

# Ring 170 and SAM 99 "The Bev and Alouise Bergeron Ring"

March 27, 2022 | Archived Famulus



We have live meetings again.

Be kind and courteous. Masks are suggested. but not required.

President Michael Matson called the March 16th meeting to order, with 24 in the seats, and we began with a special show segment. Vice-president Ryan Stiner introduced young "Magical Mia" Ciola and her family. She showed us her act that she will do in an upcoming school talent show. Wands multiplied, handkerchiefs came from a colorful "Square Circle" and streamers and mouth coils were produced and finally boxes of candy.

President Matson then did a great coin routine where Morgan dollar coins multiplied and disappeared. Dennis Phillips presented his version of Grant's Checker X using audience volunteer and guest, Michelle Curtis. His patter was on how Chinese coins have a hole in the middle and can be kept on a cord so you can't lose them unless a clever magician makes them magically come loose from the cord.

Dan Stapleton showed us a Silk on Rope, Silk through the Rope and the Rope to Silk. Much of the routine was original with ideas from Marconick and one move is from Tarbell. He explained in detail how he did the effects. No reels were used. Dan used special ties and a prepared rope. David Freeman showed our guests a Hot Rod routine. Dan Stapleton returned to show them an impromptu cell phone vanish. Thom Parkin distributed some magic sets to guests and members.

We had a brief business meeting featuring a list of magic shows playing in the Orlando area and upcoming events. Then, a group-think session on recalling and improving on a mentalism routine that Dan Stapleton had done on cruise ships. Finally, Mike Matson did a mini lecture on the rub-a-dub card vanish.



"Magic Mia" Ciola

Photograph by: Ryan Stiner.

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

**"The Bev and Alouise Bergeron Ring"**

We see things based on autopilot. Our mind identifies

something in a certain way, no matter what the eye sees.

The eye tells you one thing, and the brain tells you another.

-Jerry Andrus-

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It just does not get much better than this in terms of classic stage magic

Harry Blackstone Jr. and his Vanishing Birdcage and Dancing Spirit Hank

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From Dan Stapleton:

Pencil the date onto your Calendar for now. January 6-8, 2023. Get out of the cold and into the Sunshine State for a weekend of magic, history, and fun. Our Conference last year was great. You won't want to miss this one.

For more information see <https://magic-palooza.com/>



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A “Blast from the Past”



The name “Spurlock” will be forever remembered in Abbotts Magic History as having a disastrous stage show during one of the Annual “Get Togethers” (1970). It was said to have been poorly done with ill-trained assistants, no logical pacing or presentation and little showmanship. It was joked about that Recil Bordner , owner of Abbotts, fled town after the show to escape the wrath of angry lynch mobs demanding their ticket money back.

Spurlock apparently was an independently wealthy man and only did a few illusion-shows and then faded into the sunset. His huge illusion show was carried in a bright orangish and black semi which he brought to perform at the Get Together. The lack of performing experience or stage techniques may have been part of his problem.

Greg Bordner, Recil’s son and future owner of Abbotts, told a few customers that Spurlock had spent a fortune on Abbotts’ illusions. Recil almost felt obligated to put him on the Get Together Stage Show. I don't think Spurlock did many shows after Abbott's. In fact, he may not have done many anywhere before.

The Spurlock fiasco was reviewed in October 1970 issue of The New Tops. The reviews of the day were notoriously charitable to acts that “sucked” to put it in street slang. This review, written by John Braun mentioned that Spurlock had a company of 14 and presented "36 big illusions". His show was "21 years in the making". Braun ends his review by saying- "True, there are spots that need attention, but they'll get it...". A comment like that was almost unheard of at the time and gives you an idea of the quality of the show.

Some of the other performers at that year's convention; Monk Watson (of course), Mercer Helms, Tom & Sherrie, Pete Biro, Earl Ray Wilcox, Bob Kramer & Judie, Mike Caldwell and his famous "flip", Dale Salwak, Senator Crandall, a very young Mike Caveney, De Yip Loo, Reneaux, Ricki Dunn, Celeste Evans, Neil Foster and his wonderful Zombie, Fox & Stern's magical mayhem, George Johnstone, Josef Smiley & Georgi, etc.

I had been to the Get Together the year before in 1969 and again in 1989. Abbotts and Colon are a kind of metaphor for the changes , over that time, in American manufacturing and small-town life. IN 1969 Colon was a relatively vibrant midwestern town with several small factories. One was directly connected to the automotive business as a sub-contractor for Detroit. In these little towns you could find all kinds of small “job shops” involved in metal working and plating and assembling small parts. The main street in all these little towns was filled with local businesses. Bud West was running the Abbotts manufacturing shop and few, who had not been there knew, but they also had a large printing shop that not only printed their items but served the printing needs of Western Michigan.

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In Colon, when I returned in 1989, the downtown storefronts had many vacancies. The Fetzer company had sold WKZO Radio and TV in Kalamazoo. Almost all the small factories were gone.

The Internet had not taken hold in the magic business, but the illusion building business had drifted away to Las Vegas (Gaughan, Willie Kennedy) and Los Angeles builders (Bill Smith) and Bill Schmeelk (Wellington Enterprises) and Alcorn in New York and others around the country. Lots of low cost offshore small props were competing with Abbotts and they were not the singular giant in the business that they had been.

Today, Abbotts' type prop magic is not in style and the small-time stage magicians are a diminishing group. It appears that the Border family has wanted to exit the Abbott business and it has been for sale. A few years ago, a sale was announced but apparently never

materialized. Another, smaller magic operation, FAB, opened in Colon and then Sterlini magic is there, and Duane Laflin opened his own magic theater .

The future of Abbotts and Colon is not clear but then, the future is never totally clear.

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Ring Member Henry Rydzinski made me aware of this.

I agree with Henry that "This could affect magicians one day...

We already know that Teller ( of Penn and Teller) successfully sued for damages for a stolen routine and

David Copperfield shut down an illusionist for copying his "Flying" routine and apparatus. These lawsuits were in

Europe where their system of jurisprudence is "Civil Law" rather than our English Common Law, so the magistrates may be more sympathetic to protecting intellectual property. The moral

here is that we will all need a legal team to be in show business.

## Hiring a Magician?

Or, asking them to perform at your next event?

What you *THINK* you're paying for:  
**Someone to perform magic**

What you're *ACTUALLY* paying for:  
**Someone to perform magic**

PLUS:

- Equipment and Costumes
- Hours of rehearsal time
- Rehearsal space
- Transportation to and from the venue
- The lessons and training to become the best Magicians that they are
- Promotion and website cost
- The high percentages that goes to self-employment income taxes
- Telephone and internet bills
- Organizing the performance and the rehearsals
- Any manager agent or other booking fees and insurance
- Oh, and thats right, THE MAGICIAN HAS TO EAT
- Pay housing bills and all other living expenses

Still think that, offering exposure and experience is a fair price?

**PERFORMANCE ART has value,  
or YOU would not WANT it at your party.  
HIRE A PRO • GET A PRO**

## Comedian Class Action Seeks Royalties from Streaming Services



Audet & Partners, LLP is pursuing claims as part of a comedian class action that prominent streaming services, including Pandora, have illegally deprived comedians of significant royalty payments. In addition, specific evidence suggests that this behavior has been willful and may subject these services to statutory damages and attorneys fees incurred by comedians to recover unpaid royalties.

Streaming services, for years, have sought to avoid royalty payments to comedians by arguing that comic performers are not entitled to copyright protection for their intellectual property consisting of their underlying verbal compositions or jokes. This approach is in direct contrast to musicians who are compensated not only for their tangible recordings, but also for their underlying original content.

Evidence that the streaming services may have willfully denied these royalties to comedians exists in SEC filings by Pandora between 2011 and 2017 when the company recognized the potential of "significant liability for copyright infringement" that could arise from its failure to properly license underlying literary works such as content created by comedians.

If you are a comedian whose works have been streamed online, there is a high likelihood that you have been denied royalty payments pursuant to U.S. copyright laws. You are urged to contact Audet & Partners, LLP for a free, confidential case evaluation to determine whether you may have a viable claim as part of the comedian class action law suit. You can contact us either by completing and submitting the inquiry form on the right side of this page or by giving us a call at (800) 965-1461.

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# Plate Spinning

with



# Dennis Phillips



**FROM THE THRILLING CENTER RING OF THE CIRCUS  
TO THE VARIETY SHOWS FROM THE GOLDEN AGE OF  
TELEVISION, AUDIENCES HAVE BEEN KEPT ON THE  
EDGE OF THEIR SEATS**

**DENNIS PHILLIPS PRESENTS THE MOST  
EXCITING ACT IN LIVE ENTERTAINMENT!**


Cruise Ship Magician ,Craig Diamond came by and bought a Plate Spinning Act ,that I made for him, and I trained him on doing it.

He does mostly visual comedy bits and is very limited in audience participation due to COVID provisions on the ships. He is back working cruises and booked until the end of the year.

This was a rare break for Craig , and he came up from Ft. Myers for the afternoon.

We went over lots of magic comedy bits where you have audience interaction without contact. It is good to see the classic stage entertainment back in action.

Craig was a great student and brought down the house!

 **Craig Diamond is with Dennis Phillips in Orlando, Florida.** 10h · 🌐

A long day of travel, roundtrip to Orlando. That drive isn't getting any easier or shorter! Accidents and road construction abound. I-27 and I-4, well what can I say....other than arghhhh. A trip and visit with [Dennis Phillips](#) . He's a key figure to the Orlando magic scene. Time with Dennis is like stepping into Ken Griffen's "Illusion Show Know How" book (my "bible" as a kid). Illusions, props, costumes, scenery and a lot of road crates! Two magicians having fun together. My car is always "challenged" (loaded and lot heavier) afterwards. Something wickedly funny, this way comes. A new addition to the show. I can hear 'Sabre Dance' in my head. I'll be unleashing a bit of my inner circus "geek" next week. It'll be something you just don't see anymore, unless you're watching Ed Sullivan. It's both exciting and funny, perfect for my wacko persona. Pictures coming in the weeks ahead. Dennis is great, a creative genius. The combination of a magician and engineer. He and his wife are lovely people. Coming home, I drove a different route. One I've never traveled. Came south through Florida cattle country (RT. 441). Ranches straight out of the movies! Breath taking scenery. Remote, you want a full tank of gas, and a charged phone, but beautiful. Saw the biggest wild turkey I've ever seen!





Craig Diamond is 🥳 feeling accomplished.

March 15 at 1:31 AM · 🌐



You, Wes Iseli and 113 others

27 Comments



Like



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Dennis Phillips

I am thrilled and so happy to have helped you!

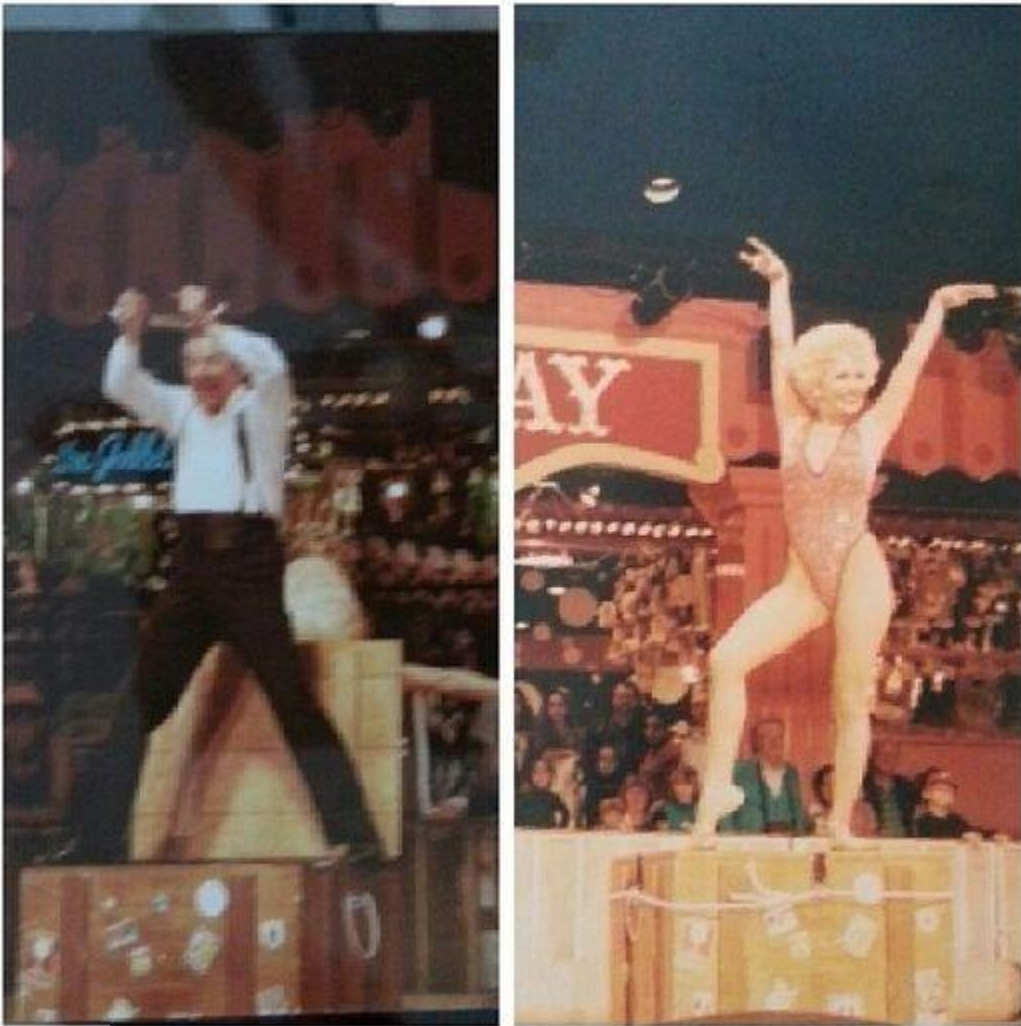


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The late great Vince Carmen and wife Yvonne.

Along with his family , they were a mainstay of Circus Circus in La Vegas and other venues in town and Nevada.

Vince established an illusion show presence in New Zealand and played all over the world.



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Kevin Spencer is no longer touring but I thought you would like this.

In his day, he was big on the college circuit.

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### **Backstage with the Magician (my version)**

This effect was a major feature of the Dante illusion show. The “Backstage” illusion was created by Danish magician Harry Jansen (1883 – 1955) better known as Dante the Magician.

Dante first used his version circa 1927 in his Buenos Aires tour.

In Dante’s Backstage illusion, the magician apparently lets his audience have a behind-the-scenes look at how he produces his assistant.

The illusion is turned around, giving the audience a view from the backside and the magician faces the back wall of the stage, performing to an imaginary audience. They see her hiding behind one of two boxes and shifting behind and then inside the other box as each box is shown empty and then nested.

The audience thinks they see exactly how the trick works. But, when the production from the nested box is made, although the audience saw the assistant crawl into the box, she is gone, and a man produced instead. The audience has been completely fooled.

Dante originally used a stage trap, but later Owens added a beveled elevated base to hide the extra assistant and vanished original assistant. This became the standard modern version of the illusion.

Mine used a Rand Woodbury style base. By stepping and stacking the base parts, you create a thinner looking base. There is a curved sheet metal bottom, lined with canvas.

The back view shows the ledge for the girl to hide on and the strap to pull up the back door.



Here you can see the bigger box opened up and the “X” rods for lifting and carrying the smaller blue box.

Also, the traps can be seen in the base top along with the positioning “L” block ends. I later hid the lines with black automobile interior carpeting.



The base could also be used for a Crystal Casket, Asrah Table, Spiker, and other things on a different addition of my show seasons.

Finally, I wanted more used out of the base than just one effect, so you can see my wife Cindy lifting the drop-in base for this effect. This is room for two girls in the base. Once, I fit in it.



Here is David Copperfield's version

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So many good lines. Steve Spill is great. Here is in the mid-1980s.

I have had a Himber Linking Finger Ring for years and it can be great with the right lines and crowd.

Packs small plays big.

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Here I am performing Abbott's Dove Catching with my two assistants, Juan and Amaal. "Remember, if you've seen Juan, you've seen Amaal!"

Okay, it got a big laugh back in 1998, when this photo was taken at a wedding reception in the ballroom at Leu Garden's in Orlando.



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FISM is coming the July and has an all-star line-up

The 2022 FISM will be in Canada in Quebec City



Stan Allen, Zakary Belamy, Jason England, Dean Gunnarson, Jared Kopf, Sos & Victoria, Brian South and Michael Weber will be in Québec City for FISM WCM 2022! They will join Michael Ammar, Lee Asher, Philippe Beau, Tobias Beckwith, Stéphane Bourgoïn, David Ben, Will Bradshaw, Mike Caveney, Dani DaOrtiz, Marc DeSouza, Alexandra Duvivier, Julie Eng, Shawn Farquhar, Paul Gertner, Larry Hass, Luc Langevin, Max Maven, Jeff McBride, Lisa Menna, Xavier Mortimer, Miguel Muñoz, Pierric, Walter Rolfo, Jay Sankey, Giancarlo Scalia, Bernardo Sedlacek, Scott Steelfyre, Ta Na Manga, Topas, R. Paul Wilson, Jeki Yoo and Zabrecky

The **International Federation of Magic Societies (FISM)** (Fédération Internationale des Sociétés Magiques) was founded in 1948 and is one of the most respected organizations in the magic community. It is an international body coordinating dozens of national and international clubs and federations around the world. Together these clubs represent approximately 50,000 magicians from 50 countries as of 2015. The organization hosts a self-named "FISM" conference every three years, where magicians compete for "Best of" categories. Founded in 1948, it is one of the most recognized magic organizations in the magic circle. Currently, there are more than 80 member organizations and about 50,000 members from 50 countries and regions

FISM's stated aim is to create a centralized "voice" for the magic world and to help develop, elevate, and promote the art of magic. It coordinates activities of member societies and encourages communication between them, as well as the exchange of services. It has a corporate identity and a team of professional marketers. It also serves a capacity in the realm of intellectual property, fighting against the copying or inappropriate release of magical inventions or routines.

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At the March meeting I performed my version of UF Grant's "Checker X".

I made my own because I wanted discs that looked more like Chinese money rather than the gaudy brightly colored discs.

My patter is about how clever the Chinese are to put a hole in their coins so you can string them on a cord and not lose them.

I then demonstrate and tell how a Chinese Banker , named Wing Tip Shoo, discovers a way to get a person's coins off the string without untying the cord.

This has always been a mystifying and fun routine for children and adults.

Performing "Checker X" , being assisted by audience volunteer and guest Michelle Curtis.



**Photos courtesy of Phil Schwartz**

Here is a version:

Dennis