Thinking Like A Magician–Part 1



Mike Close is certainly one of my favorite magicians. I am referring to him in his magician role, not as a person. Actually, in my few brief encounters with him he's always been a little bit of a dick.

Anyway he is the creator of one of my favorite tricks, The Pothole Trick. When properly performed it is totally inexplicable and provides both magical and other entertainment and gives the performer plenty of opportunity to banter with his spectators.

If you watch the DVD the amount of thought that he has put into the actual workings of this trick is amazing. Mike Close thinks like a magician and there is nothing wrong with that. Two of the finest performers in the world, Mike Close and David Williamson both give great credit to their audience as far as their ability to diagnose and figure out their tricks. Both of them take great pains in making sure that the spectators are fooled as well as entertained. When I hear someone say *you're thinking like a magician*, I consider it a compliment, not a valid criticism.

One point in particular in the explanation of the Pothole Trick really caught my attention. Towards the end of the trick the spectator is given one of the business cards with the hand that is dirty. We've all been there and it's damned uncomfortable. He talks at length about the necessity of waiting a beat before removing the hand to avoid it being the only thing in action and thereby calling attention to it. He's exactly right.

Watch a few demos online. I have particularly noticed in the Penguin tricks how so many of the performers try to remove the dirt with light speed and as Mike points out, you are drawn to that hand. It's a natural reaction.

Believe me, start thinking like a magician and quit believing that your audience are a bunch of drooling idiots. There are not. They are real people, not magicians.