

Ring Report Ring #170 “The Bev Bergeron Ring” SAM Assembly #99

August 30, 2019 | Archived Famulus



August 2019 Lecture - Dameon

President Mike Matson brought the meeting to order and it was entirely filled with a lecture by Dameon (Hal Meyers). He has been lecturing all over the country and the title was “Back to Basics”. We could appreciate seeing a polished magician. Dameon has performed all over the world in every type of venue and began his career as the opening act for Richiardi Jr. Last summer he was a featured performer at the Society of American Magicians’ convention here in Orlando and he has been at Abbotts Get Together.

This was a “hands-on” workshop as attendees had to pick up a paper bag and fill it with balls, cards, rope, etc. – all provided by Dameon - that would be used during the lecture. Everyone got to keep their stuff.

Dameon reviewed six categories: cards, balls, rope, thimbles, doves and tips on setting up for a manipulation act. He also gave tips on all the things you need to take when you travel like spare buttons, batteries, tape, safety pins. He constantly made reference that everything he was doing could be found in the classic magic texts. Dameon took the time to circulate around the room and assist members where

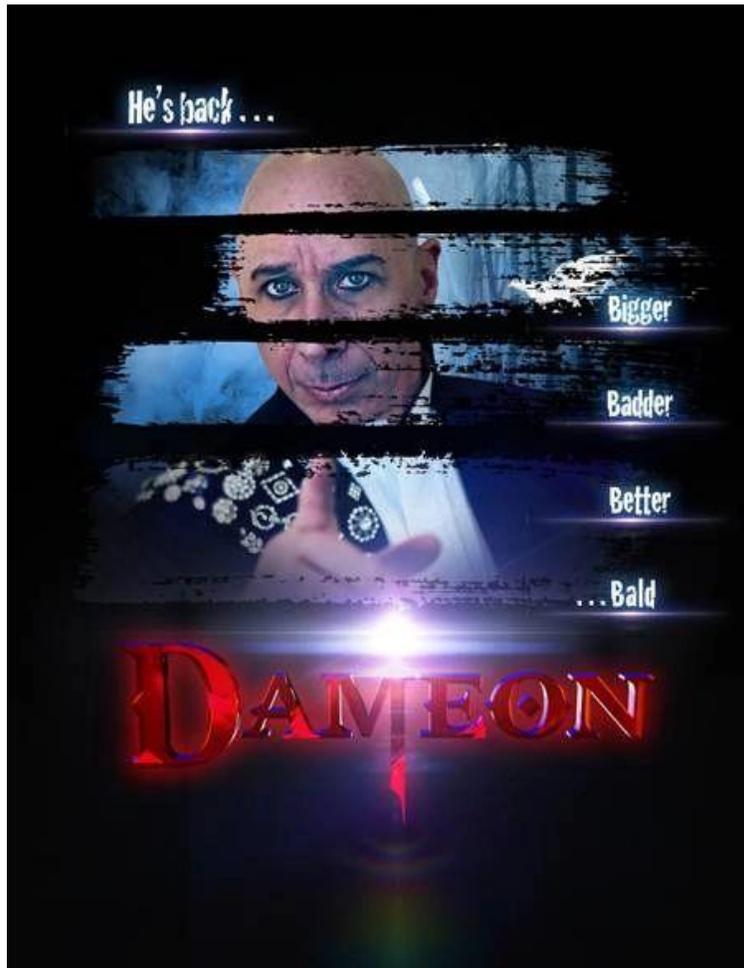
needed whether it was throwing cards, ball manipulation, making a knot vanish, making thimbles appear/disappear, etc. He gave tips on dove productions, vanishes and his own way to make the Nielsen vanishing dove cage disappear from a cardboard box.

We could see that every move, every gesture, every stance, facial expression, has been well practiced over the years, and is purposeful, with great showmanship and entertainment. He taught for three captivating hours.

Ring 170 enjoyed Dameon's visit and lecture.

Dennis







Dennis Deliberations ... Ring # 170

“The Bev Bergeron Ring”

September 2019

I keep thinking of that wonderful line from “Big Trouble in Little China,” where Jack Burton says, “sooner or later I rub everybody the wrong way.”



**This is what happens when you make a
MAGICIAN with a sharpie, wait 45 minutes
in the hot sun for road construction.**



John Naisbitt first developed the concept of high tech, high touch in his 1982 bestseller Megatrends. He theorized that in a world of technology, people long for personal, human contact. We live in a Technologically Intoxicated Zone, a netherworld where we are bombarded with impersonal stimuli. Here is a partial list of the symptoms: we fear and yet worship technology; we blur the distinction between real and fake; we live our lives distanced and distracted.

How do we struggle to bring the high touch back into our lives? We seek meaning through escapist cults and religions; we try to get as rich as possible, we demand the hottest mate-then the most expensive divorce, we buy self-help books; we search for gurus, we pop Prozac, Viagra, and other supplements; we seek a tangential connection to nature by driving sports utility vehicles and buying clothes from L.L. Bean and many live in a world as a saturated consumer-buying commodity on an over-marketed, mind-numbing Dead Zone.

Maybe we hire a real live magician to entertain us in our living room or across the table?

We live out our lives in quiet desperation. Can our own personal magician shows us there is more to life? Possibly, but it is a tall task. Maybe too tall for me. I get weary entertaining people addicted to their cellphones, and totally unfocused and incapable of listening, thinking and remembering anything. "Sure take that call. I have to move on to another table. Have a nice night." Most of the time I can not get over the blank look in people's eyes. All the human connection has been washed out of their skin tone. Their mind is somewhere else.

The other night I had someone say, " Can you send me a video of that trick. It was good and I want to see if I can figure it out." (They got the idea from Penn and Teller's "Fool Us"?)

No amount of "high touch" can save us.

Hardeen Florida Connection



On Jan 29, 1938, the late Houdini's brother Theo--billed as the Great Hardeen--performed live at Panama City's Ritz Theater on Harrison Avenue. "In Hardeen," the *News Herald* reported, "Houdini lives again. It is the desire of Hardeen to carry on the feats of his brother and in this manner keep alive his wonderful name."

Hardeen headlined the largest show Panama City had ever witnessed. Ads boasted a "Broadway-style review...featuring 42 people, 15 big scenes, glorious and daringly different girls!" Due to its burlesque nature, the show didn't begin until 11pm. Tickets cost 35 cents--big money in depression days. But the Houdini connection sold tickets.

As young boys, Harry and Theo (they would change their names upon entering show business) worked as a team, performing in beer halls and dime museums around Coney Island. Here they perfected the escape tricks that would propel one of them to international renown.

After a hit performance at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair the brothers split, performing near-duplicate acts at separate venues. Theo, it was said, could replicate all his brother's tricks save one: the strait-jacket escape that would become Houdini's signature.

When Harry died, his will granted "all my theatrical effects and illusions to my brother." But Hardeen's fame and success was but a glint of Harry's. Theo, in the words of Houdini biographer Bert Sugar, "possessed none of his brother's personality and flair." Clearly, Harry's magic lay within.

The highlight of Hardeen's performance at the Ritz was an attempt at the family trademark, the escape from a strait-jacket while in full view of the audience. As usual, however, Theo reduced his brother's artistry to low comedy, intentionally bungling the escape for easy laughter.

By the early-1940s, rheumatism had destroyed Theo's ability to perform, and he died in 1945. The Northwest Florida tour would be among his last.

"To be born into near fame is a dreadful fate," Sugar wrote of Theo. Indeed, for all the escapes Theo performed as the Great Hardeen, the one escape he could never truly make was from beneath his brother's shadow.

--Ken Brooks, Panama City News Herald <http://floridahistorian.blogspot.com/2008/05/cotton-watts-last-blackface.html>



<https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2009/mar/12/ali-bongo-magician-obituary> (around 10 years ago)

William Oliver Wallace, (better known as "Ali Bongo), was born on December 12, 1929.

He was a British comedy magician, and president of the "Magic Circle." His act was known as "Shriek of Araby."

At 16 he began his career as an inventor of magic illusions, and performer. He acted as magical advisor on many T.V. shows, such as "Dr. Who," "Ace of Wands," and "Jonathan Creek," and has won several magic awards.

You tubes clips of his work can be seem on the David Nixon BBC Magic TV show and on Paul Daniel's British TV shows.

He died of pneumonia on March 8, 2009.

Lance Burton posted an extended apology and removed his "Tee Pee" illusion for his act after being accused of bigotry, hate and racism against Native Americans.

I remember the act on his TV special and I watched this clip several times on You Tube. I think we may be seeing a case of hypersensitivity. From my perspective, I did not think that Lance's monologue was at all offensive. You watch and decide. What is next? Banning anything with any mention of anything ethnic?

I am pulling the Pizza Pie trick out of my show. It is offensive to Italians. Hey, I am half Italian! That might also be offensive. I guess I have to throw out my Chinese, Egyptian and India wardrobe and burn my Temple of Benares and Buddha Tubes?

This illusion is a Native American themed version of "Things that go Bump in the Night" which originated with Servais Leroy. Three strange giant heaps emerge under cloths from a cabinet as the magician holds up three large cloths. He retreats into the cabinet and one by one the lumps are revealed. Two are women and the third is the magician. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aX9ZXl8rux8>



Lance Burton - Teepee on Jay Leno (1999)

I recall that Ken Griffin's first act was "Indian" themed. Their first show was called "Mave, American Indian Magician", with scenery, props, and costumes all in Native American design. Ken passed away at his home in Burbank, California, January 28, 1987 .. Ken and Roberta had been honored for their work in magic by The Academy of Magical Arts, several years before Ken's death.

I still have the wardrobe and props for my "Indian" act, "Chief Fox Wind and the Braves". I always presented it as a tribute to Native Americans, whose land we took and who we mistreated.

Here is another Vegas themed Native American act that is out of fashion.





A montage of many popular walk-around effects.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=369772487277306>

This Awesome Guy Has Some Insane Magic Tricks

How is this even possible!!!



If any of you remember Joe Conrad from many years ago in the Orlando area . He is now living in Tampa after leaving Thailand after a long stay there. His leaving Thailand was noted in their local newspaper.

It appears that he is now mostly doing mentalism now.

<http://www.joeconrad.com/#>



The **Phuket**  **News** Your Island – Your Paper

<https://www.thephuketnews.com/has-joe-conrad-done-a-houdini-28513.php>

Has Joe Conrad done a Houdini? *Mr. Conrad may have fled the country.*

PHUKET: Patong illusionist Joe Conrad is reported to have disappeared last Thursday (January 26) and may have left the country, just a day after the 'grand opening' of his magic theatre in Jungceylon.



Signs at the Jungceylon booking office today (Monday) indicated there would be no shows tonight

A source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Mr. Conrad had "fled" amid growing financial woes. Even as late as Monday (January 30), a Jungceylon spokesperson insisted Mr. Conrad had not run away, and that his show was still continuing as usual.

"The story of Mr. Conrad's disappearance might have been invented to discredit him," the spokesperson said.

However, on Wednesday the Jungceylon spokesperson confirmed to The Phuket News that Joe Conrad was nowhere to be found. He is reported not to even be in Thailand anymore.

It appears on the surface at least that Mr. Conrad may have pulled off his greatest disappearing act.

Mr. Conrad had borrowed money from several people to invest in his magic theatre, and also owed back-rent to the development company behind the Jungceylon shopping mall, Phuket Square Co., Ltd.

The phone number for the Patong theatre has already been disconnected, and the website is no longer online. Since Monday, signs at the Jungceylon booking office have indicated there are no shows.

The source said Mr. Conrad had borrowed heavily to meet the operating costs of his theatre, and had allegedly run up debts of more than B1 million.

Joe Conrad Magic Theatre opened in May 2011, but failed to live up to expectations, according to the source, who added that audience numbers averaged between just five and 30 people per show in the 700-seat theatre.

Production Director of the Joe Conrad Magic Company Ltd., Andrew Pragnell, confirmed to The Phuket News that Mr. Conrad had been missing since Friday morning.

On that day, Mr. Pragnell received a text message from Mr. Conrad saying that he was going to go away for just a few days.

“It was a complete shock to us,” said Mr. Pragnell, referring to the illusionist’s subsequent disappearance. “Nobody knows what he was thinking.”

Mr. Pragnell had a meeting with the director of Jungceylon last Thursday (February 2).

The future of the magic theatre will be clear soon.

It is still not clear why Mr. Conrad staged a ‘grand opening’ last Wednesday.

Patong is a beach resort town on the west coast of Phuket Island, facing the Andaman Sea in the southwest of Thailand. Its sandy, crescent beach is lined with cafes, restaurants and bars.

The famously raucous nightlife scene features beer bars, go-go bars, nightclubs, massage parlors and cabarets that overflow into the street along neon-lit Bangla Road.