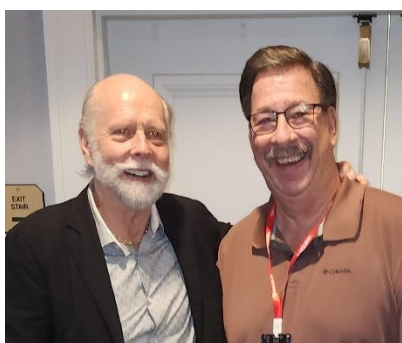




The Flash Paper

February 2024

Bob Gehringer, Editor



A Letter from Lindy

What a brutal blast of frigid temperatures we experienced in mid-January. Driving home from a gig in Fonda, IA the actual temperature was -22! The winter weather also caused problems for the contingent of club members attending the Magi Fest Convention in Columbus, OH. All Thursday flights were re-booked and some missed all of the first day's activities. Personally, I was notified that my 6:10 am flight was rebooked as I pulled up to the airport. I would have missed most of Thursday's activities, but the Southwest Airline agent worked 90 minutes to get me in early. Even though I flew, from Omaha to St. Louis, to Milwaukee, to Denver, to Columbus, and nearly missed my connection in Milwaukee, I still arrived missing only the first lecture.



During the weekend, Omaha magicians arranged a dinner at an authentic German restaurant for a good meal

and camaraderie. It is now a tradition that we arrange some sort of get together when several members attend events like this. Some other highlights of the weekend for me included: Watching 24-year-old **Blaise Serra** do things with a deck of cards not many can duplicate; Seeing **Julianna Chen** open and close the Gala show with a beautiful, awe-inspiring act; A comedy trio from Canada with a very unique act that kept you in stitches. No room to explain it here, but ask an attendee to describe it for you.

The hospital initiative headed up by **Steve Osborn** is really taking off. We are up to 22 hospitals and counting, both locally and nationally. These include such prestigious institutions as Loma Linda, Vanderbilt and St. Jude's.

Now we would like to reach out to long term senior care facilities to try a similar program. **Dr. Steve Wengel** is currently Assistant Vice Chancellor for Campus Wellness for University of Nebraska Medical Center. Steve says he is often struck by the loneliness and boredom of his older patients. Acting as our team's geriatric consultant he can open doors to position us to partner with these senior facilities. We plan to have members show residents close up magic for their entertainment. Then teach simple tricks they can show family and friends. Already over a dozen members have signed up to be a part of this worthwhile program.

A real treat for me at Magi Fest was meeting this month's featured magician. **Richard Turner** is an amazing card manipulator; it is really hard to believe what he can do with a deck of cards. An entertaining personality, his upbeat demeanor and constant smile puts you at ease and if you are anything like my brother, and sister-in-law, who met him in San Antonio, you would be blown away



to learn that he is blind! That's right blind! Richard lost his sight by age 9 after suffering a bout with scarlet fever. He does not tell audiences this fact as he performs his miracles. When it finally dawns on people he is without sight, they are even more impressed with his immense talents. If you would like to learn more about **Richard Turner**, check out the documentary on his life called "Delt".

Enjoy what's left of winter, and remember spring is right around the corner.



New Suggestion Feedback

Your OMS board is excited to announce the launch of our new Suggestion Feedback Form, which aims to facilitate the sharing of ideas, suggestions, and feedback from our valued members.

At our meetings, you can scan a QR code available on a banner, fill out a physical form available at the entrance and drop it in the designated drop box, or visit our website: (<https://theomahamagicalsociety.org/suggestions>).

Whether online or in person, you may remain anonymous (or not) by leaving your name blank and/or using "anon@oms.com" (get it anonymous?) in the email field (since the email field is a required field).

We believe that this new initiative will help us to better understand the needs and desires of our members and to continuously improve and enhance the experiences we offer. Your input is instrumental in shaping the future of our club and helping us to create an inclusive and fulfilling experience for all.

We will remind all about this frequently, especially at our next meeting that the banner and box are available. We encourage all to take advantage of this new feedback system and we look forward to hearing from you!

Thank you for your support,
Adam Schacht, Vice-President - OMS Board



Look what our club's Treasurer and Flash Paper editor **Bob Gehringer** received in the mail over the weekend! Hand written thank you notes from the Boys Town residents who had no place to go over the Christmas holidays but did receive close-up magic from our club members.

THANK YOU again **Steve Lindeman** and your team of **Matt Spielman, Thomas Neddo, Patrice Fisher**, and two of the club's Junior Magicians **Stephen and Drew** for giving of your time. Looks like it was most appreciated.

Bob said he'll bring the notes to our February Monday Night Monday so you can read some of them.



Check out our website:
<http://TheOmahaMagicalSociety.org>



Magifest Report By Burke Groenjes

Magifest is no joke. I was invited to Magifest this last summer, and I signed up, not totally sure what I was signing up for. Regardless, I was so excited to go, so when the weekend finally came, I grabbed a few decks of cards and flew out to Cleveland.



Immediately when we arrived, the place was thriving with magicians and tricks. One of the things that I noticed was that the whole environment was so inviting. There is obviously no shortage of tricks in the room, so



every second was filled with meeting new people and sharing their moves. After only a few minutes in the common area, I had already been mind-blown and earned some new ideas. I then made my way over to the dealer's room and checked out what the vendors had to sell. This might be one of the coolest rooms I have ever been in. Jam packed into this room were a ton of vendors,



each with hundreds of tricks. I spent hours the whole weekend in that room asking to see demos and losing a lot of my money to some of the coolest tricks ever. After a while in the dealer's room, it was time for the first lecture to start. I wasn't totally sure what to expect from it, but it was better than anything I could ever ask for. In just a short hour I had already learned so much. From that lecture on, I had to take notes to contain the sheer amount of useful information that these renowned magicians offered to us. The next 2 days went by in a split second. It was just a cycle of seeing incredible lectures and performances, buying tricks in the dealer's room, and jamming with other magicians in the common area. Overall, I am very glad I chose to go. Not only did I get to do all the things I mentioned above, but I got to hang out with the Omaha club, and go to cool places around Cleveland, like the Penguin Magic Shop. As a beginner, the environment was so positive and inviting, and I would highly recommend a Magifest trip to anyone even considering it.



We are at the Penguin Magic Studios



Larry's Logic

Replacing skill with gimmicks/gaffs

First, let's discuss what a gimmick is -vs- a gaff. Per my favorite author, **Henry Hay** in the **AMATEUR MAGICIAN'S HANDBOOK** credits the "authority of **John Mulholland**" to distinctly define gimmick as "a secret device never seen by the audience" and a fake/gaff as "seen... but not understood;"

A thumb tip is a gimmick. A shell coin is a gaff/fake. A Fickle fire device is a gimmick. A vanishing candle is not. A vanishing candle is a trick.

A piece of wax is a gimmick. The spray can of roughing fluid is a gimmick. But the deck you use the spray on is GAFFED. The deck is visible, but is altered in a way to make the trick work.

Now, skill is just that, no matter how simple. Tracking which card is on the bottom of a deck is a skill. Second Dealing is a skill. Knowing how to correctly use a thumb tip is a skill.

And there are times when you want to use skill more than gimmicks. But the opposite is also true. Again, from **Henry Hay**, "You can vanish a silk with sleight of hand, but it doesn't look half as magical as using a pull".

This means that there's really only two questions needed to decide if you want a gimmick.

First, do you understand the differences in the way the trick appears using sleight of hand -vs- gimmicks?

Secondly, are you aware of the costs.

Let's answer the first question. Let's look at the Scarne Bill Switch from Tarbell and compare it to the \$100 Bill Switch.

With the Scarne move under your belt, and a few seconds

to set up, you can switch a bill very, very cleanly right in front of someone's face. But your hand is left dirty, and you have to ditch the original bill.



To an experienced magician, this is not a big deal, but it DOES have to be done.

Using the Tip, you can, again, with a few seconds to set up, you can very, very cleanly switch a bill right in front of someone's face. OVER AND OVER. Your hand is left dirty and you have to get rid of the tip, etc. EVENTUALLY. But again...not too hard.

But there's other costs. You have to have the tip constantly with you, and the folding process for the switch has always seemed cramped to me.

The Scarne switch is very open, and you just need your hands.

So what it really boils down to is: With the tip, you do the switch from a \$1 to \$100..... AND BACK!

If this is that important to you (the second switch), then the sleight of hand version is inferior. If you hate carrying gimmicks or worse, hate getting waylaid when you don't have one, the gimmick method is inferior.

In my parlor/stage show, about 90% of my act has some sleight of hand in it. And it's also got a lot of gaffs and gimmicks.

Because my absolute favorite thing to do is put sleight of hand around gimmicks, since it makes the tricks that much harder to figure out, and can actually make the trick appear cleaner.

But I've weighed each gaff, each gimmick, and each of the many hours I've spent practicing to ensure that what I do matches what I want the end result to look like.



Plotting Astonishment

A Review by
Daniel Rasmussen



I recently had the pleasure of reading *'Plotting Astonishment'* by **Theron Christensen**. Theron was kind enough to send me a copy for the purposes of review and donating the book when finished to the OMS Magic Library. This book is a quick and delightful read that contains Theron's thoughts about the process of creating original magic. In addition, six of his original routines are included at the end of the book. The routines included in the book help illustrate and provide proof that his methods for creating original magic can result in some really amazing moments of astonishment.

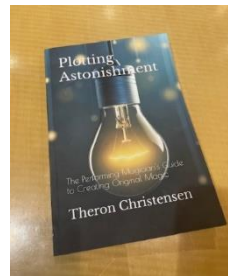


Theron Christensen

I really loved this book. It doesn't contain any card tricks, which I personally found refreshing. I wanted to read the entire book from beginning to end before giving it a proper review, and not just skim through it and jump right to the tricks - which was very tempting. Frankly, it contains some great stuff and I didn't find that it contained any "filler material". Theron provides his opinion that **Daniel Fitzkee's** book *'The Trick Brain'*, leaves out the most important part of the creation of magic - that is (spoiler alert) - magic must have meaning! I was pleasantly surprised to discover that I was already doing some of the exercises that Theron proposes in his book (my favorite of which being, hunting through antique stores to find interesting objects for magic with meaning). Before I forget, (Theron doesn't credit himself in the book for this) - all of the illustrations in the book are hand drawn by Theron himself! It made me jealous that this guy can draw so well. All of the tricks in the book are great. My favorites include "Shoebox Surprise" and "Illumination". I propose to you the very exercise that Theron discusses in

his book. Think about how you would make a **BORROWED** shoe teleport instantly and visually across the stage in the blink of an eye. Give yourself some time to think about it, and then get your hands on this book and turn to page 88 for Theron's solution.

In my opinion, the holy grail of this book (at least for me), was something called the "golden sticker ruse". This solved a problem I had been working on recently. I love this so much, that I think it should be kept secret. I'm not going to tell you what it is, or where in the book to find it. You will have to read through the entire book, like I did, if you are curious to know what it is. From researching, it seems as if this is a variation on a **Luke Jermay** idea.



What are you waiting for? Run to the OMS Magic Book Collection located at the Criss Library on UNO campus and checkout this book! Don't underestimate this book simply because it's not authored by a famous magician (at least not yet).



One last thing - when you visit the Criss Library you will notice this strange truncated pyramid located just outside the library. (see photo) It looks **EXACTLY** like Tesla's Box from the movie *The Prestige*. I was first to take notice of this, and it was mentioned at a recent Omaha Magic Jam - it's almost as if the director of the movie walked by this spot as inspiration for the movie. I'll leave it up to you to decide.



On a side note, I have been brainstorming a new magic trick with these plates. Turn the plate around and produce a small stuffed elephant from behind the plate. Then turn the plate around to show the elephant has vanished from the plate. Obviously, this would involve creating a duplicate gimmicked plate with some sort of flap mechanism, but it could be done! This is one of many ideas that came after reading **Theron Milo Christensen's** book on creating original magic.



Monday Night

Magic



100% IMPROMPTU!

SPONSORED BY **THE OMAHA MAGICAL SOCIETY**

You're eating at a restaurant when you notice a family with a boy and girl who look like they're in the upper elementary grades.

"Rats," you say to yourself.

"I don't have anything with me to show those two some magic."

However, you quickly take inventory of what's at your table.

You can see your table setting in the above picture.

Surely with all those props you can come up with something magical for these two children. Can't you? Can you generate five decent tricks? We'll see how many tricks our table teams can generate at this month's Monday Night Magic.

*No secret thumb wear allowed!



**SIMULTANEOUSLY
BROADCAST ON ZOOM**

<https://zoom.us/j/4028718108>

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2024
7:00–8:00 PM (CST)

The Cross Training Center
5030 N. 72nd Street
Omaha, Nebraska

There is no charge for this event.



EASY MONEY!
Deposit \$2,500.

Withdraw	Balance
\$1,000.	\$1,500.
750.	750.
450.	300.
300.	0.
\$2,500.	\$2,550.

Do this ten times = \$500.



Balance five matchboxes end-to-end!

SET-UP: Purchase five small matchboxes ('penny matchboxes'). Secretly tear one of the drawers in half, placing only half a drawer back in the matchbox. Keep track of this matchbox for your pseudo juggling demonstration.

ACTIVITY: "I want to show you a juggling trick I've been attempting to master! Please give me a drum roll. As they drum on their chairs or floor, pick up the prepared matchbox and hold it with the missing half uppermost.

Hold it by the sides with four fingers of your hand on one side and your thumb on the other. The box cover faces the group. In all that follows, keep the boxes above the eye level of the audience. Take another matchbox and place it end to end on top of your first box. Pretend as though you are trying to balance the matchbox on the first one. You might even have it fall off. However, be careful not to flash your half drawer box so the audience sees its true condition. Finally, set the second box on top of the first end to end and secretly press in and down on the drawer of the second box so that it extends into the first box, holding the second box securely in place.



Pick a third, fourth, and fifth box - repeating the process of pushing the drawers into the box below it. You will now have a stack of five boxes which look as though they are each one precariously balanced on the others.

My style would finish with me bowing and have the stack of boxes bend to where it was obvious that they were somehow attached to each other hopefully to the laughter of the audience."

SUMMARY: You bring the palm of your hand down on a straight pin. When the hand is removed, everyone in the group is amazed to see the pin bent in half! Others want to try.

SET-UP: Bring a box of straight pins (NOT needles, but rather the little pins with flat heads on them) and a wooden board. Soft pine works great. Place one of the boards on a table in the front of the room so that everyone can enjoy this demonstration.

If there's a chance prior to performance, let them examine your box of straight pins to make sure that they are not gimmicked in any manner.

When you're ready to begin. . .

Say, "I need someone to take this box and select four or five pins for me to use in this demonstration of courage and strength."

After pins have been selected, stick them into the board in a row as it rests on a table in the front where all can see. They should stick straight up at a ninety-degree angle from the board.

"Now watch!"

With those two words, slam your open hand down onto the board or table so that your flat palm hits away from the pins, making quite a sound. Then raise your hand and bring the same palm straight down onto the head of the pins - going down the row. Now slowly raise your hand and show everyone what has happened. The pins will be bent in two!

"Who'd like to try it?"

Anyone can do it! You just stick the pin in the board, slam your hand down away from the pin (that's supposed to help deaden your hand from any pain in hitting the pin), and then just bring it down on the head of the pin!

Easy Money is from *Tricks 4 Trainers*. The Matchbox Juggling is from *The Big Book of Gospel Magic*. Pin Crushing is from *Scarne's Magic Tricks*.



THE OMAHA MAGICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS

THE 2024 MIDWEST MAGIC COMPETITION

Drawing both close-up and stage magicians (ages 18+) from throughout the Midwest, qualifying rounds are held during the first half of the year with the finals held in October.

The feedback from a panel of judges from Omaha's University of Nebraska Theater Department contributes to attaining the ultimate goal of the competition - refining the performance skills of each contestant.

PLEASE USE THE QR CODE AT THE SIDE OF THIS POSTER FOR MORE DETAILS AS WELL AS GETTING A LOOK AT THE FIRST PLACE AWARDS.

THEOMAHAMAGICALSOCIETY.ORG/COMPETITIONS

Monday Night Magic

Monday February 19th

7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Cross Training Center
5030 N. 72nd Street
Omaha, NE

Or just click on this link: <https://zoom.us/j/4028718108>
(which is the same link we use for all of our monthly meetings).

2024 OMS Officers

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