelphia, Washington DC, and the Hippodrome State Theatre in Gainesville.

This will be an action packed workshop filled with easy to do magic, entertaining plots and hands on instruction. While Cameron is yet to be a household name in magic, he is definitely on the right track and will present a wonderful night of magic for all of those interested.

To attend the workshop will be \$25 per person. To reserve your seats, please contact Syd Segal at 619-300-1344 or btl6380@aol.com. The location of this workshop is yet to be determined.



3 Generations of Magic is presenting a lecture by Mathieu Bich Mathieu Bich hails from France and he is an inventor and creator of many magical effects using new principles and methods. He has consulted for David Blaine and has fooled Penn & Teller on their television show "Fool Us". In 2003, Mathieu won an award for Invention at FISM.

The lecture is October 17th at 7pm. It will be held at 3 Generations of Magic; 741-B Olive Ave.; Vista CA 92083. The cost will be \$20.



Happy Elliott writes:

As you know my husband, Bob Elliott, passed away December 7, 2010 from Alzheimers. In honor and support for him and all those who are still suffering from this incurable disease, I will be making a two mile walk with our Team to help raise funds to find a cure. With more than 5 million Americans living with Alzheimer's, and nearly 11 million more serving as caregivers, the time to act is now!



The walk will take place on Oct 29th, 2011. If you wish to contribute to this worthy cause, please contact Happy Elliott at 760-721-7046 or happy\_elliott@cox.net for details.