

Genii Speaks

Richard Kaufman

Contact us by calling 301-652-5800, e-mailing genii@geniimagazine.com or surfing our website at www.geniimagazine.com



THIS MONTH, thanks to the efforts of Jim Steinmeyer, his wife Frankie Glass, and the great folks at Murphy's Magic, we are able to do something new. Our cover story is about "Palingenesia," an illusion unseen in over 100 years until it was resurrected at the last Los Angeles Conference on Magic History by Jim and company. If you weren't one of the lucky 200 people who attended that convention, and you lived in a perfect world, you'd really like to see "Palingenesia" performed after reading Steinmeyer's article—and that's the point, because you can. Included with this issue is a DVD on which you'll find the filmed performance of "Palingenesia." In addition, thanks to the folks at Yari Film Group, the trailer for the brand-new film *The Illusionist*, starring Edward Norton and Paul Giamatti (which opens in theaters August 18) also appears on the DVD. After you watch the trailer, go see this well-written and genuinely entertaining movie because in our next issue we're going to go behind the scenes. How is all of this possible? The DVD was sponsored by Murphy's Magic and, on it, you'll find all kinds of interesting information about the products they sell to magic shops around the world. • Yes, "Palingenesia" ... what the heck is it? A demented trip into the theater of the Grand Guignol—your tour guide into the past is Jim Steinmeyer, who not only dissects the genius of creator William Tobin's lost illusion, but explains how he managed to bring it back to life as performed by actors Neil Patrick Harris and Jonathan Levit. • The death of Tommy Wonder at age 52 in late June sent a shockwave through our industry. We pay tribute in this issue with two pieces. In the first, author and publisher Stephen Minch, who collaborated with Tommy and published *The Books of Wonder*, recounts his final visit with Tommy and gives us some insight into why he was such a great artist. In the second, Belgian magician Carlos Vaquera kindly made available an interview he did with Tommy Wonder just after *The Books of Wonder* was published. It's never appeared in English and I thought that letting this great magician have the final word was a fitting way to say goodbye. • Sometime in the late 1980s, people began doing versions of Coins Across where the coins were held fanned at the fingertips of one hand and appeared magically at the fingertips of the other hand. The most famous of these is Chris Kenner's "3 Fly," which always carried a credit to the routine that inspired it by Jonathan Townsend. Jonathan dropped out of the magic scene years ago, shortly after demonstrating his routine to Chris, Bob Kohler, Eric DeCamps, and a few others. He had no idea that a portion of his routine had led to the most popular plot in coin magic of the last decade and a half. At long last, I'm very pleased to present Jonathan's original routine, along with an essay on exactly how he created it, on p.30. The description is long since several original con-

cepts and sleights are explained, and it fills our entire "Magicana" this month. • Roberto Giobbi is back with the first part of an exploration into all the basic plots of card magic; Dustin Stinett returns us a century to *The Sphinx*; and our the fine trio of David Regal, Jamy Swiss, and Mr. Stinett review the latest tricks, books, and DVDs.

The worst kept secret in Las Vegas is that Criss Angel has reportedly signed a 200 million dollar, 10-year deal with the Luxor for his own show, to be performed in a custom-built theater. The show is reported to be a co-production between Criss's company and Cirque du Soleil and will open in the second half of 2007. Various reports have popped up in the Las Vegas press. Meanwhile, *Mindfreak* season three starts filming this month, Criss has an album coming out, and his book for the public (for which I wrote the "40 Mindfreaks" trick section and Pete Biro took the photos) is scheduled for an October release.

Yes, conventions, conventions (and it's not over—I get on a plane to Stockholm for FISM in a few hours). The talent at both the I.B.M. and S.A.M. conventions was good this year, but it's amazing how much difference a good venue can make in your overall experience. It goes up and down with either organization, and this year it was the S.A.M.'s turn to shine. Louisville is a nice town, the Marriott hotel was first class, and there were plenty of good restaurants around. The Radisson hotel in which the I.B.M. was held in Miami was run-down and located in a poor area—the theater itself was located in a ghetto. There were few restaurants available. I can't begin to imagine how the I.B.M. convention committee picked the hotel. The good news about the S.A.M. convention is also good news for the combined I.B.M./S.A.M. convention in Louisville in 2008—good choice of city, great theater for shows, and good restaurants. The convention will be held in the Gault hotel, which is across the street from the theater (no need for busses). I think the combined I.B.M./S.A.M. convention will be a great event and if you register by the end of this year you'll get a 50% discount in the price. I urge you to step up to the plate and support your organizations by attending what promises to be a hell of a convention. • The contest winners at the S.A.M. convention in Louisville, Kentucky, were, **Close-Up:** Genii Award (\$300) Chris Connelly; Brad Jacobs People's Choice Award (\$500) and Second Highest Score (\$500) Raymond Long; Chairperson's High Score (\$1000) Rod Chow. **Stage:** Genii Award (\$300) Nathan Kepner; Brad Jacobs People's Choice Award (\$500) and Mystic Craig Award for Professional Promise (\$300) Jun Pyo Hong; Invitation to go to Japan and perform in 2007 and Second Highest Score (\$500) Latko; Chairperson's High Score (\$1000) Jay Mattioli. • The contest winners at the I.B.M. convention in Miami, Florida, were, **Close-Up** (Youth Category): First Place Trophy, Leo Michaels; Second



This year's Genii Award winners Nathan Kepner and Chris Connelly, here with The Chief Genii.

Place Award Of Merit Plaque, J. P. Wilson. (Adult Category) First Place Trophy, John B. Born Second Place Award Of Merit Plaque and FFFF "Peoples Choice" Award, M.C. Chow. **Stage** (Youth Category): First Place Trophy (\$500 Savings Bond) and Fantasma Special Youth Award, Eli Portala; Second Place Award Of Merit Plaque, Horyu Nishimura. (Adult Category) First Place Trophy (\$1000) Koyko Maebeya; Second Place Award Of Merit Plaque and People's Choice Award (\$300) Dave Kaplan.

In addition to writing the script and developing illusions for Kalin & Jinger's terrific show *Real Magic* in Reno, Nevada, Jim Steinmeyer has also just written and published a new souvenir program for it. At a hefty 24 pages in full color, it's perfect for all of you fans of both Kalin & Jinger and Steinmeyer

since it contains not only ample pictures of the handsome Marc and the lovely Jinger (or is that lovely pictures of the ample Jinger ...), but Jim has also written new articles for it on the Kalins, the history of magic in the theater, and a historical piece called "Great Magicians & Great Mysteries" that highlights the historical background of some of the illusions the Kalins currently perform. It concludes with six pages of easy tricks, but these aren't the usual "roll a

dollar bill around a pencil" baloney—four of them are original with Steinmeyer, while the others are all his clever adaptations of less well-known effects. All simple to do, and the effect "Instant Glue" is a particularly devious new method for the Cut and Restored String that will fool your friends. When I tell you that it's only \$12 postpaid I know that you'll be off to www.jimsteinmeyer.com as fast as your fingers can get you there (look under the "More Books" section).

I really can't put it any more simply than this: Mark Mason is the greatest magic demonstrator working today. The enormous crowds around his dealer table at every major convention

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THE MAGIC CASTLE

SEPTEMBER 4 TO 10

Close-Up Gallery

Early: 7:00, 7:45, 8:30, 9:15
Aaron Fisher
Late: 10, 10:45, 11:30, 12:00
Shoot Ogawa

The Parlour of Prestidigitation

Early: 7:30, 8:45, 9:30
Adam Grace
Late: 9:45, 11:15, 12
Fitzgerald

Palace Of Mystery

8:30, 10, 11:15
Larry Wilson
Dimmare
Mystina

WCF Bar

Jon Armstrong

SEPTEMBER 11 TO 17

Close-Up Gallery

Early: Dirk Holtkotte
Late: Johnny Ace Palmer

The Parlour of Prestidigitation

Early: Jeffrey Steele
Late: Rafael Benatar

Palace Of Mystery

Dana Daniels

WCF Bar

Doc Eason (13-17)

SEPTEMBER 18 TO 24

Close-Up Gallery

Early: Will Fern
Late: John George

The Parlour of Prestidigitation

Early: Dirk Holtkotte
Late: Woody Pittman

Palace Of Mystery

Dave Cox
Daniel Chan
Losander

SEPTEMBER 25 TO OCTOBER 1

Vernon Bash on Saturday

Close-Up Gallery

Early: Rafael Benatar
Late: Derek DelGaudio

The Parlour of Prestidigitation

Early: Chris Capehart
Late: Joe Monti

Palace Of Mystery

Mark Haslam
Danny Cole
Gustavo Lorgia

OCTOBER 2 TO 8

Close-Up Gallery

Early: Brad Henderson
Late: Rich Cowley

The Parlour of Prestidigitation

Early: Jon Armstrong
Late: Larry Wilson

Palace Of Mystery

Romany
Hillel
Stephen Bargatze

Magic Castle Information

Those with guest cards, and those who belong to the IBM or SAM, are admitted to The Magic Castle with dinner reservations. Please call 323-851-3313 for more information. 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

Bite (Vampire Strip Revue)

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

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.
Through September 20, Nov 9-29,
Dec 21-31

Tyas Frantz, Chris Karpik, Seth Grabel

Beacher's Madhouse 10 pm,
Hard Rock

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

Gerry McCambridge—The Mentalist

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

Nathan Burton Comedy Magic Show

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

Penn & Teller

9 pm, (Dark Tues.), Rio

V, The Ultimate Variety Show

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

World's Greatest Magic Show

Kevin James, Dan Sperry (for
Joseph Gabriel), The Majestixs,
Kozak. Billy Fergueson (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

Through Sept. 20, Nov 9-29, Dec
21-31: Hollywood Theatre, MGM
Grand, Las Vegas; Dec. 2-3,
Bucharest, Hungary

attest to that. But, what most people don't know is that he's also a terrific magician—not just a dealer. And, he has come up with the easiest and most visually stunning version of "3 Fly" I've ever seen. Even a yutz with coins (and I'm raising my hand here) can do this. You'll find his ad on p.6. I can't recommend this highly enough—if memory serves there's only one simple sleight. In speaking with Mark at the S.A.M. Convention in Louisville over lunch, it turns out he had no idea that the premise of the trick, a Fingertip Coins Across, had been invented decades ago by Jonathan Townsend. An odd coincidence, then, that this issue of *Genii* sees the publication of the seminal routine that started it all. So, after you've read Jonathan's routine and lamented how difficult it is, buy Mark Mason's version because it's the one you'll want to do.

Look rightward and feast your eyes on our latest addition, a monthly cartoon by Josh Mandel (writer) and Rich Powell (artist). Rich draws for *MAD* magazine and Josh is a computer game designer and lifelong amateur magician. Their cartoons are witty and we hope you'll enjoy them every month.

I think that about wraps it up for this month ... I've got to finish packing for FISM. They say it stays sunny for most of

the night at this time of year in Stockholm. Should be an unusual experience. Four of my most-requested books are being reprinted—take a look at the ad on p.14. They're available at pre-publication prices until September 30 and there's also a special deal if you order two or more. Looking ahead, our October issue will have a piece of vintage fun tucked into every copy and we expect to give you another free DVD with our November issue. Until then, enjoy the end of summer. •

