

Someone Gets It Right

I seldom buy one trick books or one trick DVDs. Generally I feel screwed when I do so and the after market value is pitiful.

I made an exception recently and bought John Borné's book ***Meant To Be***! It is subtitled *Principals and Techiques for the Sopisticated Magical Artisite*. It is actually an exhaustive treatise on the *Any Card At Any Number* Plot. You can read a bunch of reviews at Jabba's magic site, so I won't redo what's already been done. Just say it's an instant classic in my mind.

What I wanted to point out was Ken Krenzel's Foreword and his description of John's magic. I continue to be amazed and the constant denigration of magic in favour of *entertainment*. This has come to mean use a criss-cross force and then drop your pants so the audience can read the clever tattoo on your ass revealing the card. All in the name of entertainment.

Listen to what Ken writes:

John holds that the magician's primary goal is to utterly amaze, drop jaws, and elicit audible gasps from your thoroughly bewildered and clueless spectators.

That's magic, my friends. Don't fall for the entertainment bromide. It's an excuse for bad magic.

Take care.....



Integrity! What's that?

I try to limit commenting on other blogs, because it's trite and dumb in most cases.

There are instances, however, where I feel the subject matter is so important, that a failure to bring them to your attention would be unfair.

Steve Pellegrino at MagiCentric writes one of the most popular magic blogs and reading it is a *must* for many of us. Frankly, I disagree with him more often than not, but that's OK – it's not his job to please me. He, obviously, spends a lot of time on his posts and, believe me, writing a thoughtful, literate post is not something you don't just rip off while sitting on the can.

Right now, go and read his post on reblogging. I share his rage. This piss ant blog isn't worthy of reblogging and that's fine, but it appears that MagiCentric has supplied most of the content for this new site.

I'm sure Mr. Pellegrino know how to thwart this clown or severely handicap the process, but this is at the expense of all of us that use aggregating readers for our daily blog fix.

As we continue to see our way of life slip into the toilet, it has become very obvious that so much of what we treasured in the past depended on integrity or just *doing the right thing*. Somehow, somewhere over the past 10 or 15 years all actions have become justifiable if legal or profitable. Old dinosaurs, like me, are laughed at if we bring morality into the equation. I look around me every day and see men, primarily, trying to keep above water that were trashed by corporate America and those the espouse the *anything that makes a buck* religion. For now, they have won – no doubt about it.

As we approach Memorial Day, I seriously wondered what all these brave soldiers died for.

It's not a good time.

Take care.....



Welcome To Boot Hill



Boy! The magic blogging landscape is becoming seriously crowded with defunct sites. I know some of them have disappeared under the guise of taking a break or a sabbatical, etc. etc., but in most cases they never return. It's really too bad, we've lost some excellent writers and some of them I really miss.

This week, MagicCentric pulled the plug – supposedly it's temporary – we'll see. He also passed his mentalists' forum to someone else. As I said before, I think he made a huge mistake in the elitist approach to membership.

As far as I know, there's not a single forum with much vitality, except for the Cafe'. Haydn's *Scoundrels Forum* really took off, but the last time I was there it was totally moribund – helped along by a series of technical snafus.

One site that I consistently enjoy is Scot's Magical Mystery Tour. Articles like his recent review of the International Battle of the Magicians in Canton, Oh, make it a spot to check out frequently.

I can say, with absolute certainty, that if you enjoy the Cafe's alternatives, you need to let the authors know. It does make a difference.

Quote of the day:

The word 'politics' is derived from the word 'poly', meaning 'many', and the word 'ticks', meaning 'blood sucking parasites'

Take care.....



Drivel & Drool

Lecture - My Butt!

This week I attended a *Lecture*. It doesn't really matter who it was, as he's not the only peddling his wares under the guise of a lecture. I blame the sponsoring clubs.

There's something wrong with paying 20 bucks or more and seeing some clown do nothing but demo his products. The only places I know that can get away with this are Sam's and Costco. If a club wants to have a dealer come in and show his stuff - that's fine. Just don't deceive the attendees into thinking they are getting a lecture.

I understand it's difficult to make a buck and we all expect a short commercial prior to the break and at the close, but this was like attending a 2 hour pitch (actually, it would have been, but I left at the break).

The Blaine Aftermath

Up front - even though I'm an old coot, I like David Blaine. I think he's a capable magician and he's *good for magic* - whatever that means.

Is it my kind of magic? Generally no, but there's a lot to be learned from watching him. The fact is, I'm not in his *target demographic* and my approval or disapproval is totally irrelevant.

Do I wish he didn't use camera tricks - of course, but the day he called to ask my opinion I must have been out.

Do I wish the incredible proliferation of ***tricks that are on the cutting floor due to lack of time*** would go away? Absolutely, but that's not his fault, just the shameless and deceitful marketing we've come to accept and expect.

Did I watch it? Actually, no. I went to a magic lecture at a local club. It's on my DVR and I'll watch it soon, as I think it is mandatory for any magician to be aware of what he performed. You will be asked about it.

As expected, the blogging world has felt compelled to write about the special. From my perspective, only PeaceLove got it right. The rest was mostly inane and predictable babble.

Take care.....



Drivel & Drool

Political Stuff

The new poll on Bush is out today and, surprise, over 2/3 of the people think he's a total maroon and the country is going to hell. I'm in agreement, which is hard to say for an old Goldwater conservative. The problem for the Democrats is in the last 2 paragraphs of the NY Times article:

The political situation has not helped some of the more prominent members of the Democratic Party. Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts, who was Mr. Bush's opponent in 2004, had a lower approval rating than Mr. Bush: 26 percent, down from 40 percent in a poll conducted right after the election.

And just 28 percent said they had a favorable view of Al Gore, one of Mr. Bush's more vocal critics.

I doubt speaker Pelosi or President H. Clinton would do any better.

It's real, real ugly folks.

Old Goats Need Not Apply

There's a thread on the Genii Forum that I recommend everyone read:

[Click Here](#)

The thread is primarily a bunch of old coots flopping around like beached flounders complaining about a new site that exposes some tricks and supposedly aids in the distribution of copyrighted manuscripts. What they say, may or may not be true. I briefly looked at the site and either everyone is named *Dude* or it is primarily kids (use your own definition).

One sub-thread deals with methods of stopping them through legal intimidation. Invariably someone will post a whois and someone else will post links to the copyright office and someone will suggest pressuring the ISP 'blah|blah|blah. This shows a total lack of understanding of how morphable sites like this are and it appears that the proprietor is fully aware of the available options. Furthermore, if anybody thinks our crack government gives a damn about this sort of pilfering, I've got the proverbial real estate and bridges for sale. They've already been bought by the music and movie powers in Hollywood!

Some will invariably point to the moral issues. Com'n on fellers - people of this generation have less reason than ever to adhere to any moral principals. Think about it! What have they seen?:

- Government corruption and graft
- Corporate thievery
- Parents trashed by the very institutions our generation was taught to trust
- CEOs that *legally* steal hundreds of millions of dollars and see nothing wrong with it.

Make the case for morality, fellers. Personally, I can't find it. As someone that was raised by a near Saint, I saw him clobbered by the bad guys. Only the bastards win anymore. Think about your own bosses. Any good guys there? To paraphrase Charlie Brown, *Bastards ride - Good guys walk*.

On to more practical matters. Which of the following two ads are honest:

1. The **Silver Shifter** is like no other coin device available. With it, you actually bend a coin right in front of your spectator. The coin bends VISUALLY, and never leaves the sight of your spectator during the bend! Once bent, you can drop the coin into their hand for inspection. It is truly astonishing! No "funny" switches. No funny palm off. No pressure. No heat. No KIDDING! At the end, both hands are shown empty front and back. This one will fool Magicians and Layman alike! You can also use the device to do a coin vanish or production. You have seen a coin melt down through someone's hand but have you ever seen a coin melt UP? That's right! With SILVER SHIFTER, you can do just that! Add a whole new dimension to your Scotch and Soda routines. The possibilities are limited only by your imagination. This is the must have coin device to add to your arsenal. Only \$50.00

2. Rubber coin \$50.00

I'm sure I'm not the only one that would have an additional fifty bucks in my pocket if there was a place to go to find out what I was buying. I see apologists on the Cafe' talking about the value of magic secrets etc. The fact is, most tricks are over hyped crap and can't stand the light. Just think of the tricks you bought in the last year and I'll bet the many, if not most, ads went well beyond reasonable puffery into the land of the purposeful misleading.

Also, I'm sure that having your material stolen and publicly published could be devastating, but fellers, every download is not a lost sale. This is the accounting used by the music industry. It's unlikely that more than a couple of sales might be lost. That's the truth.

Take a reality pill and move on.

Take care.....



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Take care.....

