

Genii Speaks

Richard Kaufman

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I'M DOWN IN MIAMI BEACH, Florida right now, attending the I.B.M. annual convention. Attendance is lower than usual (and it's looking like S.A.M. in Louisville will also be shy its usual number) because of F.I.S.M in Stockholm at the end of July. While some might think that's a bad thing, I find the intimacy of a slightly smaller convention enjoyable. The highlight of the first evening show was Arden James. But

then, Arden is always the highlight of whatever show he's in. He's wonderfully emotive and his work is consistently good. After this, I'm off to the S.A.M. convention in Louisville, then onto Stockholm for FISM.

Two days before leaving Washington I received the news that Tommy Wonder died just short of his 53rd birthday. It's been a damn lousy nine months—I can't remember a year in recent memory when so many notable people in our field have died within so short a time. Tommy was certainly one of the greats. From the moment I first saw him lecture when I was 14, in 1972 in New York City, my memory is vivid: he was still Jos Bema then, and he performed the most astounding "Diminishing Card" I've ever seen. He fanned the deck and the fan visibly shrank—like a special effect in a film, but done live in front of us. He also performed a remarkable routine something like billiard-ball manipulations, but he was actually using flattened spheres and doing amazing color changes. Then he did a two-cup and ball routine which fooled everyone in the room. I've known for many months that Tommy was ill with lung cancer, but you always hope that perhaps the odds will be overcome ... though it rarely seems to happen. Who can forget his stage act set to classical music with his renditions of the classic "Orange, Lemon, and Egg," Floating birdcage, and Cups and Balls? It's hard to imagine we'll never see it again. Next month we'll have an article about Tommy by Stephen Minch, one of Tommy's closest friends and co-author of *The Books of Wonder*.

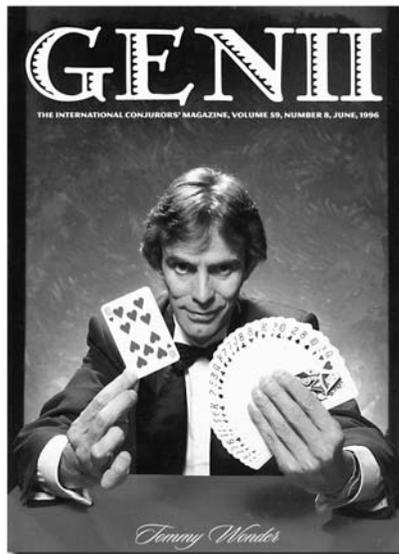
When you meet our cover subject this month, Allan Slaight, who for many years has been an amateur magician and creator of some very clever magic, you may not know exactly who this Canadian entrepreneur is ... one of the wealthiest men in Canada, to be precise. But Allan is, remarkably, someone who still found time for magic in his life and has managed to co-author and publish two of the largest books ever produced in our field about the creations of his hero Stewart James. David Ben, Slaight's long-

time friend, has not only profiled this fascinating man, but compiled an accompanying "Magicana" tribute to Allan with magic from: Aaron Fisher, Bill Goodwin, Nate Kranzo, Max Maven, Steve Beam, Gordon Bean, David Ben, and more. • As promised, this month we bring you some reminiscences about the late Billy McComb. Leading off is compiler Gordon Bean, who not only shares some of his memories of Billy, but introduces contributions from Mac King, Terry Seabrooke, Max Maven, David Berglas, Milt Larsen, and others, concluding with a particularly fine memorial by Jamy Ian Swiss. • Pierre Meyer, who created "The Remarkable Little Man," an automaton I wrote about some months ago, has produced a female cup and ball performer known as The Geisha. Her trick is even better

than her male predecessor and you can see her on p.30. • "Moodini" is not the name of a new chocolate drink, but the moniker of a cow made to vanish on stage by Tom Yurasits to open the Allentown Fair in Pennsylvania last year. Paul Osborne introduces, then Tom Yurasits explains, on p.16. Mooooooooooooo. • We're pleased this issue to present a new monthly column by Dustin Stinett: 100 Years Ago in the Sphinx, sponsored by Lybrary.com • This month Eric Mead, David Oliver, and Joe M. Turner bring you the finest product reviews—flip to the back of the book and learn what the experts think. • You'll have noticed something new attached to *Genii* this month; it's what we call the "Genii Wrap" and it enables us to bring your attention to a second story before you even open

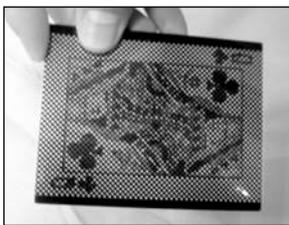
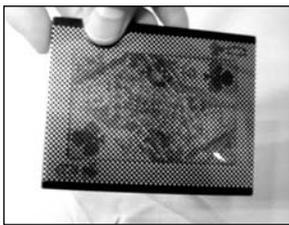
the magazine—the first one features Billy McComb. • Next month *Genii* will contain a DVD with some surprises. Watch for it.

Walking around here in the dealer room at the I.B.M. convention, I've found some fun things. There is a new magazine out, but the twist is that it's on DVD and comes out bi-monthly from Sandercrest Entertainment. Titled *Enigma*, the electronic periodical contains mini-lectures, interviews, and features with Dan Stapleton, Harry Allen, George Schindler, Steve Hart, Vince Carmen, Brandon Thomas, and more. It runs two and a quarter hours and is available from www.enigmathedvd.com. I watched about 30 minutes, sampling the different clips, and enjoyed it. • Creative Magic, the folks who make the nifty "Shadow Tent" and "Victory Cubes" illusions have branched out into close-up magic with a whole new line of products. The very first, Daniel Martin's "Bruised," has premiered in a "Spoiler Edition," which is a limited run preview of the



Tommy Wonder

actual item which will appear in September. Briefly, it's a set of temporary tattoos that, when applied, appear to be genuine bruises—the magical twist is that they reveal chosen cards. There are lots of tattoos that allow you to create numerous different cards for the revelations (so you can repeat it) in various permutations. My favorite is the "bruise" that has a full-size Five of Spades in it: you could force the Five, have it shuffled back into the deck, and let the spectator throw the deck at you and whack you in the arm. Roll up your sleeve and show the bruise. When "Bruised" has its official release in September you'll get a wide assortment



of bruises and DVD instructions for \$30. Check it out at www.creativemagic.org. • Japanese magician Fukai brought a brand new effect from the creative wizard Masuda and sold out instantly. Called "Wow" (named by Lance Burton—that's the first thing he said after seeing it), this is one of the most amazing card changes I have ever seen. Words cannot convey how astounding this looks, but with John Ekin's handy camera we'll attempt to show you what happens. The spectator selects a card, signs it, and it's lost in the deck. You "attempt" to reveal the card and show the wrong card—the Six of Hearts. It's turned face down and placed into a transparent plastic sleeve that has a black pattern on it. You turn the sleeve face up and the Six of Hearts can be clearly seen inside. While holding the sleeve between the thumb and first finger,

you rest the sleeve on a spectator's palm. The Six of Hearts slowly and visibly changes into the signed selection. I can't emphasize how *slowly* and magically this happens—then you slide the signed card out of the sleeve and hand it to the spectator and you can show the sleeve on both sides—it's transparent. I immediately plunked down \$55 for it and have been doing it all weekend. I don't know when it will be available in the United States or who will be selling it, but you'll definitely want to get one.

A new stamp was recently produced by the post office in Austria commemorating the 200th anniversary of Johann Nepomuk Hofzinsler's birth. Sheets of 20 stamps cost 50 euros; single stamps run three euros. You can e-mail Magic Christian regarding purchase at magicchristian@chello.at. You might also find the website www.hofzinsler.com of interest.



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THE MAGIC CASTLE

JULY 31 TO AUGUST 6

Close-Up Gallery

Future Stars Week

Early: 7:00, 7:45, 8:30, 9:15

Late: 10, 10:45, 11:30, 12:00

A. Simon, R. Goodwin, E. Chiu, M. Locker, N. Gibson, B. Proudfoot, A. Rakin, K. Viner

The Parlour of Prestidigitation

Early: 7:30, 8:45, 9:30

Matt Marcy

Late: 9:45, 11:15, 12

David Regal

Palace Of Mystery

8:30, 10, 11:15

Joel Ward, Jessica Phillips, Krystyn Lambert, Kyle Echen, Farrah Siegel, Jonathan Neal

W.C. Fields Bar

Allan Hayden

AUGUST 7 TO 13

Close-Up Gallery

Early: Martin A. Nash

Late: TBA

The Parlour of Prestidigitation

Early: Bruce Cervon

Late: John Carney

Palace Of Mystery

Harry Maurer, David Zirbel, Ice McDonald

W.C. Fields Bar

Tony Picasso

AUGUST 14 TO 20

Close-Up Gallery

Early: TBA

Late: Lou Serrano

The Parlour of Prestidigitation

Early: Rob Zabrecky

Late: Fernando Keops

Palace Of Mystery

Aye Jaye, Stoil & Ekaterina, Joseph Tran

W.C. Fields Bar

Glenn Farrington

AUGUST 21 TO 27

Close-Up Gallery

Early: Mark Matsumoto

Late: Fernando Keops

The Parlour of Prestidigitation

Early: Chazz

Late: Michael Hack

Palace Of Mystery

The Pendragons

W.C. Fields Bar

Lorenzo Clark

AUGUST 28 TO SEPTEMBER 3

Close-Up Gallery

Early: Aaron Fisher

Late: Shoot Ogawa

The Parlour of Prestidigitation

Early: Adam Grace

Late: Fitzgerald

Palace Of Mystery

Larry Wilson, Mystina, Murray

W.C. Fields Bar

Jon Armstrong

Updates to the performing schedule can be found at www.MagicCastle.com.

LAS VEGAS

Compiled by David Neubauer
(www.dnmagic.com)

Amazing Johnathan

10 pm, (Dark Thurs.), Sahara

Jason Bird

The Shops in Desert Passage—Aladdin. Main stage, near the "V" Theater, Thurs.-Mon. Various times from 1:15 pm to 8:15, Free

Buck Wild

Nathan Burton (as a redneck magician), 7 pm covered shows Mon.-Wed. & Sat. 9 pm Topless shows (Over 18), Sahara (Dark Fri.)

Nathan Burton Comedy Magic Show

2 pm, (Dark Fri. & Sun.), V Theater in the Desert Passage, Aladdin

Lance Burton, Master Magician

7 pm Tues.-Sat.,

10 pm Tues. & Sat., Monte Carlo

David Copperfield

7:30 & 10 pm, 4:30 Sat. & some Sun. MGM Grand Aug. 3-9, Aug. 24-Sept. 20

Collin Foster—Quicker Than The Eye

4 & 6 p.m. (Dark Mon.)

Comedy Zone, Plaza

Tyas Frantz, Chris Karpiak, & Seth Grabel

Beacher's Madhouse 10 pm, Hard Rock

Gerry McCambridge—The Mentalist

Hypnotic Lounge, Stardust Mon-Tues 8 pm, Wed-Sun 5 pm

Haunted Vegas Tour & Show

Robert Allen & Jac Hayden & Zamora, 9 pm tour and show (Dark Fri.), Greek Isle

Illusionary Magic of Rick Thomas

2 & 4 pm, Stardust (Dark Wed.)

La Femme

Stephan Vanel, 8 & 10:30 pm (Dark Tues.), MGM Grand

Mac King Comedy Magic Show

1 & 3 pm, (Dark Sun. & Mon.) Harrah's Clint Holmes Theater

Penn & Teller

9 pm, (Dark Tues.), Rio

Bite (Vampire Strip Revue)

Antonio Restivo (magic & fire manipulation) 10:30 pm (dark Thurs.) Stratosphere

V, The Ultimate Variety Show

Jeff Hobson, Nathan and Sarah, 7 pm and 9 pm, Aladdin

World's Greatest Magic Show

Kevin James, Joseph Gabriel, The Majestixs, Kozak. Guest Stars: Juliana Chen, Gaetan Bloom, Billy Ferguson (pre-show). 6 pm Sat. - Thurs., 8:15 Fri., Greek Isle.

Xtreme Magic Starring Dirk Arthur

2 and 4 pm, (Dark Fri.)

Tiffany Theatre, Tropicana

David Copperfield Tour Schedule

August 3-9, August 24-Sept. 20, Nov 9-29, Dec 21-31: Hollywood Theatre, MGM Grand, Dec. 2-3: Bucharest, Hungary

Well known French magician Jacques Delord died recently and his friend Jean-Luc Miller sent the following: "The French magician and poet Jacques Delord passed away on June 2. A renowned cabaret artist in the 1960s, notably for his rope routine, he would always perform while reciting poems he wrote. He was chosen to play the role of a magician in François Truffaut's film *Stolen Kisses (Baisers Volés)* in 1968. His trilogy of books in the early 1970s, *Sois le Magicien*, *Sois l'Enchanteur*, and *L'Eternel Magicien*, was a landmark in magic literature, notably for its use of poetic language to reach young readers. He reached fame in French-speaking countries with his TV show *The Magician's Workshops (les Ateliers du Magicien)* between 1973 and 1978 using the same poetic eloquence. His was also a tireless traveler, spreading his magic abroad. Several generations of magicians blossomed with his teachings and will miss his wisdom."



Jacques Delord

Ludovic Bertrand/ikona

Bob Loomis writes: On behalf of the Association of International Magical Spectators (AIMS), I want to thank *Genii* for publishing Richard Wiseman's excellent article on "The First Film of a Magician," in your April 2006 issue. However, I can't resist one very minor quibble. My friend Richard said that Raynaly should now replace David Devant as being in "the earliest film of a conjurer." My problem is with the modern definition of "film." If I told you I'd been hired to perform in a "film," I think you'd assume I was to appear in an animated movie to be viewed

by multiple spectators. The film featuring Devant was just like that. Richard's film was not. This is because the modern film projector had not yet been invented. At best, Richard's film could only be viewed by a system similar to the Edison Kinetoscope, which was a hole in a box that only one person could use at a time. I'm very glad Richard employed a 21st century technique to animate a 19th century film

strip so we could appreciate it, *but* perhaps Devant should still get the modern "film" first, with Raynaly getting the first "film strip" award. Now, after all that, I have a quibble on my own quibble! In researching an article for my association's newsletter, *The Magical Spectator*, I discovered an Edgar Heyl article on the history of magicians in movies in the May 1968 *Linking Ring*. Edgar mentions a "motion picture copyright" registration for an Edison Kinetoscope motion picture in the same year as Richard's film. Did Heyl's *Hindoostan Fakir and Cotta Dwarf from Barnum & Bailey's 'Greatest Show on Earth'* really contain the first magician on film? Can any magic nut/film buff please investigate this and put us out of our misery?

Department of Inevitable Corrections: Eagle-eyed reader Pete McCabe couldn't help but notice that Al Schneider's "Wedding Ring Thing" in our July issue was very similar to an item of Michael Weber's in his book *Life Savers*. Since Al doesn't own a copy of *Life Savers*, I'll have to take the blame since I published it. •