

Ring Report Ring #170 “The Bev and Alouise Bergeron Ring” SAM #99

November 17, 2023 | Archived Famulus



November 2023

President Ryan Stiner called the meeting to order. He led the announcements about the places and times that you can see magic and shows in the Orlando tourist area. We had a raffle for some donated magic effects. The floor was opened for nominations for the new officers for next year. Nominations will be taken until the vote is held at the December meeting.

The monthly meeting show began with Dennis Phillips showing a “chair prediction”. It is the classic mentalism effect where spectators are called up to each freely pick a chair to sit in. An envelope in clear view before the effect began is opened and the one empty seat number is shown on a large card. The empty chair was predicted before the effect had begun. Dennis explained that this an effective opening to a mentalism show . He followed up with an example of a light-weight table he made from an inexpensive music stand and then showed Abbott’s Coin Ladder.

David Freeman was inspired by last month’s lecture by Christian Miro and made a version of Miro’s Egg Roulette. Dave gave some insights into the audience reaction when performing the effect.

Dan Stapleton gave a mini lecture on some classic Slydini “lapping routines”. One was a finale to the spoon bending with the addition of the spoon vanishing. Then he did the disappearing sugar from a packet and did not use the classic thumb tip. Finally. Slydini’s two-stage vanishing paper napkin. Dan has used all these effects in his years of performing and has mastered the techniques that the late Slydini taught.

Ryna Stiner closed the show with the Massey “Ribbon release” when a threaded ribbon (or shoelace) is threaded through a small panel with holds and miraculously becomes free of the restraint.

Meeting policy:

Face masks, if you wear one, will not be ridiculed. We are understanding that some people may be immunocompromised. We also respect your personal choices.

"Pirola" or "BA.2.86" is one of the latest strains of COVID 19. Optional vaccine updates have just been approved and available.

Stay prepared, healthy, and informed about current Public Health issues and contagious outbreaks.

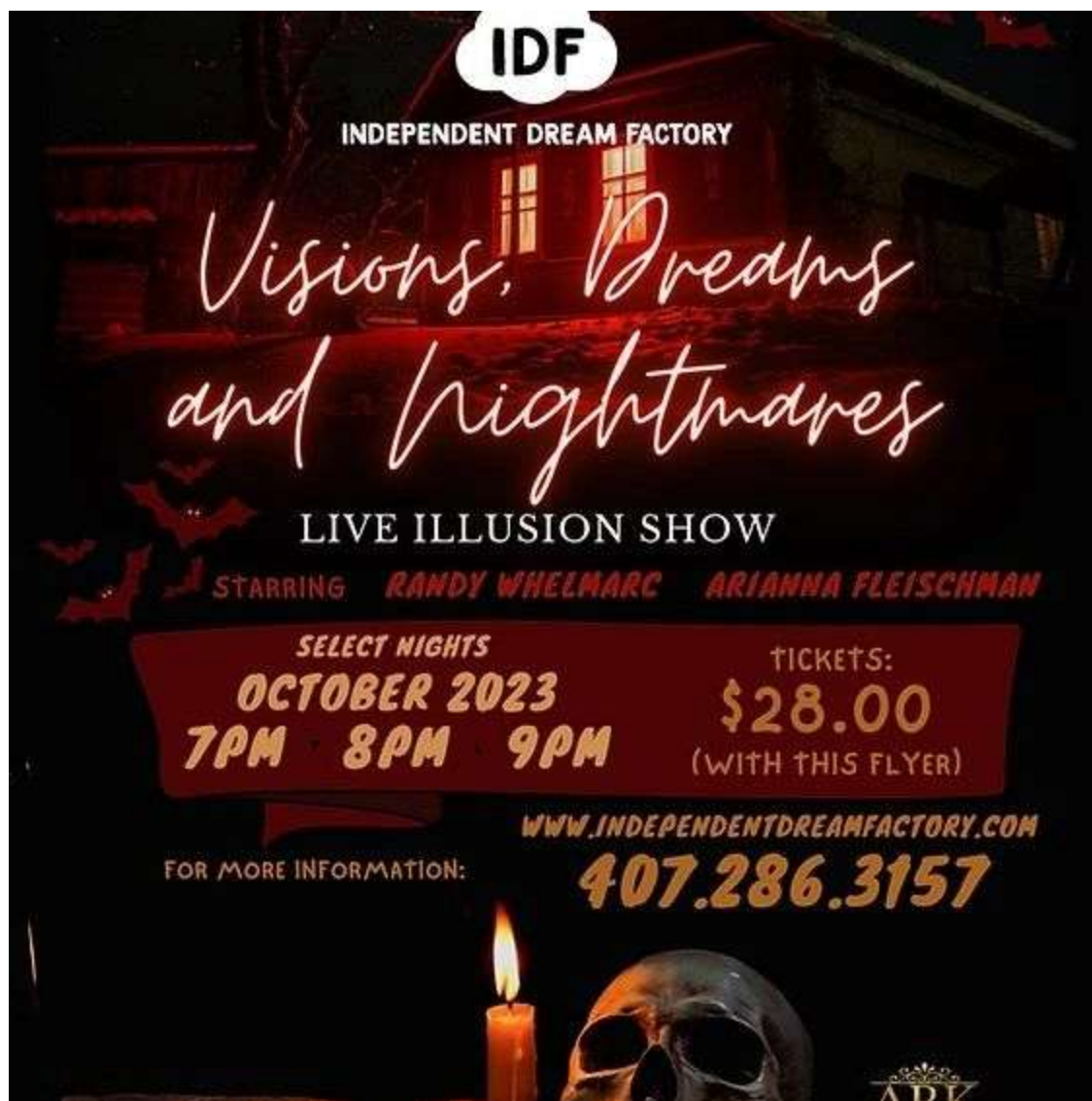
Be respectful of others and avoid group contact if you suspect you have any contagious illness.



Dennis Deliberations ... Ring # 170, Assembly #99

“The Bev and Alouise Bergeron Ring”

Visions, Dreams and Nightmares



I visited Randy Whelmarc's show at the ARK Event Center on Oakridge Road, Orlando on October 24th and he and his cast did a great job. His sense of showmanship, his speaking voice and theatricality is polished from years of experience. He has a show business flair and production sense.

The ARK is in a strip shopping center and is two medium size units with the middle wall removed. It looked to be a total area of about 5,000 square feet. Randy had appropriate pipe and drape and black stage flats to form four separate areas.

You enter the first area and are greeted by Randy dressed in his trademark black tones with Platform shoes and finger rings wrist bands and chains. The style is a kind of "Formal Goth" and unique. The lights dim and a hooded and robed monk silently paces through the standing spectators. Randy then makes an appeal to the spirits to manifest themselves and

he has a mysterious ringing bell. He wheels around a Pepper's ghost cabinet, the size of a wardrobe, and eerie music played, and a girl materializes, leaves the chamber, places a flower on a table, reenters the cabinet, and then fades away. It is amazingly effective from just 3 feet away! The audience is then escorted into a back room.

Vicente was the host in this 2nd room, and you are seated, and he congenially performs on a futuristic half-round table. He did a sponge ball routine with 2 audience volunteers and a 3-Cards-Across with them and a matching soulmate selected cards trick.



Photos courtesy Craig Fennessy

Next was the 3rd room and that was Randy's main magic illusion area. He opened by having an audience member select a card and he then lit a torch and did the Girl from Fire Cage. She girl, his assistant Arianna, appeared and was holding the selected card. Then the classic Banana-Bandana routine but with his own twist. He read the script as opposed to the typical recorded voice. Music was behind him. Arianna, his assistant stood on a stopped turn table behind the table that held the "Magic Box".

When she folded the banana, there is a natural laugh line because the joke in the script says it is a “bandana” and the audience sees there is a misunderstanding. He said, “Let’s stop time for a minute” She froze and then the turn table slowly rotated with her in a statuesque position holding the smashed banana and he said, “By now you can see that this not going well. Let me give you a moment to make a choice. Should we stop before things get worse or just let time continue and see how things work out?” The audience voted to continue, and the turn table then stopped turning with her facing the front again and he went on with the script and bit.

It was, in my thinking a clever adaptation. It worked because he was reading the script rather than her reacting to a recording.

The Modern Art (divided lady) was next and then the Ultimate Levitation (a clever Taylor Reed creation). He passed a Blaney hoop over her. When photographer Craig Fennessy took the photos, the “Ultimate Levitation” was being worked on and the Gamola Levitation is seen in the photos. Randy called me to help him diagnose the mechanics on the Ultimate and he ordered the parts and got it working in time for the show that I saw.

One impressive element, in all his illusions, was well chosen appropriate music. “Cherry Pink and Apple Blossom White” was used for the Banana Bandana

and “People are Strange” for the Modern Art and Phil Collins & Genesis, “Mama” for a levitation.

David Copperfield was noted for his excellent and appropriate hit music as background songs for his illusions, Randy follows the same successful pattern.

Arianna moves well with her dance training. Randy has a cultured voice and presentation. He is comfortable and confident on stage. The room is nicely lit with LED Par Cans and pin spots, and he has foggers.



Photos courtesy Craig Fennessey

The 4th room and final room had a costumed Tarot Card reader.

It was a show well worth the time and ticket price .

The ARK location works for him, and he did a nice job in theming and adapting it.

Vincente and the rest of the cast kept up the haunted atmosphere in the other rooms.

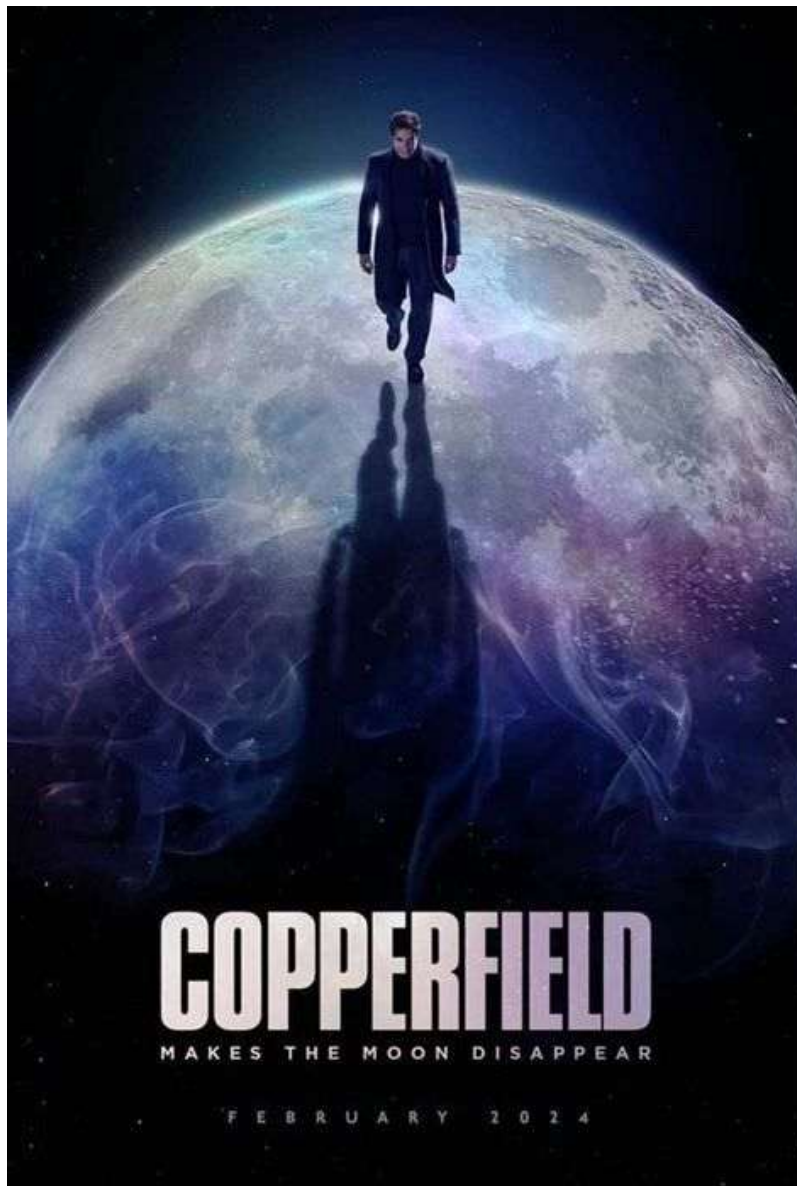
The audience was 30 people, the capacity, at the show.

I am glad to see that Copperfield may have another TV special in the works.

“Making the Moon Disappear”

The release is set for February.

No details on a network or pay per view.



I dug out my “Vanishing Moon” trick...

I am ready for the Copperfield Special.



Sadly, the Astrophysics on this just don't add up.

Physicists recognize that the earth-moon relationship is more like a dumbbell moving in space, than the moon in an orbit around the earth.

The Lagrangian forces at work would seem to say that the earth's orbit and speed would change if the moon was suddenly gone.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lagrange_point

Here is the math that would be violated https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lagrangian_mechanics

We would lose the James Webb Telescope because it is in a Lagrange point.

Tides are also caused by the moon's gravitational pull and if the moon's forces were gone, tidal patterns would noticeably change.

Of course, ancients believed the moon "disappeared" during an eclipse or was eaten by the sun.

I keep having to remind myself that in terms of what science and math that the average person knows, we are not far removed from the ancients.

I am not sure how he plans to work this premise out, but I hope it does not become another Tornado of Fire in a special that was mostly filled with

other people's material like Steve Ferson's Body Split and touches of Blaine walking among the marginalized.

We will see in February.

British magician David Berglas dies aged 97

Berglas, known as the "International Man of Mystery", was the first magician to have his own program on British television, Meet David Berglas, in 1954.

In the 1980s he had a second television series, called The Mind of David Berglas, where he entertained celebrities, including Omar Sharif, Christopher Lee and Britt Ekland.

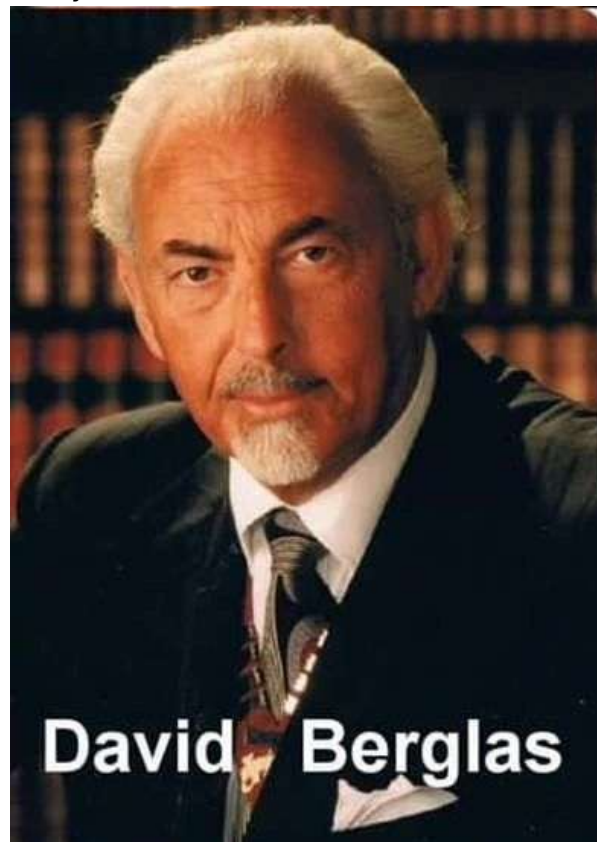
Throughout the decades, he appeared frequently on British TV and radio and became a household name for his incredible stunts, one of which included driving a car around London while blindfolded.

Berglas was renowned in magic circles for a trick called the Berglas Effect (ACAAN), with which he could find a spectator's chosen card at any number in a deck of cards.

It is regarded as the holy grail of magic effects, the secret of which he never revealed.

Berglas was awarded an MBE by the Duke of Cambridge in 2018 for his services to magic and psychology.

Berglas revitalised the Magic Circle society during his tenure as president from 1989-1998.



It was under his guiding hand that it elected to admit women to the illusionist society in 1991.

His son, Marvin Berglas, elected president of the Magic Circle in September this year, said: “My father was a giant in the magic fraternity, known for his originality, creativity and showmanship.

“His mysteries have not only baffled audiences but also his peers. However, to us, his family, he will always be best remembered as a loving husband, father and grandfather.”

The late great Alan Shaxon, from England, and the seldom seen “gaslight” (Abbotts) trick.

Bending The Spoon

You take the spoon from your very table, in order to prove to you that they haven’t brought along their own. They then make the stainless-steel silver bend.



You then toss the spoon on the table and it is unbent and in its original form. This trick is a classic and it’s one that’s quite easy to pull off if performed correctly.

The secret? The magician uses a small silver coin to mimic the spoon’s handle. They then make the illusion of the spoon moving in their hand by making use of the table. This makes it appear as though the spoon is being bent when in reality, the illusion is created by using a silver coin and keeping it still. For a quick

impromptu gag, you can eliminate the coin and just quickly make the bend and do the toss.



The Levitating Cup Trick

This is based off the old bit with the Zombie Floating ball, where you put your thumb into the cork hole gimmick and make it look like the silver ball is floating out of your hands.



Magic suppliers sell a thumb tip with a suction cup on the end so you can do an impromptu floating of a cellphone or coffee cup. I made a gimmicked chalice for the “Magic to do” scene in the stage play “Pippin”.

You can make it appear that you are making a cup levitate. By strategically placing your hands around the cup and slowly moving them apart, you too can make it look like you are making a cup float in the air.

All that it requires is poking a hole through the back of a Styrofoam cup with your thumb. The cup will stay attached to your thumb and you’ll be able to fool your audience into thinking that you’re making it

levitate. If you're going to try this trick, then you'll want to make sure you distract your audience members with your other hand so that they don't try and understand for too long how you're making the cup "float." This is a quick, but effective stunt.



Michael Jackson was the King of Pop. He loved magic. One of Jackson's most popular moves was his iconic lean from the Smooth Criminal video. Kalanag used the effect back in the 1950s, in his big European stage show. A waiter was holding a tray with cocktails and Kalanag made a hypnotic gesture and invisibly pulled the waiter over at an angle and the tray tilted also without the cocktail glasses falling over. The waiter returned upright and Kalanag took two of the glasses for him and Gloria to drink.



MJ performed the move perfectly, making it appear as though it came as natural to him as walking does to every other person.



In order to pull off the move, Jackson actually wore special shoes which had triangular holes in the bottom. There were also nails jutting out of the ground to catch the holes. So, Jackson would get into position and the nails would catch into the holes of his shoes, allowing him to bend all the way forward. The pin can be mounted on a $\frac{3}{4}$ inch rectangular plywood sheet about two by four feet to provide the leverage. The edges are beveled, and the plywood painted to match the stage floor.

Tutorial on how to make an amazing “fade away” key vanish.

I got a nice e-mail from MJ Emigh in Texas. Old timers remember when MJ was our President.

His wife sadly passed, and he wants to get back to living in Florida.

I wished him to the best and we would love to see him again. I have kept him up to date with the Ring Newsletters.

He sent me this for Halloween. He always had a wicked sense of humor.



The Society of American Magicians is **now charging extra for a printed copy of the Organization's Magazine , MUM.** A few years back they changed the policy of “Lifetime Members” getting copies of MUM, at no charge.

This is disturbing and visible evidence that magic fraternities are struggling with finances. This struggle is not unique to just magic clubs but can be seen in many fraternal, trade groups ,Civic clubs and even churches.

My guess is that this new policy will cause more decline in membership numbers . In the meantime, this drives more members to the Internet which is at the root of the decline in membership.

Country: *Malawi*

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before: 2/21/2023

Take Your Seat

An effect that many mentalists use is the “Chair Prediction”.

A committee of volunteers is invited on stage, and each is asked to choose a chair from a row of chairs and sit in it. After they have all done so, the mentalist opens an envelope that has been in full view from the beginning, and it predicts which chair is empty.

The late David Berglass had a bewildering version with many volunteers and colored chairs. Like most Berglass effects, it had a combination of methods and a lot of miscalls, double interpretations and psychological forces.

Paul Romhany used a switching portfolio holder to force the chair numbers that each person sits in.

I wanted a simple version. I realize that a “one out of four” is not all that powerful, but the presentation can be strong, and it is a great lead-in to another effect like Pseudo-psychometry.

My method is obviously a “multiple out” method where the revelation seems to conform to the reality of what just happened.

The concepts are from the late Larry Becker and Bill Severn and Banachek (Steve Shaw) in his 1990 booklet “Rethoughts: Mentalism by Steve Shaw.

This is from a Ring # 320 photo in Virginia when Steve did a lecture there and I was the Secretary. We were both younger then!

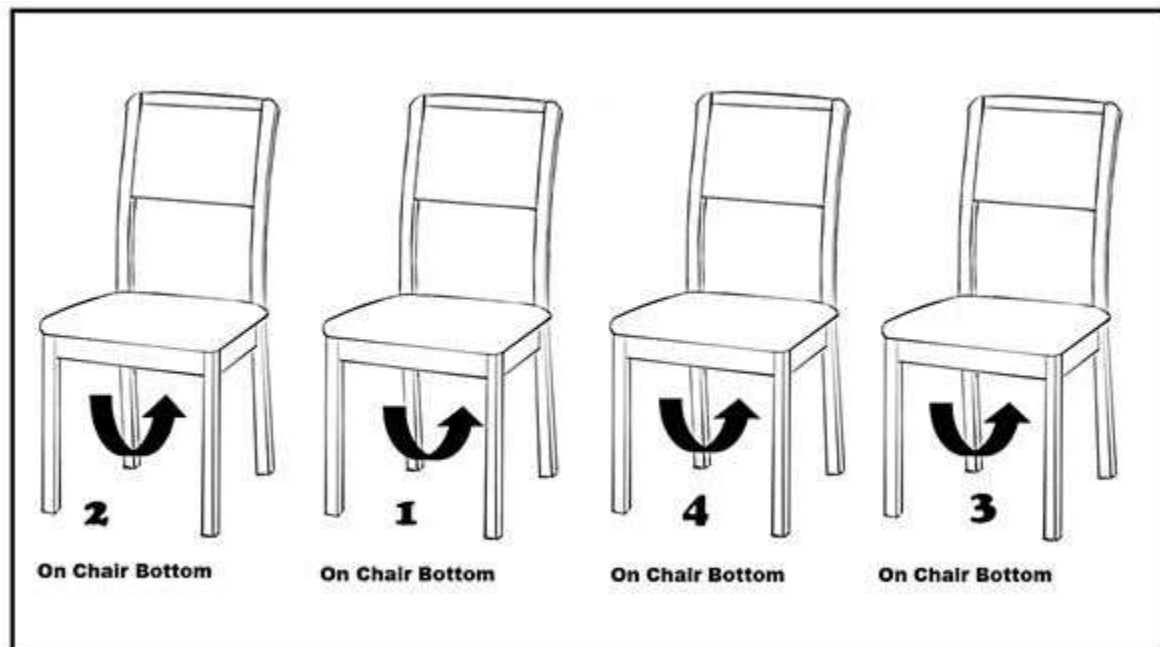
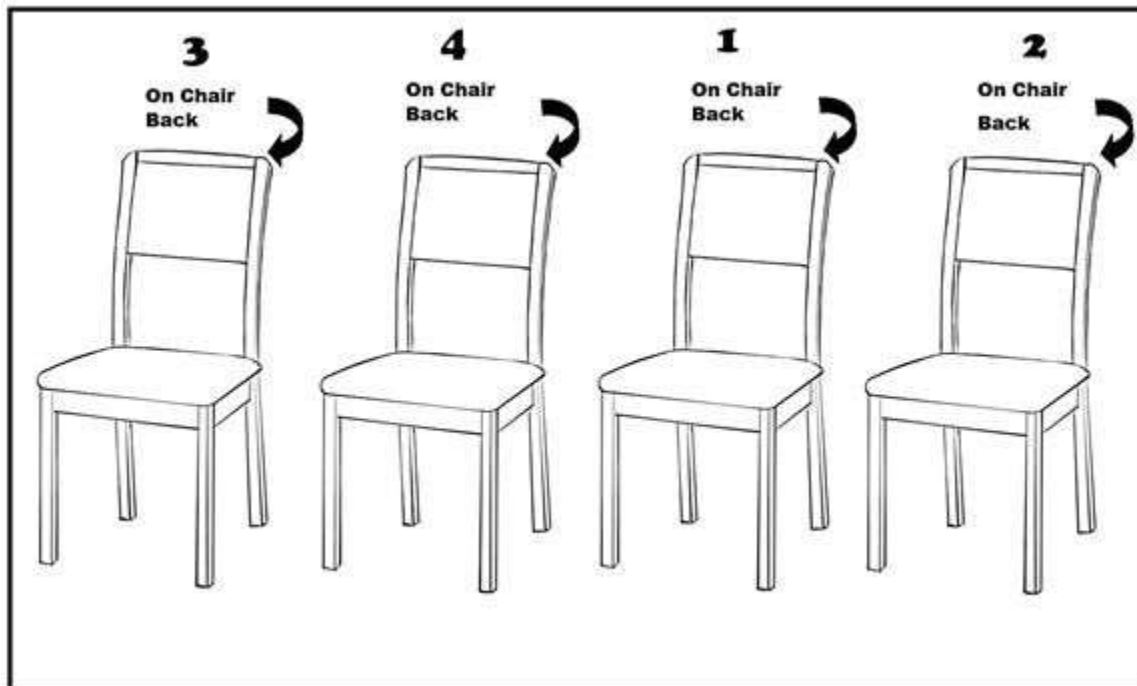


I use 4 ordinary chairs and 2 sets of cards with 4 large numbers on each.

It “packs flat and plays big!”

One of the number sets is mounted on the 4 chair backs and the other set is mounted under the chair seats of the 4 chairs.

Here are the diagrams:



You will also need a large manila envelope that you will place on the final vacant chair.



Inside the envelope is a large sign. Do not write out “two” but use the number written like this:



To perform, place the 4 prepared chairs in a row and call up 4 spectators. You can use the old “toss the paper wad” or “beach ball bounce” to get random volunteers. I usually prefer to be more careful in selecting helpers so I can get the most alert and good looking.

I give them a choice of who gets to hold the envelope. During this time, in the interview process, is a good time to evaluate the volunteers and add some humor.

Hand the envelope to one spectator and have that spectator stand to the side and ask the other spectators to each carefully select one chair that they want to sit in. There can be some funny by play if you use young men and a girl. Have the girl choose first and then make a comment about where the guy chooses to sit. “What’s matter? Don’t you want to sit next to the pretty girl?” Or “Good move! Next to the nice-looking lady!” Ask the girl if she wants to move. There are comedy possibilities. I once did this with a middle-aged crowd and one woman said, “No, I want to move! He looks like my ex-husband!”

Once three chairs have been chosen and they are seated and no one wants to change their mind and they are “Happy with the mind they have”. You have the person holding the prediction envelope then put that envelope leaning up on the empty chair, as the drawing shows.

Now the “multiple out” begins. If one of the empty chairs in one of the two middle chairs. I walk to the appropriate side so that it becomes the #2 chair. If the empty chair is second from the stage right chair, I go to that side and tell them that they could have sat in any chair, but they chose chair #1 (I made it verbally chair #1!). I then point to the envelope sitting in the empty chair and I tell the next volunteer that they could have chosen any chair but chose or fate gave them chair #3. I do the same explanation to the volunteer in what is chair #4.

If the chair that is empty second from stage left. I do the same thing from the other side! This covers a miraculous prediction I either of the two middle chairs are chosen. You open the envelope and reveal that you had predicted Chair #2 to be empty. If you did the nail writing, you could now have the envelope holder pull the index card out of the envelope and their name was predicted.

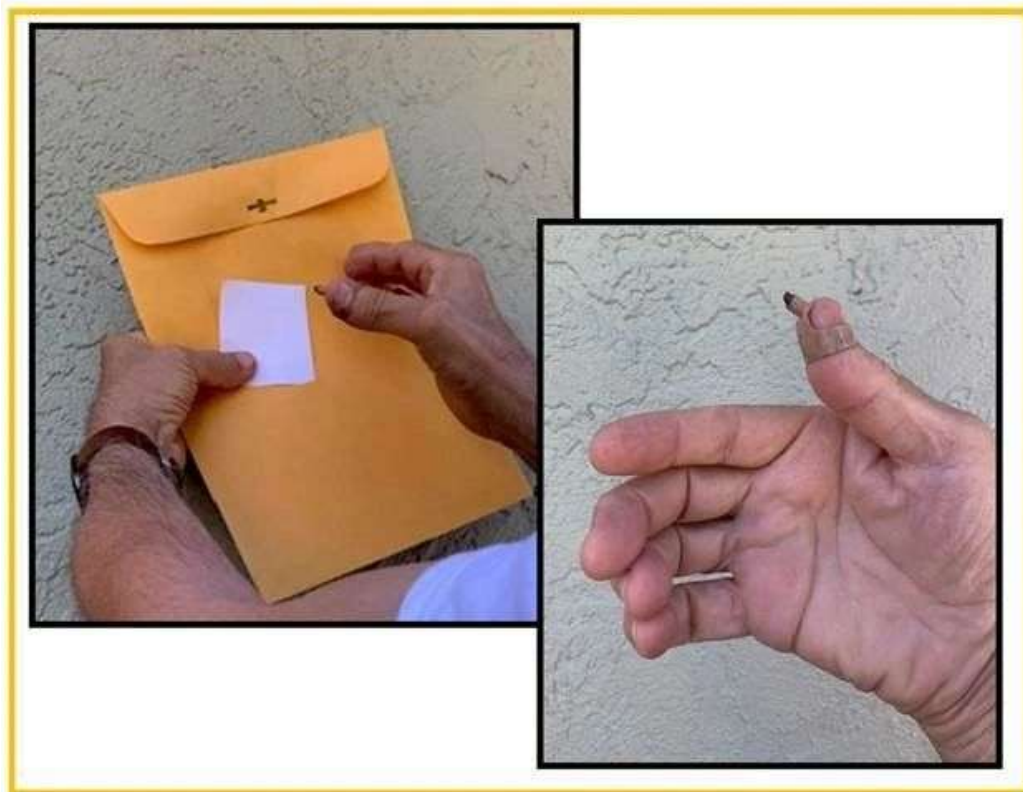
If either of the end chairs are empty, you proceed this way.

You explain that in various cultures we read from left to right or right to left and you did not want that to influence the choices, so you randomly numbered the chairs. It is a seemingly reasonable explanation.

The diagrams explain that if the empty chair is on stage left, the #2 is on the back of the chair. So, you have everyone stand up and turn their chair around and pull off the numbers (which were security taped on with the numbers facing inward). The remaining chair with the envelope is turned around to show its number and the volunteer envelope holder removes the large prediction card and, if prepared, the small nail written index card with their name on it.

If the empty chair is stage right, then proceed the same way but have them all stand and tip back their chairs to show the bottom of the seats. Remove the cards and proceed as above.

Postscript Note: This part is not mandatory but can be an added “kick” at the end. I will often ask the spectator (who holds the envelope) his/her name and nail write it (with a thumb band writer with grease pencil on a 3 by 3 trimmed unlined index card that is protruding through a slit in the back of the manila envelope). When I reveal it at the end of the routine it gives an extra punch at the end.



If you add banter and confidence to the presentation, this is a powerful and entertaining effect.

Dennis