

DECEMBER 2007 NEWSLETTER



OFFICIAL WEBSITE:

WWW.OAKLANDMAGICCIRCLE.COM

OMC Discussion Area:

www.groups.yahoo

DECEMBER OMC MEETING

Tuesday, December 4, 2007 - Bjornson Hall, 2258 Macarthur Blvd., Oakland (Fruitvale off ramp)

Doors Open: 6:30- Socialize, eat snacks or carry-in dinner, check out the newest book courtesy of Byron Walker (wash your hands first please)

7:15- Fred Casto will present a lesson and discussion on the Card Warp as this month's teach-in.

7:30 -Short Business meeting will include announcements, "Second Readings" for membership, announcements. Etc.

Following the meeting -The **theme** for the meeting is **children's magic or magic with a holiday theme**. Everyone is encouraged to perform a trick, and or, bring an effect they have been working on for advice from the members. We'll have both the stage and close-up mat.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE DUE. Bring a check to the meeting or mail it to Manya Casto. 1853 Lamp Light Court, Walnut Creek, CA 95497.

David Fry says Goodbye to 2007

David Fry was elected President of the OMC last December and brought with him fresh ideas and new energy. Under his guidance we have had a full year of teach-ins, lectures, contests and themed evenings. More people took advantage of the stage and close-up mat (so generously

provided by Bob McKenzie). These are important elements of keeping our club lively and interesting. Despite some personal problems, David has kept us going and now the year is drawing to a close. I ask you all to join me in offering David a hearty salute, a magical "thank you" and our wishes for a happy and healthy 2008.

Editor's Editorial

It is hard to run a club. There is much to do behind the scenes to get each detail right. There are people to please, political issues to navigate and a membership to satisfy. Whoever is elected into office for 2008 will need your help. Volunteer now to plan an evening's program or do a teach-in. Ask what you can do whether it is for a single meeting or on a regular basis. Why not write a column or story for the newsletter.

And speaking of the OMC Newsletter.....I volunteered to do this for 2 months. That means we need someone for January. The hardest part is getting you, our members, to contribute something. It would seem that you'd like your fellow magi to know what you are up to...where you perform, new effects you invented, articles you've written or million dollar lotteries you've won. But few of you take advantage of this opportunity.

Maybe the membership would prefer a simple mailing stating only meeting details. If so, that is pretty easy. But I have a hunch you want more. To get it, you'll need to participate. And that could include some photos taken at the meetings of our members performing.

I apologize for the lateness of this newsletter. I have been traveling on work and am finally trying to finish this early in the morning in New York City. Gary Meyer

OAKLAND MAGIC CIRCLE - Minutes of meeting 6 November 2007

The formal meeting was preceded by a fine talk by Dan Solo on his experiences lecturing on cruise ships. Two of his lectures are on subjects of particular interest to magicians: escaping the con man and great American hoaxes. Hopefully, Dan will present one or both of these lectures to the Oakland Magic Circle in the future.

President David Fry called the meeting to order at 7:45 PM. Under new business Byron made the motion that a new position be created on the OMC Board, that of Newsletter Editor, and that this may or may not be one of the other board members. The motion was passed. Since Gary Meyer did such a fine job on the November newsletter, David Fry agreed to ask Gary to accept the nomination for the position in 2008. (*He has reluctantly had to turn it down*) Mark Tarsus reminded members that the OMC website, operated by him, will continue to contain information about club and other activities.

Nominations for 2008 officers are:

President – Scott Alkali
Vice President – Mark Tarses
Secretary – Byron Walker
Treasurer – Manya Casto
Librarian – David Sament
Historian – Ken Taylor
Sgt at Arms – Dagmar Theison
Newsletter-C.F. Kane

The second reading for membership was given for Jorge Ledesma and he was voted into membership.

The Treasurer's report shows that the club continues to be solvent.

Manya Casto volunteered Fred for a pre-meeting discussion of Card Warp at the December meeting. The general theme will be Holiday Magic.

The show at the Installation Banquet the first Tuesday in February was discussed. Goldfinger and Dove will do a 15 minute opening and a 15 minute closing act. Scott Alcalay will be the Master of Ceremonies and the winner of the annual OMC inter-club contest, Benny Buettner, will perform if he is not in China at that time. Bob MacKenzie, winner of the annual OMC intra-club stage contest but unavailable to perform at the inter-club contest, will also be invited to perform. Byron will contact Patrick Martin about performing also.

David Sament showed his discovery of a broken wand ceremony in the OMC library.

Mark mentioned that the 2008 PCAM convention will be held in Monterey 10 to 13 July. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Byron Walker Secretary, OMC

TARBELL NIGHT AT THE OMC!

The theme at the November meeting was "do a trick from the Tarbell Course" and five members did just that. David Fry performed a silk through leg penetration and the shoelace knot trick. Byron Walker, who can't just do a trick but has to tell a story, displayed an original poster from 1926 that came with the original 60 lesson course, as well as one of the original lessons. He then did the Afghan Bands from Volume 4, done to circus patter. Recently re-instated member Rene Castillo performed a flashcube card location. Since Harlan Tarbell died in 1960 Rene may be updating Tarbell a bit. But since Harry Lorayne did the same for Volume 7 and Richard Kaufman for volume 8, it seemed appropriate. Andy Pojman showed us how Tarbell snapped a knot in a rope and how to magically thread a needle. Jim Hamilton, recently returned from his series of performances on the East Coast, told us of his experiences with the Tarbell Course. Jim also discussed the film shown at a Conference on Magic History when Tarbell tried acting. Jim decided that Tarbell should stick to teaching magic and give up the acting career.

Byron Walker

WHAT MEMBERS ARE DOING

Fred Casto reports: "The shows I did for Halloween and a corporate function at the Four Seasons in SF went very well. The latter was a very posh affair. An investment group with people flying in from England and other countries. The Brits particularly like the close up magic."

A LIBRARY LOVE AFFAIR

By David Sament I've always loved libraries. When I was in grade school I went to the Abington Free Library almost every day after school, and it was there that I discovered my two favorite literary thinkers: Carl Jung and Ray Bradbury (every now and then I'd work on my homework too, but I was usually too distracted for that). At Temple University I had a very menial job at the Samuel Paley Library, and even though the work itself wasn't very interesting I really enjoyed being surrounded by thousands of books and magazines. So I'm very happy to be

the OMC Librarian. I don't know how old the OMC library is, but it's probably as old as the club itself, which is almost 83. I do know that it contains an absolute wealth of books, magazines, old photographs, newspaper clippings, performance and lecture videos, and back issues of our newsletter. It's

not only a magic library, but also a historical record of the club. For example, at the last meeting I gave a short talk on something I found hidden away in there: the OMC Memorial Service, which is a broken wand ceremony for OMC Members, printed on old, yellow paper. I'm sure that there are other treasures hidden away that I'll discover over time. And that leads to my next point: the library needs to be more organized. If anyone wants to help me catalog everything into a spreadsheet then just let me know.

Most importantly, the library exists for the betterment of the club and it's members. There is so much knowledge and history in there that it would be a crime to let it go to waste. For as long as I'm the librarian I'll be putting stacks of books and magazines out for people see, and all members are welcome to take out one item at a time until the next meeting or event. Happy reading!

Vaudeville on Film

If you didn't get to the Castro for their Vitaphone Vaudeville show you have another opportunity to experience most of the short films screened and many others in the comfort of your home. Though there are no magicians represented, it will give you the feel of what vaudeville might have been like in the early part of the previous century. There are great musical numbers, novelty acts and hilarious comics including Burns and Allen and Joe Frisco. Talk about timing!

Warner Brothers Home Video has released a deluxe DVD box set of Al Jolson's THE JAZZ SINGER which includes so much more. If you are interested in the transition from silent to sound film or vaudeville, it is a must have. Read about it:

<http://www.dvdtalk.com/dvdsavant/s2435jazz.html>

Playland-Not-at-the-Beach to



Feature Magicians

By Richard Tuck

Opening in early 2008 on San Pablo Avenue in El Cerrito is a family fun museum named Playland-Not-at-the-Beach being built by a member of the OMC, Richard Tuck. Not surprisingly, amongst its more than 20 exhibits and attractions are three that celebrate magic and magicians—a magic stage for live shows, an area called Sideshow celebrating famous illusions from Spidora to the Disembodied Princess, and Wizard World, a future exhibit featuring dioramas of famous wizards from Merlin to Harry Potter.



“What sets our museum apart is that nearly all the attractions were built by volunteers,” says Richard Tuck, the Master of Fun behind Playland. “We started six years ago with a 9000 square foot building and a bunch of ideas. Now we have an amazing 300,000 piece hand-carved miniature wooden circus, four separate arcades full of pinball machines and other antique entertainment devices, a small movie theater, and world class artwork including one mural that runs 32 feet long and 10 feet high.”

For most volunteers who convene every Saturday, the special treat at the end of the day is the live magic shows. The headliner at Playland is Magical Nathaniel, a 13-year old budding prestidigitator who keeps adding to his repertoire of mystifying effects involving ropes, cards, silks and other illusions. On special occasions he even makes his younger sister Carmela float in the air.

“I have always been fascinated with magic and especially stage illusions,” Tuck shares, “so it

was natural that I would want to have a performance area for youngsters who want a place to hone their skills in front of a live audience. Nathaniel came along one weekend and, at the end of a day of volunteering at Playland (painting, organizing and sorting exhibits), he asked the other volunteers if they would like to see a few magic tricks. An impromptu magic show followed, and the volunteers were all quite impressed with the talents and stylistic delivery of Nathaniel.

"I am hoping that we can interest other people to step forward and learn the joys of live performing," Tuck offers. "There is no pay, but our hope is that others will find the same success as our first young magician. Nathaniel is now performing several times a week at birthday parties, libraries and civic events, paid bookings that evolved from his Playland exposure."

Playland-Not-at-the-Beach is not yet open to the public. "We're installing a brand new parking lot, and have a few more exhibits to complete," Tom Wyrsh, Director of Operations, explains. "But we have lots of projects for volunteers in the mean time.

For more information, visit the website www.playland-not-at-the-beach.org or call Richard Tuck at (510) 232-4264 ext. #25.

EXOTIC PROPS FOR SALE

One of the most unusual sales you've ever been to will be the collection of exotic items collected by Dick and Beany Wezelman from around the world. Going to their twice-a-year sale is like stepping into the back room of a museum. Most people are hoping to find jewelry, decorations and other interesting items for their home or for gift giving. But for the magician with some imagination, this is a true treasure trove of possible props and décor to make your show look unique. The current sale is Saturdays and Sundays, Dec. 1-2, 8-9 from 10-5pm. You'll have fun. Dick and Beany are fascinating and with great stories to tell about their adventures gathering the goodies. 1026 Shattuck, Berkeley (510) 525-8666

THE BAY AREA'S MOST UNIQUE PLACE TO EXPERIENCE MAGIC By Wayne "Dr P" Pernell

Welcome to the parlour of the 1800's. It's the way magic was meant to be seen. Live and with no special effects. Imagine that you've been invited to a friend's estate. He entertains you, serves you dinner, and then invites you and the other dinner guests to join him in the parlour for a show not to be forgotten. In fact, it's an experience you'll remember for a long, long time.

Gerry Griffin has re-created that experience for you at his California Magic Dinner Theatre. The (amazingly reasonable) price of a ticket includes dinner, close-up magic at your table, and a featured show in a room that holds a maximum of sixty people. Now that's intimate! And – that's Gerry's dream. To bring you magic in the way it was meant to be seen.



Not just any magic –

California Magic Dinner Theatre at 729 Castro Street in Martinez boasts some very big names in the world of magic. This past year, we've seen Bob Sheets, Losander, Mark Mason, Daryl, Eric Buss, Shawn McMaster, Austin Brooks, and Fielding West to name but a few. Because of the size of the room, you'll see the highlighted performing magician within arm's reach. New shows each weekend mean that you can go to a show one week and then bring relatives the next. You'll be seeing a different show as you engage in your own guilty pleasure of indulging your "I love live magic" habit.

Check out the website to see who is coming, to get directions, and to reserve your space for the next amazing show – www.CalMagic.com – By the way, relatives in town? What a great place to take them for an evening of fun.

Stop by www.CalMagic.com to save your space for the next fun evening!

Wayne “Dr P” Pernell is a contributing author who provides magic for the greater Bay Area and beyond. www.MagicOfDrP.com

WHAT'S COMING TO CAL MAGIC?

The first weekend brings our own Timothy James along with Michael Silver but those shows are sold out. Dec. 7 & 8 bring the International magic of Alex Ramon Gonzalez .



OMC veterans, The Flying Calamari will destroy audiences with their wild magical humor on Dec 14 & 15. Jeff Ezell and Gerry Griffin amaze on Dec. 21 & 22, and celebrating the theater's 300th show on Dec. 28 & 29 will be “The Dave Cox Show” with his evil hypnotic monkey.

MAGIC ONLINE- HEAVEN OR HELL?

There is a lot of magic online. Much of it is made up of poor performances of potentially great effects, spoiled because somebody feels the urge to videotape their newly learned magic trick and put it on YouTube or other sites. Usually it is a single camera shot on a pair of hands, often poorly lit. I have seen effects using a black prop against the performers black t-shirt...this making

it impossible to see what is happening. We don't get to know the performer, their personality or any reason to believe they are worthy of our time. Many have never performed for a real audience. The camcorder is great to record your act and judge what is working for you. What a wonderful opportunity it can provide the performer as a way of improving. But the camcorder doesn't get bored. The people watching online can turn you off and you'll never know it. Poor performances and badly filmed videos only hurt magic, causing damage for live performers by spoiling the surprise for a potential audience member at a real show.

By all means use these sites to promote yourself but make sure it is your best. People aren't going to hire anything less.

I also can't stand the generic music that so many videos. Jay Sankey must have clones to create all the videos he makes to advertise his products but the same music, used from one to the next...and by many others will drive one crazy.

There are good ones...Ed Alonzo and Mark Wilson to name a few. But too much junk is up.

Please send in some examples of the best and worst magic you've seen online.

World Magic Awards ON TV

The World Magic Awards was taped in Santa Monica on October 13 to raise funds for Feed The Children. With Sir Roger Moore as emcee, it featured Rick Thomas, Jason Byrne, David & Dania, Kevin James, Mac King, Ray Pierce, Andrew Goldenherh, Luna Shemada, Arthur Trace, Jim Karol, Krystyn Lambert, Tony Chapek, and Hans Klok & Pamela Anderson. The 2 hour special will be broadcast on Fox, Dec. 14.

Magic Legend John Calvert Live Dec. 12!

Veteran magician and movie celebrity John Calvert did a lecture and performance at OMC several years ago. It was certainly one of the club's all-time highlights as the generous Calvert shared his knowledge, stories and secrets all

evening and into the night with those stayed late. Don't miss this show.



"He meant everything to magic; a legend for so many years."

- Siegfried & Roy

MISDIRECTIONS MAGIC SHOP
PRESENTS

John Calvert's Magicarama
Spectacular Show & Lecture

Wednesday, December 12, 2007
7:30 p.m. - Doors open 7:00 p.m.

Tickets in Advance (by Friday, December 7, 2007)
\$30.00 Misdirections Magic Club Members
\$35.00 General

\$40.00 at the Door

Miraloma Park Improvement Club
350 O'Shaughnessy Boulevard
San Francisco, California
Free Parking

Contact Misdirections Magic Shop for
more information.

<http://www.misdirections.com/calendar.html>

John Calvert is the epitome of a "living legend." He has not only lived beyond the

over 90 mark, but is also constantly working and still has the handsome look of a movie star. He has crisscrossed the world many times and his real life adventures pale the likes of Indiana Jones. He traveled his big illusion revue in his own plane; and later, in his fabulous yacht that he christened "Magic Castle." His life story reads like a novel, and he has fascinating tales of the Hollywood Legends, the Broadway Stages, the upper crest of American Society and of course, all the 'Greats' of magic that he has long outlived. He has taken his full evening magic show, "Magicarama" around the world and has broken every major box office record. In fact, his stage production holds the distinction of being the longest running world-touring magic extravaganza in theatrical history. He has made an incredible 20,000 personal appearances on stage and distinguished himself as an actor in Hollywood. He has appeared in over 40 films including the series known as "The Falcon."



John recently celebrated his 93rd birthday and was recently given a tribute by the top magicians in Las Vegas. He

continues to be an inspiration to new generations of audiences, performing and lecturing with incredible energy and enthusiasm. This night will be more than a lecture, as John will perform his "Magicarma Spectacular Magic Show," which will feature some of his signature effects such as "Casper the Dancing Handkerchief," and "The Spirit Cabinet."

John's lecture will not only have secrets of magic, but also include ideas on:

- * How to become a magician
- * How to build an act
- * Finesse of presentations
- * Create and choose illusions
- * Select assistants
- * Finance and operate a world tour
- * How to obtain a sponsorship
- * Create publicity stunts for television, newspapers and radio
- * Conduct an advertising campaign
- * and much, much more!

Recipient to the Society of American Magicians Hall of Fame; Chavez Memorial Cup; Performing Fellowship and Masters Achievement Award; Magic Circle's David Devant Award and the Magic Collector's Association Award, John Calvert is one of the most loved and respected magicians in the history of magic!

Read an interview:

<http://www.angelfire.com/ma/sym29/jcalvert.html>

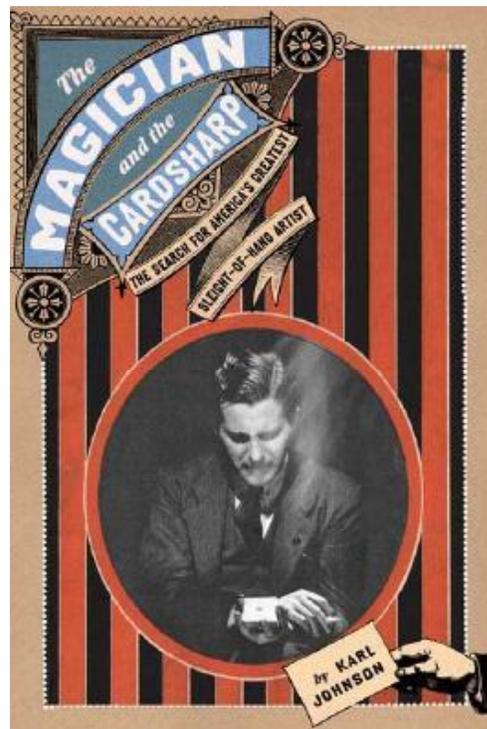
See John perform:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6n_es3RPYsl

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Good Reading

Last week I came across several new hardbound copies of *THE MAGICIAN AND THE CARDSHARP* at Berkeley's Half-Price Books for \$5.98 (marked down from original \$26.00). This great true story about Dai Vernon is well written and reads like an adventure story.



"This engrossing detective story traces the quest of Dai Vernon, né David Verner (1894–1992), to find the man who perfected the art of dealing from the center of the deck. An accomplished card cheat, sleight-of-hand magician and silhouette portraitist, Vernon was so expert at duplicitous card techniques that he once fooled Houdini with tricks he'd learned as a child from S.W. Erdnase's classic *The Expert at the Card Table*. Proficient at dealing from the top and bottom of the deck, he was astounded to learn that someone in the Midwest had the ability to win by dealing from the center. Johnson, a former editor at New York's *Daily News*, details Vernon's long search for Allen Kennedy (1865–1961), a cardssharp who

plied his trade with loaded dice and deceitful deck handling. By recounting the shadowy careers of these two men, the author successfully evokes the picturesque world of illegal gambling during the 1920s, '30s and '40s. Johnson vividly conveys

how obsessed Vernon was with magic and card tricks, and how much time, energy and practice gamblers put into learning how to cheat at cards." Publisher's Weekly

<http://books.google.com/books?id=JWie7ATaoc0C&printsec=frontcover&dq=magician+and+the+cardsharp&psp=1>

Watch a video of Vernon demonstrating the center deal and much more at National Public Radio:

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=566656>

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BORN STANDING UP

At age ten Martin started his career at Disneyland, selling guidebooks in the newly opened theme park. In the decade that followed, he worked in the Disney magic shop and the Bird Cage Theatre at Knott's Berry Farm, performing his first magic/comedy act a dozen times a week. This was

followed by an extensive stint in San Francisco honing his comedy skills. The story of these years, during which he practiced and honed his craft, is moving and revelatory.

Steve Martin is appearing on radio and television to promote his autobiography.

<http://www.amazon.com/Born-Standing-Up-Comics-Life/dp/1416553649>

National Public Radio interview:

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=16629674>

NY Times review:

http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/15/books/15masl.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

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The December Magic Magazines

GENII Celebrating 7 years this month, featuring an extensive cover story on the Tomsonis.

David Regal has done a terrific interview with Johnny Thompson that follows his career from the early 1940s through today when he provides ideas and consultation for Criss Angel's TV shows. Great photos throughout. Other features include the introduction of the newest from Tenyo, a brief history of playing cards by Roberto Gioobi, 7 effects by various magicians, extensive reviews of books, DVDs and tricks plus regular columns by Jon Racherbaumer, Al Cohen and Paul Osborne.

www.geniimagazine.com



MAGIC



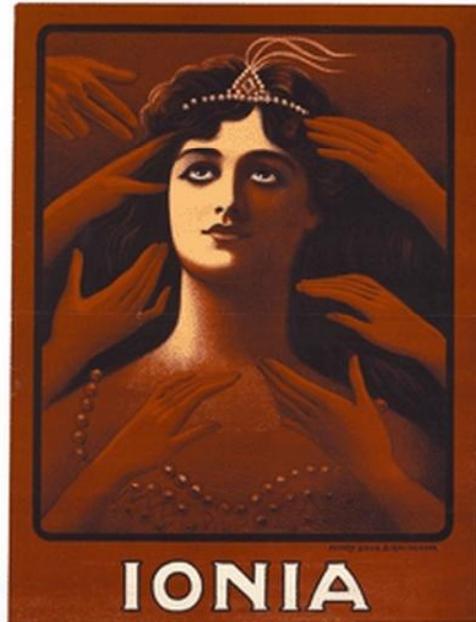
Jon Racherbaumer writes the cover story, “Thrillusions: Carnival of Astonishments” about the spectacular New Orleans magic review of Phillipart & Anja. Memorable photos accompany. Also “King of the Magic Collectors” follows Bill King and his basement museum of over 8000 props. Rory Johnstone contributes his suggestions for extravagant holiday gifts and the lengthy article on this year’s Los Angeles Conference on Magic History makes the reader salivate to have been there. Of course there are many tricks to learn, reviews to read and regular columns from Jeff McBride, Lawrence Hass, Joshua Jay, David Kaye, David Starr and Gaeton Bloom.

www.magicmagazine.com

Both magazines are packed with ads of the news magic being sold.

RARE POSTERS

A recent magic paraphernalia and poster auction from the collection of Christian Fechner brought record prices at Swann’s in New York had some beautiful and rare works. According to Magic Magazine, an original lithograph of “The Houdini’s: Original Introducers of Metamorphosis” was estimated to bring \$12,000-15,000 but went for \$60,000!



You can view the catalog:

<http://www.phantasmaphile.com/2007/10/magic-auction.html>