

# How else?!



Many, many moons ago **The Great Ballantine** appeared to be breaking out of his magic buffoon act and performed a beautiful floating ball effect - complete with music, hoop and graceful movements. He received genuine and appreciative applause from the audience. Towards the end of the routine, he reached in his pocket - pulled out a pair of scissors and cut the string. Of course, the ball fell to the ground. Ballantine's statement? ***How else!***

You can read all about James Cheung's ripoff of Richard Osterlind's ***Psychic Control*** in a number of magic blogs. There seems to be little doubt that he was aware of Osterlind's creation prior to the release of ***Moveo***.

In all honesty, "***how else***" was exactly the reaction I had when I saw it performed on ***Mind Mysteries Too*** - Volume 5. It was no great mystery. At least I didn't think so. Of course Osterlind managed to wring every bit of entertainment possible out of the routine and - **SURPRISE** - the L&L audience went into orgasmic palpitations.

My point? If Cheung wanted to rip something off, Osterlind has better stuff than this.

If you're gonna pilfer, man, make it worth your time. All you got out of this was a bad reputation and a copy of a lame trick!

Take care.....



## Drivel & Drool

**Software time:**

I'm on the computer many hours a day and there are a few pieces of software that I find indispensable. One of these is Evernote. A random access note pad. I can't imagine going to forums, participating in news groups and general browsing without having Evernote available. It sits quietly in the background and is ready to capture anything you like. Just right click and you send it there. Later you can classify the note in one or many ways. It's a little hard to describe.

Drop by the site and check it out. It's truly free. You won't be disappointed.



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## I feel better

As I've said before, most of the magic blogs are pure crap - this one included. The only serious journalism has always come from John LeBlanc at *Escamoteur*. John's articles are always well researched and intelligently written, unlike this spittle most of us spew with little thought.

Anyway, John's blog had not been updated for quite a while and I was afraid he'd moved on to more intellectual pursuits. Thankfully, I was wrong. His latest article just hit and it's a beauty.

John discusses Richard Osterlind's allegations that James Cheung stole his *Psychic Control* and issued the ripoff as *MoveO*. From what I've read and seen, there can be little doubt about the parentage here, but read John's article for the full story.

From my perspective, I can definitively say Cheung is an ass hole. All you have to do is read his reply on Osterlind's blog where he refers to him as a delusional, insecure old man to see that. Dipping into the sewage and name calling that quickly, certainly solidifies my take on his character. Cheung shows his originality, by using the clever ROTFLMAO and then *If you think I 'stole' 'your' idea, sue me*. FWIW (see I know Internet acronyms too) I think Cheung is an unoriginal and unimaginative buffoon, but I may be just another delusional old

man.

Take care.....



## Drivel & Drool

### *A strange theory*

I received a private email wondering why I persist in dumping on Mein Brooks at the Cafe'. It's worth exploring, I guess.

When I was a sophomore in college, I was assigned an art major as a roommate for a semester. We had nothing in common, but got along OK.


The first thing he put up on the wall was a LARGE nude pin-up of Mama Cass Elliot - the lead singer and **the sound** of *The Mamas and the Papas*. For those that don't know, Cass Elliot went about 3 bills. Very frankly, she was not one of those fat women that had a *pretty face* and would look good if she lost a couple hundred pounds. She was just butt ugly. Thank heavens she was on her stomach and it was just her large, flabby tattooed ass staring me in the face every morning. I guess it could have been worse. It was another semester before I could sexually function normally.... I still have periodic nightmares flashing back to that terrible visage.

Maybe this is where I developed my fear and loathing of large, ugly things. Possibly, but I don't think so. I believe it is the morality passed from my father that causes me to fight self righteous jack asses that exhibit no sense of fairness in their dealings with others.

Who knows.....

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# A good reason to go to the Cafe'

My general feelings about the Cafe' are probably best expressed graphically: 

There was a time I checked into their hallowed hallways at least once a day, but over time I grew weary of that pompous ass Brooks (and that's a LOT of pomposity) and the generally sour mood that permeated the groups. I now stop by on most weekends and browse a little, but that's it. I no longer post - actually I can't since I am banned - just read a few areas.

His attempt to create internal blogs, called ***The Buffet***, has been, to put it kindly, a disaster. As I write this, Paul Chosse hasn't posted since August, Brooks and Curtis Kam haven't posted since early November. Even Bill Palmer hasn't posted in over a week, which is a lifetime for him.

In January of this year Brooks added:

*Magic Friday by Jamie D. Grant*

*Every Friday a trick will be taken out into the real world - Read here for a complete review.*

I don't know Jamie Grant, but I do know you'll find some of the best reviews I've seen in a long time in his *column*. Not only are his reviews spot on, but his choice of material is excellent. Tricks like:

- Ringer
- Signed Torn and Restored Post-It Note
- Torn and Restored Transpo
- Hundy 500
- Ultimate Three Card Monte

as well as others are covered and covered well.

Jamie, at least publicly, seems to have not caught the *superiority virus* that seems to afflict most of the *staff*. I hope that continues. It's damn refreshing.

If you can stand the stench that is the Cafe', I highly recommend this diamond in a pile of insufferable manure.

Take care.....



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## i/m is getting soft

### **A thought on mentalism:**

It seems like we are seeing more and more mentalism effects. I think there are two reasons for this:

- 1. The effects appear to be easier to do than straight magic.
- 2. It's easier to sell to today's audiences.

Each of these could be the basis for a long article and we may well explore them another time, but today I want to talk about prediction tricks. You know, some pretender pulls out an envelope and says *I have a prediction here* and the rest of the routine is take up proving the prediction is correct. I don't know about you, but both of my cheeks have fallen asleep by the time it's over. Avoid the simple prediction. A layman is not some simpleton, incapable of rational thought. They know where you are going and the mystery is nonexistent.

I realize that most mental effects could be considered a prediction, but delay that fact as long as possible and you'll get a much better response from your audience. I guarantee it!

Take care.....



## Drivel & Drool

### *Things and people I actually like*

I know this area is reserved for my personal bitch sessions, but there are a number of things in magic I do like - some of them a lot. It's just that it's easier to get passionate about ignorant fuckers like George F. Bush or congenital douche bags like Mario and Paul than it is to appreciate the good things we all have around us. For better or worse, here are the some good things that come to mind:

**Tim Ellis and his blog, Magic Unlimited with Ellis & Webster** - I admire his energy and his honesty. His "fakers" page is must reading. I ALSO highly recommend his DVDs - even if you don't learn anything (and you will), they are incredibly entertaining.

**Glenn Bishop** - Yeah, I know Glenn can be frustrating, at times, with his vanishing and re-appearing blogs, and he's more than a little mercurial, but it his passion for what he does that I so greatly admire. I wish he would learn to ignore his critics and concentrate on his friends and fans, but I genuinely understand that is **WAY** easier to say than to do. Just don't go away and stay away Glenn - magic needs guys like you.

**Dick Osterlind** - There are many magic books and DVDs, where I feel like I didn't get the whole tamale. Kind of like a cook leaving out an essential ingredient in a recipe. It's OK, but something is missing. I've always felt that Dick really tips in is books and on his DVDs. Like anyone that has produced as much as he has in recent years, some stuff is better than others, but it's always will thought out and meticulously explained. You never feel screwed when you buy his stuff - and that, my friend, is a huge statement.

**Jake at RNT2** - Although I consider Jake a friend, I just realized I have no idea what his last name is. If you frequent the magic boards, you know that the whole "collector class" prop business is a giant pissing contest. I long ago, quit trying to determine who's right and who's wrong, but I do know, I've always been treated

well by RNT2. Jake recently had a heart attack, but he's back at work now and I wish him the best.

**Many Magic Clubs** - It's actually pretty darn easy to criticise the local clubs - inept performances, internal politics and the fact that anyone under age 65 sits at the kiddie table. If the truth be known, it is these people that really support this hobby and the businesses trying to make a living from magic. They are there for any magic related events in the area and if you're willing to look past the few highly visible ass holes, I'll bet you'll find some great people to talk to and learn from. Give it a try.

**Some of the recent magic books** - I think we've been really fortunate on some of the recent output:

- Harry Riser's new book
- John Bannon's *Dear Mr. Fantasy*
- The book on Paul Potassy
- The reprints of many of the Kaufman "classics"

Guess I better go drink a bottle of vinegar and get back to my usual sour self. I'm not sure who's writing this.....

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## He Didn't Fall Far From The Tree

I recently attended a show by a local magician, Dan Sperry, held in a theatre not far from where I live. Dan is a young man with wild spiked hair and very mod clothes. It's not really my kind of act, but I do try to support any local magic action if at all possible.

Actually, the show wasn't bad. The audience was about half kids, I would say and even though a lot of his material was more advanced he tried to play solely to the kids. Personally, I think that was a mistake, but it was his call.

Anyway, at some point he called up a kid that I would guess was about nine. The boy was a holy terror. He totally destroyed what should have been one of the

highlights of the show â€“ his Miserâ€™s Dream. The kid ran behind the table and was totally uncooperative. A more seasoned performer would have done a quick bit and gotten the little hellion off of the stage. Dan pressed on and on and on. When the bit was over, the kid wouldn't leave â€“ his mother finally had to come on stage and get him.

My point? I was sitting next to some ass hole the was laughing at everything the kid did. I couldn't understand. Then I realized it was his old man. Pitiful, just pitiful. I'm always amazed when parents will let their kids be so rude and thoughtless and make things miserable for everyone else.

I'm getting old!

Take care.....



## Drivel & Drool

### **Time to award the i/m Disposable Douche Award again**

As we've mentioned previously, the **i/m DD** is not given frivolously or lightly. It must be earned by continuously being a pompous jackass â€“ a rude and boorish person, incapable of decent human emotion or compassion. In other words â€“ **a world class DICK!**

Today's recipient is a man of unquestioned qualification for this prestigious designation. We are fortunate that he so freely exhibits his dickosity to one and all. I commend to you his latest bit of rancour:

[http://geniimagazine.com/forum/cgi-bin/ultimatebb.cgi?ubb=get\\_topic;f=14;t=006265](http://geniimagazine.com/forum/cgi-bin/ultimatebb.cgi?ubb=get_topic;f=14;t=006265)

Yes friends, Mario Carrandi is our honoree. As one who has dealt with Mario for many years, let me assure you that he is no johnny-come-lately to dickdom. No sirree bob, he's been a horse's ass since day one, only improving with age and growing in his chosen craft.

***Here's a tip of our hat and a drop of the trou to you, Mario â€“***



*i/mâ€™s latest Disposable Douche.*



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## It's Not All Crap After All!

I've been going through a magic funk recently, thinking there is absolutely nothing good in magic.

- Clubs are dying.
- New tricks are stale rehashes.
- Damn few decent books.
- The new DVDs S-T-I-N-K
- All but a few performers are lame with a capital **L**

Out of boredom and nothing else to do, I went to a lecture. After attending the Al Bach lecture recently, I swore off ever going to another one. Just brutal. Anyway, Bob Sheets came through town and am I ever glad I went. It's been a long time since I left a lecture actually enthused about the material. Material that made me want to go home and try some of the ideas.

Sheets was competent, funny, entertaining and congenial. His work with the shells is legendary and the reputation well deserved. His material shows the result of years of performance honing. He freely gave of his experience and answered all questions thoughtfully and completely.

Thanks, Bob, for putting some energy back in this old magic body!

Take care.....



# Drivel & Drool

*Cafe Fund Drive.....*



I'm surprised the needle moved at all!