

Lecturers I have known



As I mentioned in the prior post, Ye Olde Magick Blogge is doing "favourites" during the month of February. In some respects I hate to play off Andrew's hard work, but I just can't figure out how to comment on his blog. I have tried requesting a name and password, but never seem to get a response. Actually, I probably wouldn't want me commenting on a blog anyway. He has touched on a number of subjects, which I find fascinating and feel somewhat compelled to make comments. One of his recent subjects was best lecturer. Given the substantial difference in ages, it's not surprising that our perspectives are different. I will say that his choice, Chris Capehart, was one lecturer that I missed when he was in Chicago and everyone said he was just terrific. Hopefully, I won't miss seeing the next time he comes through. Just a quick brain dump on some lecturers that I have seen over the past 35 years or so:

Geoffrey Buckingham - this was a lecture I enjoyed tremendously, even though stage manipulation of the nature he practiced was of little interest. Probably the most fascinating part of the lecture was watching him get ready to do his show. He showed us all the loads that he placed on his body in preparation for his award winning act. A true English gentleman in every sense. He added a lot to the convention.

Paul Harris - I had the opportunity to see all when he was at the height of his creativity. You couldn't help but be struck by how shy he actually was. I had the opportunity to attend an extra cost session with him and he couldn't have been more accommodating. The lecture itself, was good but not great. It just wasn't his venue.

A stage illusionist whose name I have forgotten - I've always thought of a stage illusionist as someone who dances around and acts gay while the boxes do the trick. After watching this demonstration, I now define stage illusionist as the guy who dances around and acts gay while the boxes **and** hard-working assistants do the tricks. Some of the machinations that the girls went through in those boxes astounded me.

Lectures that keep the good stuff - one real gripe I have with DVDs and

lecturers are *performance only* pieces. In several cases, I have sat through mundane lectures only to be excited towards the end of the lecture by a quality piece of magic and then being told that it was *performance only*. Certainly no lecturer is required to show anything, but keep your performance only pieces for performances. They are not for lectures!

Paul Green – this is a lecture I thoroughly enjoyed. Paul's magic is doable and well structured. It's too bad his reputation was somewhat sullied over that silly Card Warp controversy. If you can't see Paul, I highly recommend his DVD. There are a bunch of lecturers, many of them big names, such as Darwin Ortiz and David Roth whose lectures have grown into nothing more than a sales pitch with a little bit of entertainment.. Personally, I resist buying anything when I attend one of these lectures. Having said all of this, one lecturer stands out from the crowd to me –

David Williamson! Dave has chops, creativity and insights to offer any audience. He can be absolutely hilarious, but hopefully he will not be in one of those moods where gets just plain goofy. Just hearing him tell the story of his command performance before Siegfried and Roy is worth a long trip. Dave is also one of those guys that puts his whole heart and energy into making sure any convention that has booked him is a success. I understand he is giving more lectures these days as this crappy economy is seriously reducing the number of corporate gigs available. See him if you have the chance. (Now that I think of it, I don't recall Dave having anything to sell in any of the lectures that I have attended.) i/m

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Addendum: Some of the better lectures I have seen over the past couple of years have been presented by local *no names*. Some of these guys really, really work hard to present good magic and good explanations. Maybe it's just a sign of the times.