



Dennis Deliberations ... Ring # 170,

Assembly #99

“The Bev and Alouise Bergeron Ring”

<https://www.wopc.co.uk/members/royjhopwood/mechanical-decks-part-1#:~:text=This%20deck%20is%20widely%20credited,the%20title%20of%20'Svengali%20Deck.>

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Mechanical Decks – Part 1

Published November 23, 2023 • Updated July 04, 2024

This article explores various mechanical decks used in magic, including the long-short principle in decks like Svengali and Mirage, as well as other unique cutting techniques.

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Ever since the invention of playing cards magicians; card cheats; gamblers etc. have been finding ways to take advantage of the cards, and the public without them being aware.

In my article [Fox Lake Playing Cards - a magician's perspective](#)^[1] I briefly spoke about mechanical decks. This article goes into more detail about some of these so-called mechanical decks, however, due to my magician's pledge, I am unable to go into specific details as to how some of these decks work.

I define a mechanical deck (trick decks) as any deck of cards, group of cards or even a single card that has been modified or changed in some ways to facilitate the operation of the deck / trick. There are a great many varieties of trick decks, in this article I will talk about one type of trick deck, and that is were either a single card; group of cards or a whole deck has been cut in some way.

Long-short Principle

AND

<https://www.wopc.co.uk/members/royjhopwood/mechanical-decks-part-2>

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Mechanical Decks – Part 2

Published March 29, 2024 • Updated March 29, 2024

This article examines the Rough and Smooth principle in mechanical decks used in magic, detailing several types such as the Invisible, Brainwave, Split, and Nudist Decks. It explores their history and usage without revealing the specific methods behind their magic tricks.

[Cardistry](#)
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This was from the final season of the Paul Daniels British TV series.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vF4NjXp2PYo>

This Asrah Levitation is bit like Kalanag's , He also started with a chair suspension. With Daniel's, they cover her up with not only the shiny cloth, but with a black art cloth!

She does not vanish like the Asrah. There is no wire form. She goes up and into the black area. When the cover cloth is pulled off, the black art cloth remains. She is securely attached to the AGA bar and her cradle. The clouds are projected onto the backdrop. The center fan wedge behind Daniels is moveable along with the AGA bar.

Since the cloud projection remains fixed, you are never aware that the background is moving up as well as the AGA bar which had been pushed through to attach to Debbie's cradle.

Also, two white hoops were used. The one first used by the helper on the chair suspension was not gimmicked. The one that Daniels used a Blaney's Great White Hoop which does open.



Levitation Asrah Magic illusion

From my daughter , Sara, lives in Rome and keeps me posted on Italian Magic. Magic is alive in Italy and Europe.

I find it interesting that in honor of Saint Francis of Assisi, they are not using any live animals in any of the acts. I am not sure if this is a permanent ban.

It seems that an act with live animals is now politically incorrect.



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Magic International Magic Gala



After the success of the previous editions, the **international Grand Gala of Magic** returns to the stage on **8 and 9 May 2026** at the **Auditorium della Conciliazione**, which brings the **greatest international magicians** to the stage, ready to amaze the public with **spectacular magic numbers**. In an edition that promises to be even more surprising and engaging.

In fact, this year's direction is based on **the encounter between magic, stage illusionism and tricks**, which amaze and enchant the audience, offering them an experience that enhances art, creativity and sharing. The Grand Gala thus becomes **a unique opportunity to experience authentic emotions** and experience a **Journey into the world of the extraordinary**, in which everything becomes possible.

Photo: official poster of the event

Here she is with her “side gig”, in Rome, presenting perfume making seminars as part of the Italian Experience to tourists.



The English Translation of the promotional flyer for the Rome Magic Grand Gala!

Wonder needs no chains, but wings to let the imagination soar. The "Magic International Grand Gala of Magic" returns to Rome for a twelfth edition that marks a poetic and ethical turning point.

This year, the Wonder Art Entertainment production has chosen to celebrate the anniversary of Saint Francis of Assisi, honoring his greatest "magic": the ability to

communicate with animals in a dialogue of universal brotherhood. And to reinforce the value of this message and the importance of respecting all of nature's creatures, for the first time at "Magic," there will be no live animals on stage.

Illusionists and magicians will feature handcrafted symbolic animals in their performances, demonstrating that the art of magic can enchant audiences by relying solely on talent and creativity.

On May 8th and 9th, at the Auditorium della Conciliazione, just steps from St. Peter's, a true "enchantment of kindness" will come to life, ready to transform the show into something special. Thanks to the success of past editions, "Magic" confirms its desire to offer audiences of all ages the power of daydreaming on an extraordinary journey into an extraordinary world.

Under the artistic direction of Alessio Masci and directed by Francesca Bellucci, some of the most celebrated international magicians will once again take the stage with their spectacular illusions, manipulation, and mentalism.

A global cast includes: Andrea Sestieri, a graduate in educational sciences with a background in education, the artist blends human sensitivity and high technology, presenting a unique format where magic and digital innovation create never-before-seen visuals; Anca and Lucca, FISM World Champions of mental magic, arrive from Austria to redefine the limits of mind-reading. Theirs is an "unplugged" mentalism: no electronics, no earphones, no accomplices; Van Denon and Nicole, one of the most celebrated couples on the international scene, bring to the stage grand illusions and indelible emotions cultivated on the stages of Europe's most important casinos and theaters; Igor Trifunov: The award-winning Serbian illusionist, TV star with Street Magic, and winner of numerous international Grand Prix shows. A master of manipulation, Trifunov transforms everyday gestures into moments of pure choreographic enchantment; Jad, fresh from winning the 2025 French Magic Championship, the Swiss artist is a leading exponent of modern magic. Renowned for his impeccable tape technique and captivating visual manipulation; Britney Bricherasio, a visionary spirit born into a circus profession, combines the power of an extraordinary voice (already appreciated on X Factor) with the extreme discipline of circus.

Mago Lupis, the histrionic 2014 Italian Magic Champion, returns to helm the event. With his captivating, comedic style, Lupis will be the guiding thread of this journey, guaranteeing laughter and amazement for audiences of all ages.

My fake newspaper headline always gets a laugh.
(pictured is my longtime assistant, Luana "Brandi")
I wonder how long before audiences will even know what a newspaper is!

I have had to stop doing effects with men's coats. Few men wear a coat.
You can't bake a cake in a hat anymore. Men do not wear hats. Few men
carry cloth hankies so there goes the dancing hank.
It is getting tougher to borrow paper money and coins.



Hilarious show from Kerry Pollack
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISS1G0chE9w>



Kerry Pollock @ Magic Castle - Hollywood, Ca.

I do Grant's "Checker X" . I made my own version and patter.
I think I may be the only magician who has regularly done the trick. The
reason is that it needs a storyline and reason.

My patter is about the cleverness of Chinese coins and Norwegian coins having a hole in the middle. It is so you can keep your coins on a string and never lose them like our American coins.

I have lots of lines like: “My Hong Kong banker, Wing Tip Shoo, told me this. He says they speak three languages in Hong Kong: VISA, Master Card and American Express. I was so bad at using Chinese money, they called me Sum Ting Wong.”

Here I am being assisted by Michelle Curtis at a Ring meeting.



Photos courtesy of Phil Schwartz

**This is one of the best versions of the Spreer-Bamberg method (periscope sawing table) that I have seen.
Enjoy!**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xa4rOxLpsBo>

kasem chituch bechura shkof - metuch mufa ha'ashliot shel chzi din behut shenet

“Magic of cutting a transparent girl - from the illusion show of Hezi Din in Hot Shenat”



קסם חיתוך בחורה שקוף - מתוך מופע האשליות של חזי דין בהוט שנת 2008



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The internet is brutal for magic secrets.

For example: David Copperfield's Flying Illusion

<https://patents.google.com/patent/US5354238A/en>

Click for the full drawings.

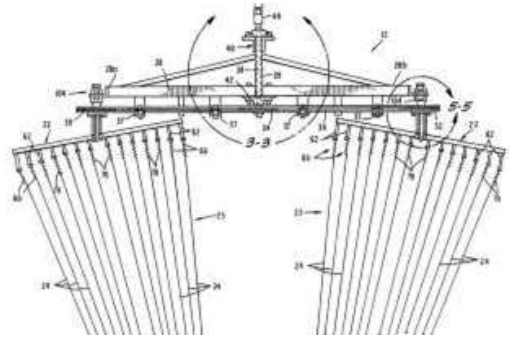
Abstract of US5354238 (A)

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An apparatus for use in performing levitation type illusions in which the performer appears to be raised and moved about in apparent defiance of gravity. The performer is safely supported within a novel harness assembly which, in turn, is supported by a pair of wire arrays made up of a plurality of fine wires which are substantially invisible to the audience. Each of the support wires is spring loaded so as to evenly distribute the weight of the performer among the support wires which make up the arrays. The harness assembly is connected to the wire arrays in a manner that permits several degrees of movement by the performer during lifting and movement relative to the stage so that the movements by the performer appear smooth, natural and graceful.







Howard Thurston stood in a smoke-filled vaudeville theater in 1908, gripping a worn deck of cards in his left hand while a skeptical audience in Chicago waited for him to fail—and chose, in that moment, to turn doubt itself into the foundation of one of the most successful magic careers in American entertainment history.

This was not a world that trusted magicians. At the turn of the 20th century, stage magic was crowded with competitors, most famously Harry Houdini, whose escape acts were redefining public expectations of

illusion. Thurston, however, was building something different: not escape artistry, but theatrical persuasion on a grand scale.

Before his rise, Thurston's early life was marked by instability and apprenticeship in smaller traveling shows. By the early 1900s, he was working under and learning from established illusionists like Alexander Herrmann, absorbing stagecraft that emphasized timing, misdirection, and audience psychology rather than pure technical trickery.

But Thurston's defining shift came when he stopped trying to merely perform tricks—and started constructing entire emotional experiences.

By 1908–1910, he was touring major American cities with large-scale stage productions featuring elaborate illusions: levitations, disappearing acts, and elaborate card manipulations that required assistants, custom-built props, and precise choreography. One of his signature illusions, “The Levitation of Princess Karnac,” reportedly required a stage apparatus so carefully engineered that only a handful of technicians understood its full mechanism.

Audiences didn't just watch the trick—they watched belief being negotiated in real time. Thurston's shows grew into national events throughout the 1910s and 1920s, often performed in theaters that seated thousands. He became known not just for skill, but for spectacle—velvet curtains, dramatic lighting, orchestral accompaniment, and carefully staged suspense that stretched single illusions into multi-minute emotional arcs. There's a telling detail from his touring years: Thurston often rehearsed not just the mechanics of tricks, but audience reaction timing. He would adjust pauses down to seconds—waiting just long enough after a reveal for disbelief to fully form before moving to the next illusion.

That control turned performance into psychology.

By the time he reached the height of his fame in the 1920s and 1930s, Thurston was one of America's highest-paid magicians, commanding large touring productions that filled theaters across the country. His shows were less about “how it was done” and more about how long an audience could be held between certainty and doubt.

Even as Houdini's legacy leaned toward exposure and debunking fraud, Thurston leaned into wonder—insisting that magic survived not by being explained, but by being experienced.

Howard Thurston didn't just perform illusions.

He built entire evenings where thousands of people agreed, for a few minutes at a time, to believe that reality could bend—if the performance was precise enough to make disbelief feel like part of the trick itself.
