

Good Enough



I'm a big fan of the reviews posted on My Lovely Assistant. They are sincere, well considered and well written.

From my perspective, they suffer from a little bit of *grade inflation*, but that's because I'm a cranky old fart and would rarely give anything more than three stars.

On January 9, 2016, a review of ***Unbound: Gimmickless Invisible Deck*** by **Darryl Davis** was published. I've seen the DVD and pretty much agree with the conclusions. The final paragraph got my attention:

While the technique on this video works very well with practice and the impromptu effect itself is not bad, it will not be for everyone. There is certainly quite a bit of material packed onto this disc and if you like what you see in the trailer and/or read in the ad copy, you might like this one. Just do not call it an 'Invisible Deck', okay?

It's not bad, but it requires a lot of practice and effort to perform properly and what have you got then - something that is *not bad*.

One thing that amazes me more and more is the effort, time and money put into tricks that are, at best, C+. Why would you do that!

Years ago *Ye Olde Magic Blogge* wrote a terrific series giving his perspective on the best of various tricks. It really made ol' i/m think about his magic and it caused me to pull out some old stuff I had either forgotten or ignored the first time through e.g. ***Charlie Frye's Torn and Restored Card*** buried in the travesty that was the *Paul Harris Project Without Paul Harris*. I miss the *Blogge*.

Someone please explain to me why any thinking magician would ever consider performing anything that wasn't best of breed!

Take care.....

Can you go home again?



Back in 2003 magic blogging took a turn. The direction was and is subject to debate. If you are Richard Kaufman you think it turned to childish immaturity. Some people felt that the language used in the blog was unnecessary and inappropriate for public consumption. Many, however, in the magic community found it creative and just plain fun. Of course, I'm referring to the ***Magic Circle Jerk***. It's arrival spawned many pretenders, most of which have vanished into the ether.

The Jerk was written by someone named Andy, who tells us he is from New York, but has left very few clues as to his actual identity. As with most New Yorkers, he's a big fan of what he sees in the mirror. That's OK. It goes with the territory.

From his wording and syntax, he is obviously intelligent and well educated. Certainly not as intelligent as Mr. Mensa himself, His Holiness, Stephen Youell, but nevertheless very bright.

Jerk Mania reached its height after the publication of a boring post challenge issued to users Of the Magic Café. There is no reason for me to recount that, as it is readily available should you care to find it. Andy, was always at his best in attack mode. That is certainly not unexpected, as any of us that blog we seem to be at our best when the anger juices are gushing.

In 2005, unceremoniously, Andy called it quits. I suspicion that he realized it had run its course and had developed an unsatisfactory sameness.

Recently, he pulled a Phoenix and the jerk is back in business. <http://www.thejerx.com/> The header on the blog is a rather clever take off on Annemann's Jinx.

The new blog is still certainly the *Jerk*, but we can now see very intelligent insights into modern magic and presentation. Actually, some of the best stuff I have seen written recently. He has a surprisingly well contained cynicism about the way magic is performed and how it should be performed for maximum effect.

In some respects Kaufman is still right. Conversely, if you write him off as childish crapola, you're really hurting your understanding of good magic.

Welcome back Andy! (Turn on comments on your blog - it could be fun)



A Real Secret Worth Knowing



If you didn't know Andrew Musgrave, formerly the proprietor of *Ye Olde Magick Blogge*, has returned with a new blog. The new one is called The Burnaby Kid. I can't tell you how happy I/M is to see him back. Andrew is

passionate, intelligent, a good writer and he has balls! This makes for a wonderful combination. He also has more energy than I/M and produces a LOT of good stuff. Just spend a little time with his *Annotated Royal Road To Card Magic* or read some of his reviews. You'll see what I'm talking about.

Is he right all the time? Hardly, but his writing is always well reasoned and he gives you deep insight into his thought processes. Something very, very rare in magic writing.

I'm glad to have him back on a number of counts, most of them selfish, but most of all I hated to see that ass hole, His Holiness, win. I know, I know he takes pills and we must forgive him - just ask Tom Fucking Frame. Anyway, for the time being things seem to be righting themselves and the blogging world feng shui is again in order.

Andrew, and others, has spent a great deal of time recently talking about *Real Secrets*. This is a monthly trick produced by unknown persons. It seems to appeal to those that want to be on the inside and smell the jocks of *name* magicians. From what I've seen it's a waste of money, but it wouldn't be the first money that most of us have wasted on bad magic. It seems that some disgruntled subscribers have begun publishing what the tricks are in violation of the terms as dictated by the proprietors of *Real Secrets*. It's a pleasant respite to see the screwwees fighting back.

In some respects this reminds me of Microsoft's requirements for reviewing software. A reviewer must sign an NDA and under threat of having an army of Microsoft lawyers sit on their head they cannot publish the results. This way, Microsoft can continue to produce absolute shit and nobody knows it - at least until they fork over their hard earned money for the product!

I guess I'm somewhat surprised that anyone would fall for this. So much of the doubletalk and restrictions stated when this project first began, including mandatory renewal, just stunk. Every time I think magicians can't be dumber, I'm proved wrong. The last paragraph in Andrew's most recent editorial said it best: *Because magicians are idiots.*

Some years ago I wrote an article here entitled *Fuck Me I'm A Magician*. The subject of that particular post doesn't matter, but the principles have stood the test of time. I've never seen a group more willing to take it in the ass and say how

much they enjoyed it. I'll never understand!

Magic Trick Marketing 102



The Weekly Magic Failure wrote an interesting article recently entitled *10 Rules To Market Magic*. Roland was right on point in virtually every instance. It somewhat reminded me of an article I wrote several years ago entitled *Fuck Me, I'm A Magician*. That article was written towards the end of the *Cogitations* disaster when I continued to insist that the perpetrator (and we all know who that was) failed to deliver what was promised and so many fools on the Magic Café kept insisting "I got my money's worth". That was never the point. Anyway, that article seems to have gotten lost in a recent transfer. We'll live.

I think Roland left out two items which have become somewhat indispensable if a trick is to succeed in the current market:

11. Sell lots of your product on a pre-issue basis and then push the delivery date back month after month, all while promising more and better effects. Even as it becomes apparent to anyone with half a brain that something is seriously wrong, there will be many fools at the Café saying that they are willing to wait for this *life changing* trick. Obviously, when it finally comes out and is nothing but a stale rehash of an existing trick or a totally unworkable abomination, the same morons will tell the world how pleased they are that they waited.

12. Troll the forums as the inventor/publisher and immediately pounce on any negative or lukewarm review explaining that the reviewer is an ignoramus incapable of appreciating the sheer genius he holds in his unworthy hands. The reviewer will immediately be accosted for having the intelligence of an amoeba by the same group of fools (see 11) that want to just smell a *real* magician's jock. If Brooks had a scintilla of integrity or desire to keep his forums fair, he would preclude authors/developers from commenting on their

own material. Of course, that will never happen!!

So now you have everything you need to go out and make a fortune as a magic inventor.

You are welcome.



A Favorite Favourite

I've often said that Andrew Musgrave over at Ye Olde Magick Blogge writes the most ambitious and intelligent articles on the web (magicwise). He has committed himself, as have several other bloggers, to producing an article per day during 2011. We'll talk about that later. Right now I want to concentrate on several of his most recent articles.

He has declared February as favourites (as he spells it) month. So far, the articles have been outstanding. I would think the toughest part of this series is actually defining the categories. He has already written articles such as favorite book on magic theory, favorite L & L performance, and favorite talk show magic performance. As I write this article, I believe I have only agreed with Andrew on one item, which is favorite impromptu card trick. Certainly, much of this is due to our sizable difference in ages (I have underwear older than Andrew) and part of it do to our individual preferences and prejudices e.g. he has already awarded two categories to Jay Sankey, which is something I would never do. Jay has put out so much crap over the years that was unworthy of publication that I have a hard time accepting he has also done some incredibly good development.



The article which recently caught my attention was *favourite torn and restored card*. The easy out would have been J. C. Wagener's seminal routine and it would have been an excellent choice. Andrew, however, went with Charlie Frye's *Ripped and Fried*. Frankly, this is

a trick that I had missed. It is on one of the discs in Paul Harris' True Astonishment set. In searching out Charlie's trick, I again realized what a terrible, terrible effort the long awaited Harris set was. Here we have the work of possibly the most influential magician of the past 30 years and he doesn't show a single trick. Boy, was I disappointed!

Charlie's trick is well conceived, well executed and doable. I'm a big fan of Charlie Frye - his juggling and magic. This trick is worth looking up. Our thanks to Andrew for bringing this and other items to our attention.

i/m

PS Favorite L&L performance? - it's gotta be that gal in the front row of Tommy Wonder's DVDs keeping that micro skirt from going that last inch before the vice squad is called in. VERY impressive.

The kid finally gets it right



Mr. Erland referred to yours truly as *venerable* in his latest post.

I wasn't sure if I had been insulted, so I checked the dictionary:

Pronunciation: \?ve-n?r(-?)-b?l, ?ven-r?-b?l\

Function: adjective

Date: 15th century

1: *deserving to be venerated* —used as a title for an Anglican archdeacon or for a Roman Catholic who

has been accorded the lowest of three degrees of recognition for sanctity²: made sacred especially by religious or historical association³ a: calling forth respect through age, character, and attainments <a venerable jazz musician>; broadly : conveying an impression of aged goodness and benevolence <encouraged by the venerable doctor's head-nodding> b: impressive by reason of age <under venerable pines>

synonyms see *old*

- ven·er·a·bil·i·ty \?ve-n?-r?-?bi-l?-te-, ?ven-r?-\ noun
- ven·er·a·ble·ness \?ve-n?r(-?)-b?l-n?s, ?ven-r?-\ noun
- ven·er·a·bly \-ble-\ adverb

Even though the *old* theme runs through the definition, I can live with that.

He classifies our little corner of magic blogland with The Phantom Notebooks. I consider this an honor. Anyone that writes with the sheer passion he exhibits has my admiration. Don't miss the current series of *The Man Who Raped Erdnase*. Agree with him or not (personally I do) it's not to be ignored if you have any real interest in the pasteboards.

Take care.....



I asked the cab driver, "Where can I get some cheap action?". He took me to my house. - Rodney Dangerfield