

MOVED to Hollywood in search of fame & fortune

RICKY JAY

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Marcello Truzzi
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SEPT 28, 1978

DEAR MARCELLO —

A hurried note as I'm on the way to the airport (DENVER bound) for a few days work.

Looks like I'll be getting as close to YIRSAANTI as one can without a special effort in the near future.

I have a gig at Western Michigan Uni - in Kalamazoo on Mon Oct 23. You are of course invited to attend, if you can, and at the moment I have the Sunday before and the Tuesday following as open days - so - perhaps if it is convenient we could get together -

While I'm in the area I'd also like to visit Robert Lunds Magic Museum in Marshall, Mich, depending, of course, on where Marshall Michigan is - . . .

Also, I've just uncovered some juggling info that might be of use - quasi-antropologically speaking -

Anyway, more later - best to PAT,

Ricky

30 Brooks Avenue Venice, California 90291
2605 Strong's Dr.

213-399-3977
827-1511

P.S. I still interested in the T.M. mantra code list if you've got it around.

4234 PALMERO
BLVD.

LOS ANGELES, CA

90008

5 APRIL 79

DEAR MR. TRUZZI,

WELL, ONLY A MONTH HAS
PASSED SINCE I RECEIVED THE
POSTCARD FOR RENEWAL. ENCLOSED
IS A CHECK FOR \$10 FOR VOL. 2.
I HOPE YOU CAN KEEP THE MAGAZINE
GOING.

I ENJOYED TALKING WITH YOU
& RICKY WHEN YOU WERE OUT HERE.
ONE OF THE THINGS ABOUT HOUDINI
WHICH INTERESTS ME IS THAT HE
TOLD ~~8~~ PEOPLE THAT HE WAS ESCAPING
FROM HIS OWN INVENTIONS, WHICH
IMPLIES THAT HE COULD BUILD IN
SPECIAL CATCHES YET PEOPLE STILL
ACCEPTED THOSE ESCAPES. WHY?
COULD SOMEONE DO THAT TODAY?
WAS HOUDINI'S PREVIOUS REPUTATION
A FACTOR IN ACCEPTANCE? ETC.

THANK YOU.

BILL LILES



19 Sept 1980

Dear Marcello

Now it's my turn to apologize for the long delay.

My job as technical consultant on the Escape Artist film is almost over but it's been utterly consuming for months. Back from a month location in Cleveland and tough work on the lot in L.A.

The Book progresses slowly, as might be imagined. I have had an offer from a major publisher, and other than their wanting to make it less academic and more "commercial," it's quite flattering (Damned conglomerates!).

Your suggestions are most valuable and I appreciate your taking the time to help. I'd love to get in touch with Daniel Cohen if you could arrange it. I've located a fellow who is doing the Man Who Grows Act currently in Oregon.

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I've come up with quite a bit on the
Georgia Magnet that I think you'd
enjoy seeing when I get it into shape.

Also found a current practitioner
of the "Le Petomane" routine in Japan —
This gives us all cause for reflection

All the best & many thanks for your help
Love to Pat, etc.

Jim

I've enclosed a check for the Zetetic
and the Sense Perception Brochure
I finally had done after all this time
Do you think E. Mott O might be interested
in the lecture?



29 April 1980

Dear Marcello -

It has been a long time.

My thanks for the "playing" card and of course for the juggling article which I really enjoyed. Amazing how you were able to come up with so much more material on the Tongans.*

The article is in the rag in L.A. juggling circles. Who's this Truzzi the youngsters ask? Of course, my lips are sealed.

I've finally finished a chapter and introduction for my new book on unusual entertainers and it is now being submitted by my literary agent. I'm hoping a healthy ~~advance~~ ^{advance} may keep me off the road for a while, but these days I'm afraid this may be wishful thinking.

Life on the road remains as tiring as

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30 Brooks Avenue, Venice, California 90291 213-399-3977

ever. The show is always the easiest part of
it; getting there the difficulty.

Working on some new material and
am close to a number of wonderful
possible projects out here in dreamland
of the stars.

Hope it won't be too long before I see you
and Pat again -

All the best,

Bill

P.S. I've enclosed a list of people I've been
researching for my book - If you come
up with anything - particularly primary source
material - I'd be most grateful -
Thanks, Bill

Mr. Willard Boffie

Mr. Willard

The Great Lafayette

Lulu Hurst, Annie Abbott, Resistas, Phyllis Bentley
Willie May Price, Johnny Culoon

Ludwig R. , La Bola Misteriosa, Jim Brent

Chabert, Powell, Richardson, Madame Girardelli

Felecien Trewy^e

Datas

Arthur Lloyd

Katterfelto, Dr. Graham

Le Petoma~~ine~~

Sadow, Sampson, Cyclops, Orville Stamm, Thomas Topham

Cinquevalli, Paul Conchas, Spadoni, Brinn

The Great Everhart

Willard the Man Who Grows

Eric Jan Hanussen

Zerah Colburn, Jacques Inaudi, Jedidiah Buxton, Harry Kahne
Washington Irving Bishop, J. Randall, Brown



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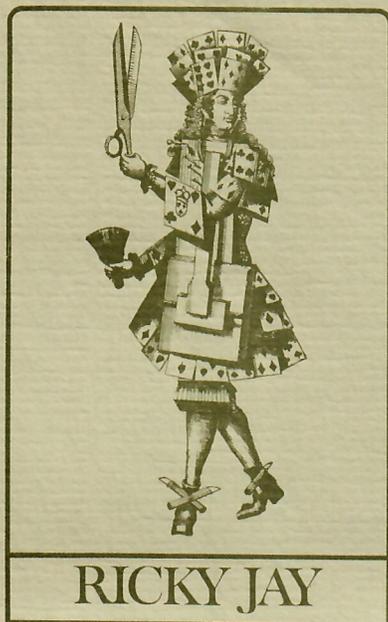
November 1183

Dear Marcello

Instead of straightening out
my life become more complicated.
Just seen teaching Robert Redford
sleight of hand for a scene in a
new movie and leave tomorrow
for Chicago.

Thanks much for the Cumberland
Book which had a few good anecdotes.
I'm sending the Sperber book so you
can read through the whole thing.
I'm not very impressed with it
but you might find something —
Again thanks & apologies —

Ricky



7 April 1979

Dear Marcello

The books you offer on your recent list are not needed, but please keep trying.

I recently purchased a complete run of Stoney's Magic Magazine - (1900-1915) which contains numerous references to juggling, etc. I'm having a lot of fun going through it. A number of articles & pictures of Cinghialli, reviews of acts, and occasional tricks described. The magic material is also good. Also picked up a copy of Frank E. Miller's Indian Club Swinging, Akron, Ohio, 1900. A book I'd seen listed many times but was never able to locate. The last 40 pages are devoted to club juggling with some wonderfully amusing photographs to illustrate.

I'll be on DINAH doing the Medallion routine around the end of the month or May first (consult your local listings or a competent medium) and a CBS Special (not very) called "Like Magic" - MAY 1st around 5:00 P.M.

I Am now working on an alternate ending to the Eggs & Glasses Routine but in spite of Alex Tim

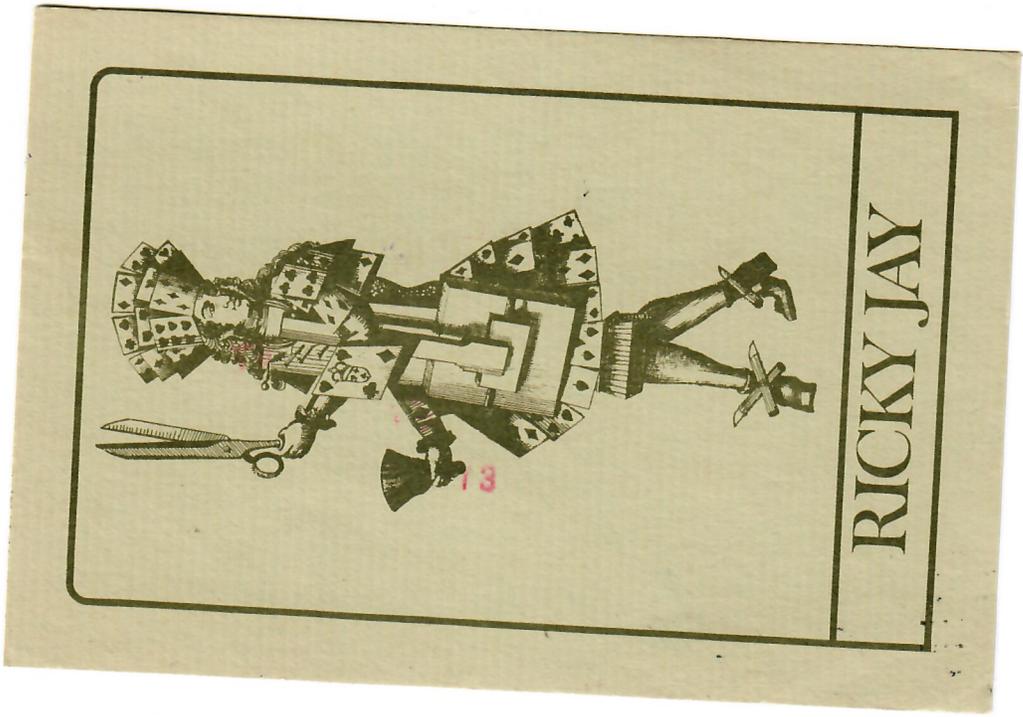
Still not quite convinced.

You may not be familiar with the Polish dial-a-joke. It changes every day - dial 1-800-663-POLZ - and let me know what you think

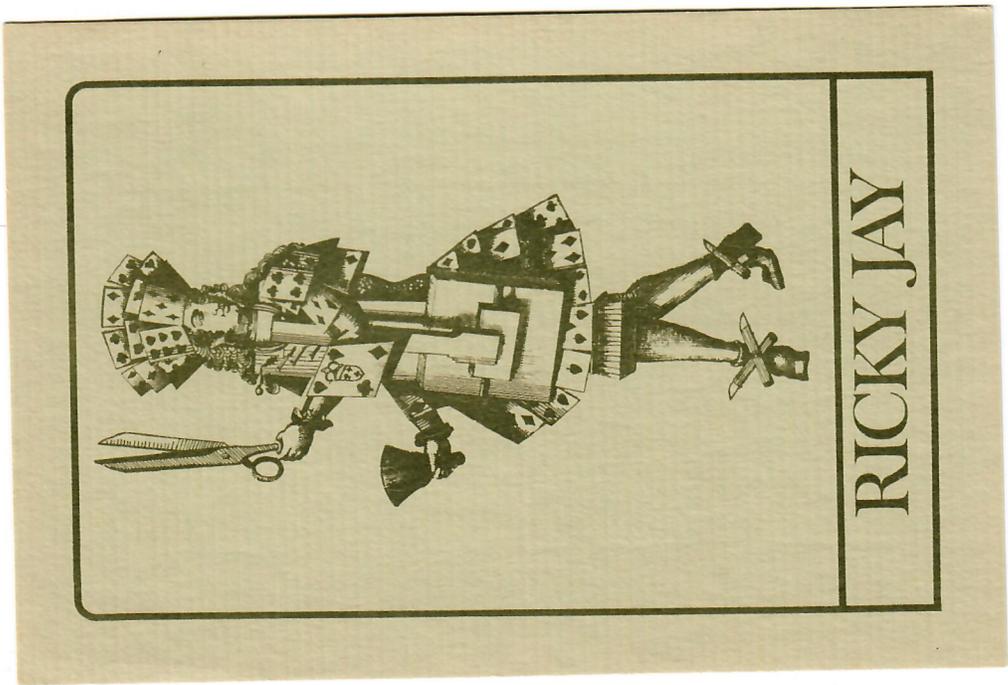
All the best to Pat & offspring

Ricky.

P.S. A friend of mine is interested in purchasing the reprint of Zollner's Transcendental Physics - could you send info?

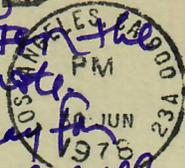


RICKY JAY



RICKY JAY

DEAR MARCELO
MANY THANKS FOR THE
Z.S. and the letter
I leave today for
LONDON - please call
me when you arrive
I'm taping my special
for the BBC - on July 9
Evening I think) World
Love to have you see it.
I can be reached
at 607-3456 or do
my producer John Fisher
743-8000 ext. 2170
Home to see you, Nick



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17 Nov 1981

Dear Marcello

Thanks for the splendid cutouts. I'm really sorry I couldn't have accompanied you. I'm anxious to hear much more.

I've just been in N.Y and Atlantic City and might very well be in L.A. in December if you make it out this way... keep me posted

I have a bunch of T.V. shows; Mike Douglas, John Davidson, Comedy at the Improv, and That's Incredible taped but don't know any of the air dates.

Got an interesting Chinese Magicians & Jugglers in Eng. playbill from 1854 to show you

Best to Pat, et al
Thanks again for the cutouts!

Ricky



23 March 1982

D.M.

I've sent along a piece I just wrote for Arabian Horse World Magazine.

I'm somewhat concerned over the problems of writing an article for a popular magazine - it would be inappropriate to footnote the piece yet I'd like to give credit for my sources. I know you've been in this situation before. I'd appreciate any suggestions, and also any criticism of the piece - (are the names of the horses in the Clever Hans story correct? I still don't have the book -)

I came across a letter to you in my files, and can't tell if it's an original or copy - it lists some references on Tommy Minnock. ~~The~~ If it doesn't sound familiar let me know and I'll send it along.

Best to Pat, et al -
T.J.

EQUINE AMUSEMENTS

Ricky Jay
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EQUINE AMUSEMENTS

by Ricky Jay

Sagacious sows, prancing ponies, and charming chimps have not been dealt with kindly by history. They have lost their identities and blended into society's collective grouping of ephemeral entertainments. Notable are the exceptions, and rarely has an exception been more notable than Morocco, the learned horse.

Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and scores of their contemporaries thought enough of Morocco and his trainer, William Banks, to make them the most mentioned entertainers of Elizabethan times.

The recipient of such honors must boast an impressive repertoire and by every account Morocco surely did. Although contemporaries could not agree on the horse's breed, size, or color, they described the following feats:

He fetched objects thrown by the audience and returned them to their rightful owners.

He identified spectators wearing spectacles and other distinguishing articles.

He knealt, lay down, or played dead on request.

He drank great quantities of water and divested himself of it on command.

He, by tapping his foreleg, totaled figures on dice, counted coins in a gentlemen's purse, and identified cards selected from a shuffled pack even though his trainer was blindfolded.

He imitated how he would walk if carrying a lady (with poise and gentility), a valet (in an impatient trot), or a riding master (executing airs, bows, and passades with impeccable precision). Scholars contend Morocco's dancing act was the origin of the modern "haute ecole" or high school riding act.

The horse was the subject of numerous stories and it is difficult to separate fact from fiction. Morocco's most remembered stunt, however unlikely, was climbing to the top of St. Paul's Cathedral, an imposing edifice more than 500 hundred feet high and containing perhaps 1,000 narrow spiral steps.

Once, when Banks and Morocco were accused of sorcery, the trainer asked the horse to seek out a man with a crucifix and kneel down in front of it. Then the horse was asked to rise and kiss the cross thus acquiting himself and his trainer.

Another story is told of Tarleton, the famous jester, asking the horse to choose the "verriest fool in the company". Morocco immediately put his mouth on Tarleton's collar and dragged the clown forward. Next he asked the horse to produce the "verriest whoremaster in the company", and again Tarleton was brought forth to the delight of the crowd.

Morocco's apparent mind reading abilities inspired contemporary exposures and a school of followers that continues to the present day.

In 1929, Dr. J.B. Rhine, the famous parapsychologist, was amazed by the horse Lady Wonder and her owner, Claudia Fonda, near Richmond, Virginia. As late as 1956 Lady Wonder made the headlines spelling out words on a special typewriter operated by nudges from the horses's nose.

In 1904, a horse called Clever Hans inspired an extensive psychological investigation. The horse was capable of performing marvelous stunts which included arithmetic problem solving and the answering of questions (by pushing forward letter blocks) on a variety of subjects. When Hans' trainer, Wilhelm Von Ostend, died the horse was left to a wealthy German businessman named Karl Krall. In Elberfield, where Krall lived, he developed other horses to do even more startling effects. His prize student was a beautiful Arab stallion called Muhamed. This horse mastered in two weeks what it had taken Hans three years to learn. Muhamed, along with Zarif and Mustapa, a pair of cunning stable mates, performed their stunts in what was called "the most sensational event which has ever appeared in the field of animal psychology, perhaps even the whole realm of psychology."

Ironically, the basic explanation for the seemingly psychic powers exhibited by these horses was described by 17th century writers explaining the phenomena of Banks and Morocco.

The first book in the English language to deal exclusivley with conjuring (and the second to explain the methods of a learned horse)

was S. Rid's The Art of Juggling or Legerdermaine (London, 1612). Rid, in one perceptive sentence, gives the key to all such entertainments: "... nothing can be done (by the horse) but his master must first know, and then by his master knowing, the horse is ruled by signes. This, if you mark at any time, you shall plainly see."

Actually, these signs are often too subtle for the untrained eye. They may require the expertise of one well versed in deception, like Milbourne Christopher who exposed magician's tricks in the cueing of Lady Wonder, or psychologist Oskar Pfungst who determined Van Ostend was subconsciously imparting information to Clever Hans with almost imperceptible movements.

* * * * *

Horses have played a role in more traditional conjuring performances. Lafayette, Thurston, Dante, and Blackstone among the most famous of all 20th century magicians reaped important publicity from the equine helpers.

In 1925, when Howard Thruston was the pre-eminent magician in America, he introduced what was then the largest illusion in the world: the disappearance of "Beauty" the Arabian Steed. Beauty and his robed rider were hauled high above the stage on a swinging platform. The platform was covered for an instant and the horse

and rider seemed to vanish in mid-air. The next season a small open pen was raised above the stage; when Beauty vanished the pen crashed dramatically to the floor.

The illusion was advertised as costing \$50,000 (the actual figure was closer to \$5,000) and requiring a special baggage car for its transportation. In 1928 Thurston sold the effect to Dante who was then touring South America. Although Dante's posters still announced the disappearance of Beauty, another Arabian was used and Beauty was retired by Thurston to a farm in Pennsylvania.

Dante had trouble with the illusion in Montevideo. He wrote to Thurston in frustration explaining that the local officials demanded a payment of forty cents for every poster hung in the city (usually thousands of lithographs like the ones illustrating this article would herald the show in each new town). In addition, he reported, the fee for parading a horse through the city streets was eighty dollars. Dante relied on "word of mouth".

Harry Blackstone, who succeeded Dante as the world's best known magician also did the illusion featuring the "Phantom Stallion" in his "Oriental Nights" sequence. Currently Sig^ofreid and Roy feature a vanishing horse in their spectacular show in Las Vegas.

The Great Lafayette featured an Arab Stallion, an African lion, and his dog Beauty in an elaborate show at the turn of the century.

Lafayette was an eccentric in a field resplendent with peculiar performers. His personal checks bore pictures of Beauty and sacks of gold with the inscription "my two best friends." His dog traveled in its own railroad compartment complete with a pint-sized plush couch and tiny porcelain bathtub. His house was painted in multi-colored stripes and above the entrance archway was the inscription "The more I see of men the more I love my dog."

It was this love of animals that cost him his life when a fire broke out on stage of the Empire Music Hall in Edinburgh on May 9, 1911. Lafayette reached the street safely, but already distraught over the death of Beauty a week earlier, he returned to the blaze to rescue the other animals. Apparently the lion, mane in flames, blocked the exit door and prevented his escape. Sadly Lafayette, ten members of the cast, and all the animals perished.

Some magicians performed magic on, rather than with, their horses. In the early years of the 19th century, an English equestrian named James West performed sleight-of-hand effects while he rode around the circus ring. West brought his own show to the States in 1816. He traveled his troupe instead of setting up the customary permanent amphitheatre and consequently became the first truly successful circus entrepreneur in America.

Over a hundred years later, a German circus featured an equestrian escape artist. He was "placed on his horse with both arms and legs

securely fettered, and after a couple of circuits around the ring was able to cast off the last of his bonds." One evening the would-be Houdini galloped out the the ring before effecting his release, his face bearing a pained expression. It seems that a practical joker had filled his pre-performance cocktail with a strong aperient from which there was but one escape.

* * * * *

By the middle of the 18th century equestrian exhibitions had become the rage in England. The wedding of the horse and circus took place on an open field in Lambeth in the 1760's. There Phillip Astley, a discharged cavalryman, combined for the first time the skills of trick riders, performing animals, jugglers and acrobats into the modern circus.

The horse was the key element, the other acts being brought in to accompany the performance of mount and rider.

Astley featured Billy, "the Little Military Learned Horse, three feet high from the deserts of Arabia". The miniature horse displayed many of the feats shown by Banks and Morocco, and like Banks, Astley was brought up on charges of witchcraft that were soon dismissed.

The fate of Billy is the stuff of which heart-rending novels used to be made. William Davis took care of the horse after Astley's

death, and in an act of kindness loaned him to Abraham Saunders, a talented but unfortunate trick rider and entrepreneur. Shortly thereafter Saunders' show was lost through debt and the little horse mistakenly auctioned with the rest of his stud. Billy was bought by a tradesman, who, though he called the horse "Mountebank" because of his odd prancing, was ignorant of Billy's higher education. For three years the horse pulled the tradesman's cart until he was spotted by one of Astley's riders.

Thinking the horse might be Billy, the rider clicked his fingernails, the cue for the horse to tap his foreleg in a counting exhibition. When the horse perked up and began to count he was purchased and taken home. "Even in his old age he would ungrit his own saddle, wash his feet in a pail of water, fetch and carry a complete tea equipage, take a kettle of boiling water off the fire and act like a waiter at a tea garden".

Eventually losing his teeth and unable to eat corn, the horse was fed on soaked bread at considerable expense. Even in his old age he was called upon to give an occasional performance. When he died at the age of forty-two his hide was fashioned into a special effects thunderdrum used for many years in the amphitheatre; a curious but laudatory gesture.

As the popularity of the circus grew so did the accomplishments of its performers. Much like professional athletes, horsemen competed

for glory by introducing ever more novel effects. These are some of the performers you might have witnessed at the time:

Thomas Johnson, the Irish Tartar (who may have been the first trick rider to perform in London) stood up while riding three horses simultaneously.

Sampson played the flute while standing on two horses without using reins. Thomas Price, also astride two horses, jumped over a three foot bar. Perhaps the first equestrian juggler, Price also rode while spinning plates on top of canes in each hand.

Charles Hughes, the founder of the Royal Circus and Astley's great rival, vaulted forwards and backwards over three horses and encored by jumping over a single horse forty times without stopping. In an attempt to stay abreast of Astley he exhibited a "Horse of Knowledge" that fired a pistol and a cannon.

In Paris in 1774, Hyamm, called the "English Hero" galloped around the ring with a child standing on his head. His partner, Miss Masson, rode standing with one foot on the saddle holding her other foot aloft between her hands.

Jacob Bates, who charmed Europe and America with his comedy trick-riding, stood stradling four horses. He also picked up a pistol

from the ground at full gallop, and while hanging upside down fired the gun under the belly of the horse.

Peter Mayhew, Thomas Pool, Mr. Coyetana, and John Bill Ricketts were all early jugglers on horseback. Ricketts founded the circus in America. In the early 1790's he tossed marbles into bottles and caught oranges on forks while speeding around the ring. Ricketts placed a wine glass in a hoop and spun the hoop rapidly without spilling a drop. He then drank to the health of the assembled company, all the while galloping around the ring without bridle or reins. So impressive was Ricketts that George and Martha Washington were among his admirers.

In France, Astley founded a circus that was eventually taken over by the Franconi family. Laurent Franconi charmed Paris performing trick-riding and a splendid school routine (on a wonderful mare called Blanche). He introduced novelties like Coco, the trained stag who jumped over four horses, and the first aeronaut horse who ascended in a balloon piloted by Testu-Brissy at Franconi's Cirque Olympique.

Perhaps the most unusual of all these early acts was Daniel Wildman who exhibited "all but wet evenings" in 1772 at the Royal Tea Gardens. A horseman and apiarist, Wildman combined his skills and rode through the ring standing on his horse while a swarm of trained bees covered

his face. Upon firing a pistol, half the bees returned to the hive while the others marched over a nearby table. Wildman was able to master the movement of the bees by controlling their leader, a process known as "caging the queen". A respected and popular figure of his day, Wildman inspired the following verse:

He with uncommon art and matchless skill
Commands those insects, who obey his will;
With bees others cruel means employ,
They take their honey and bees destroy;
Wildman, humanely with ingenious ease
He takes the honey but preserves the bees.

* * * * *

A law which prohibited non-musical theatrical performances with spoken words gave birth to the Equestrian Drama. To bypass the edict (which protected existing legitimate theatres like Covent Garden and Drury Lane) horses became the featured entertainers. They rode around the ring while riders displayed banners detailing essential elements of the drama, a precursor to the film subtitle.

The key figure to emerge from this peculiar amalgamation was Andrew Ducrow, said by many to be the greatest horseman of all time. Exhibited at age four as the "Infant Hercules" by a talented but

cruel father, Ducrow learned the combination of strength, acrobatic, balancing and equestrian skills that were to set him apart from his competition.

He was the romantic hero on horseback of dozens of melodramas like St. George and the Dragon, Rob Roy and Timour the Tartar. He was a man of ungovernable temper, called "indelicate, even revolting", but imbued with great talent and panache.

Among his innovations were classic postures of strength and grace called "poses plastiques" performed while standing on a cantering horse. A protean act, lightning changes of costume while moving around the ring at breakneck speed, highlighted another routine. He was a master of mime and caricature as well as horsemanship.

He was a tenacious worker but an impatient viewer. Once while witnessing a theatrical rehearsal he was heard to say, in his characteristic cockney, "cut the cackle and get to the 'orses."

He produced Mazeppa and the Wild Horse of Tartary, the most famous of all equestrian dramas. Based loosely on the Byron poem, it dealt with a young man who falls in love with a woman of ostensibly higher social standing. The irate father of the girl, in a gesture modern viewers might find excessive, has the man strapped naked to the back of the horse and sent galloping off into the Polish

countryside, (a fate worse than death). Sparing the reader the thrilling resolution of the play is an exercise in journalistic prudence. Suffice it to say that the Mazeppa survived thousands of performances, substantially added to Ducrow's pocketbook, and much later, affected the stardom of a most unlikely woman.

Adah Issacs Menken, an undistinguished rider, actress, and dancer was catapulted to stardom as England's first female Mazeppa in 1864. A striking woman scantily clad in pink silk fleshlings, she refused a stunt double and rode to fame bound to the back of a fiery steed.

Scandal rather than skill promoted her, but she was an extraordinary woman. People came to gape rather than admire, but they came. Her shows were sell-outs. When Charles Dickens was unable to buy a ticket to see her she wrote him letters and dedicated a book of verse to him. All London talked of her romantic conquests, and so did she. In Paris she was toasted by royalty and shared more intimate pleasures with the elderly Alexander Dumas.

Back in London she focused on literary luminaries like George Sand and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. In America she fascinated Bret Harte, Walt Whitman and Mark Twain. She had a much publicized affair with Algernon Swinburne at the height of his fame. She was the subject of innumerable stories (many self-perpetuated) and interminable debate.

When she died at the age of thirty-three she had published and inspired controversial poetry, ridden semi-clad through most of the world tied to a horse, and gone through four husbands (one of whom fought for the heavyweight championship of the world).

In the words of her biographer, "while she lived no woman was more eagerly discussed and after her death more mercilessly slandered."

* * * * *

As the literati were intrigued by the exploits of the beautiful poetess on the fiery steed, the aristocracy have been fascinated by "haute école".

Based to some extent on medieval movements of attack and defense which warriors taught their horses, the modern school movements are a beautiful blending of horse and rider.

The horse must execute airs both on and above the ground. Particularly exciting are the great soaring leaps like the "capriole" where the horse seems suspended in air. The rider must control the horse's action, but with no ostensible sign, and must appear composed and natural-- at one with the horse. And the routine must not appear stiff or mechanical like the movements of an automaton. The subtlety of such technique has

made it difficult for the average fan to appreciate and therefore, the haute école is considered the caviar of the circus.

Two figures reign supreme in the modernization of school riding. Francois Baucher (1796-1853) the famous French riding master had both circus and military trainers using his methods. He often had horses considered untrainable prancing in the ring within a month of his tutelage. He was responsible for working the famous horses Neptune, Partisan, Gericault, and Capitaine. In 1855, at the pinnacle of his career, he was struck while on horseback by a falling chandelier. Although he continued to train and instruct other performers, he never again performed in public.

James Fillis (1834-1913), an Englishman and student of Baucher's pupil Francois Caron, also won his acclaim in Paris. His control of horses was legendary. He was able to make a horse canter backwards (not sideways) on three legs, an incredibly difficult stunt. His own legs were powerful, and legs he said, not arms were the key to training a horse. Clemenceau, who called Fillis the "Goethe of Equitation", urged him to write a book and the result, Principles of Dressage and Equitation, is still in use.

Today's readers may find it difficult to imagine the extent to which school riders were adulated in the last century. In the 1850's the Circus Renz featured Mathilde Monnet, a French student

of Baucher. Her skill and grace made her the sensation of Berlin. Even her rehearsals were attended by nobility, business magnates, and stars of the legitimate theatre. Lithographs and medallions bearing her image were sold in the street.

Inspired by her, Professor Boeckh, the famous philologist and scholar of the classics, urged his students to revel in equitation as one of the fine arts.

In France, Caroline Loyo, the "Diva of the riding whip" received similar kudos, and her star student, Emilie Loisset, had countless glasses lifted in her name. Hugues Le Roux said watching her ride was to witness the "artistic union of the two most perfect curvilinear forms in creation-- the horse adding height to the woman by the majesty of its stature, the woman daringly poised on the animal like a wing. Not to be overlooked, however, were the long hours of practice necessary for the perfect blending of elements.

Described as "female centaurs" women like Emilie and her sister Clotilde Loisset found themselves the very "symbol of Romance". Emilie shunned the advances of suitors preferring to live a curiously private and melancholy life. She surprised everyone by her betrothal some years later to the Prince of Hatzfield, but the marriage never took place. At a morning rehearsal her horse fell and the saddle cut into Emilie causing fatal damage. She died while deliriously humming the opening music to her act.

School riding continued into the 20th century with masters like Burckhardt-Footit (who was said to have trained a hundred horses in his long and spectacular career), and Therese Renz from the famous circus family known particularly for their marvelous horses (at one time they had 235 fine specimens in their stud).

School riding is an art largely unappreciated by the masses. A sad picture is painted by Antony Hippisley Coxe, of Therese Renz "who at the age of seventy-three appeared as late as 1933 at the Cirque Medrano with her horse Last Rose. Maybe she was queen of them all but towards the end of her life she was forced to wander about Europe searching for a circus which might keep up some semblance of past glories."

Perhaps exciting current performers like Katja Schumann, the fifth generation of her family to present horses, may be able to revive interest in a wonderful art.

* * * * *

The performance of a horse without a rider, called the Liberty Act, is still a regular feature of the circus. The act may consist of a single horse like Morocco, dancing or answering questions, or the 120 horses Edouard Wulff managed simultaneously in an especially enlarged ring.

Particularly popular were horses like Black Eagle, who under the tutelage of John Murray, waltzed, polkaed, and imitated a camel in London in the 1850's. Shortly thereafter Professor D.M. Bristol's "Equescurriculum" troupe, which featured educated horses in a variety of entertainments, debuted at the Third Avenue Theatre in New York and continued to please the American public for more than twenty years.

Although it is still possible to see learned horse acts, particularly in small European circuses, the modern Liberty act is generally a group of four, eight, twelve or more beautifully matched horses in a wonderfully choreographed routine.

To horse lovers, nothing seems more beautiful, more exciting, than a great set of magnificent animals rearing and prancing in perfect co-ordination.

Arabians have long been the favorites of the Liberty world. Selected for their beauty, symmetry, intelligence, and spirited individuality, they are usually the ideal height (14.1 to 15.1 hands) and size for the ring.

Many of the great circus impresarios have been praised for their presentations of splendid Liberty acts: the Renz's, the Hagenbeck's, the Carre's, the Krone's, the Knie's, the Chipperfield's, Bertram Mills, and of course the pre-eminent circus horse trainers, the Schumann's.

There are tremendous difficulties encountered in teaching individual horses to move in unison, and in matching both their physical characteristics and temperaments. It is said that Mary Chipperfield spent a year in visiting every Arab farm in England before choosing her set of magnificent grey stallions. The time, energy, and cost involved have made larger Liberty groups a rarity today, but it is the matching, routining, and presentaion of the horses which should take precedence of the number of animals involved.

The Liberty trainer, at his best, seems to do nothing in the ring. In Fred Petoletti's troupe twenty-one horses, each numbered individually, go through their paces. Eventually the horses are allowed to wander about haphazardly. When Petoletti snaps his whip the shuffled horses begin to trot around him in the ring. Without another movement on his part, the horses begin to realign themselves, and in a few minutes are back in consecutive order.

Lulu Gautier, impeccably attired in top hat and morning coat, stood in the center of the ring calmly puffing a cigar while twelve horses, four each of blacks, bays, and chestnuts grouped themselves into alternating colors. The horses continued moving until they were in groups of two matching colors, then three, and finally all four again in their original positions.

* * * * *

The spectacular accomplishments of horses, trainers and riders have left us breathless. Lucio Christiani somersaulted backwards from one horse, past a second, and onto a third, landing in a standing position as the horses trotted around the ring.

Margot Edward consistently juggled five balls on horseback in her act, and practised doing seven, a feat supposedly performed by Hubert Cooke, perhaps the greatest of all bare-back jockey riders. Emile Aguinoff is also credited with a seven ball juggle. In another routine, also on horseback, he juggled three burning torches. He threw the torches high into the air, somersaulted, caught them and continued juggling.

Poodles Hanneford was a great circus clown, a master of equestrian tumbling and vaulting, his act was played for comedy. The Fredannis^{ianis} successfully performed the "3 man high" on horseback; each brother standing upon the shoulders of the next as the horse circled the ring.

May Wirth, a dauntly Australian girl, was the world's greatest equestriene. A "performer's performer", she delighted in doing stunts that would ^{impress} ~~wow~~ other riders. She jumped from the ground onto the back of a galloping horse with baskets on her feet, and with her back towards the head of the horse, threw a backwards somersault (against the centrifugal force created by the motion of the animal), twisted in the air and landed facing forward on the horse.

The Loyal-Repensky Troupe created a pyramid of seven people-- four on bottom and three on top while balanced on five moving horses.

In 1885 Signor Corrandini presented the "Blondin Horse", named after the first person to walk over Niagra Falls on a tightrope. The horse climbed a flight of stairs and walked across a nine-inch thick rope at an elevation of twenty feet.

Doc Carver, Buffalo Bill's first partner in the Wild West Show exhibited horses which dove off a 40 foot platform into a twelve-foot tank of water; and posters of Freyer's Pony Circus pictured horses, somewhat unbelievably, walking on stilts.

As early as 1607 Gervase Markham, in a treatise on equitation, questions the training of horses to lie down, kick, dance, and count as perhaps being inconsistent with the natural dignity of the animal. He nevertheless explained the stunts, concluding that in these tricks are revealed some worthy and extraordinary qualities of the animal.

No matter what the reader's views, the pitfalls of equine education have never been so clearly exposed as in the following story related by Aristotle:

In the ancient city of Sybaris lived a hedonistic and effeminate people (from whom we derive the word sybarite). Having the free time essential to a voluptuary existence, they taught their horses to dance to the music of the pipe. When the Sybarites were engaged in a war with the neighboring Crotonians, their enemies, knowing of the terpsichorean predilections of the opposing steeds brought a large number of pipers to the battlefield. The pipers began to play and the Sybrian horses began to dance. The riders, unable to control their shimmying steeds, were "thrown into confusion", and summarily slaughtered.



Eastern Michigan University

Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

April 12, 1982

Dear Ricky,

Sorry for my delay in getting back to you about your most interesting EQUINE AMUSEMENTS article. I was out of town for a week and just got back to a typewriter.

Clever Hans' owner was von Osten (which you have as Von Ostend). Also, I only have seen his name as William rather than Wilhelm. Also, on p. 4, you refer to von Osten subconsciously imparting cues, but this was minor. The point with Hans was that most of the other subjects who quizzed him gave such unintentional cues. That was what made Hans so different. His owner could be entirely absent. And that is what fooled all the animal trainers who checked out Hans. Even von Osten did not know how Hans did it. In that sense, he was not really trained at all in any conscious sense. As far as I know, Hans did not push forward letter blocks. He responded by tapping. That was the key to the whole mystery. Hans simply stopped tapping when cued (unconsciously) by the interrogator. I think Lady Wonder used letter blocks, but I don't know of that being so for Hans -- certainly not in Pfungst's book, anyway.

You mention Lucio Christiani doing a backward somersault from one horse over another one. He probably did though I don't clearly recall that. But I do recall my father mentioning to me that Lucio was one of the very few to ever do a forward somersault from one horse to another (which is far more difficult).

I really don't have much to add otherwise. I don't really know very much about my great uncle William Truzzi except that he had all his horses taken to Russia which was apparently quite incredible a trip at that time. Lots of stuff on William in the Russian circus books. He was the greatest of his time.

I enclose an article from volume 31 of the SATURDAY BOOK series which you should get familiar with if you are not already. Terrific stuff in these antiquarian volumes. Your UCLA library should have them all if not your public library. Beautiful color illustrations and photos, too.

I don't think I have the letter from you re Tommy Minnoch and references on him. I would like to see it.

How goes your book? How are things with you in general?

Best,

Marcello Truzzi



29 Nov. 1981

Dear Marcello

Came across some references to
Tommy Minnok, the "horse" Houdini wrote
about. I've never checked them out &
they might prove interesting to you re:
Eva Tawado, etc.

MINNOK, T- A Fakirs Ex pose of Fakirs Fakes - 3 articles
Sto Louis Sunday Star Aug 28, Sept 4, Sept 11, 1904
— Confessions of a Hypnotic Subject
N.Y., varieties (?) - Sept. & Oct 1896

If you're able to find them I wouldn't
mind copies myself.

All the best,

P.S. Minnoch is,
of course, mentioned
in RINN's book



15 June 82

D.M.

Thanks as ever for your help & info.

Unfortunately ~~some~~ the Hans material got in before I could make changes (I was promised proofs and they were never sent) maybe corrections can be made later.

This kind of thing makes me crazy. No doubt it's happened to you. How do you deal with it.

Thanks too for the Spaight article. While I'm familiar with the Saturday Books I'd never seen that piece.

My book moves slowly, my life flashes by at an ever increasing rate.

I'm enclosing the Tommy Minnok letter.

Farewell

Best to Pat, et al

r.j.



RICKY LAY

1257 North Flores Street
Hollywood, California 90069

23 April 1983

Dear Marcello

Thanks for a lovely visit. As usual your efficiency amazes me - your package preceeded me to Los Angeles. I'm grateful for the material, and as always, for your suggestions.

I've read the list of aims for CSAR in the ZS and would be delighted to be a resource consultant and provide any help I can. By the way, is there something you wanted me to look up in the Home Lights & Shadows of Spiritualism?

I have a feeling I'm forgetting something but am still a bit dizzy from the snow.
Best to Pat & Chris

Ricky



RICKY JAY

1257 North Flores Street
Hollywood, California 90069

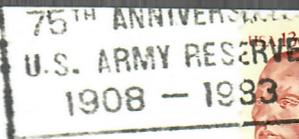


Marcello Truzzi
Dept of Sociology
E. Michigan Uni.
Ypsilanti, Michigan
48197



RICKY JAY

1257 North Flores Street
Hollywood, California 90069



Marcello Truzzi
Dept of Sociology
E. Michigan Uni.
Ypsilanti, MI
48197

D.M.

Thanks much for your recent enjoinments.

Would love to see you at the collectors convention the dates are April 5, 6, 7 at Jay Marshall's place.

I'm now working on a film with Dove Trumbull, the special effects wizards, fun-interesting stuff, but I'm up to my ears in work —

best to Pat & Pat

P.J.

D.M.

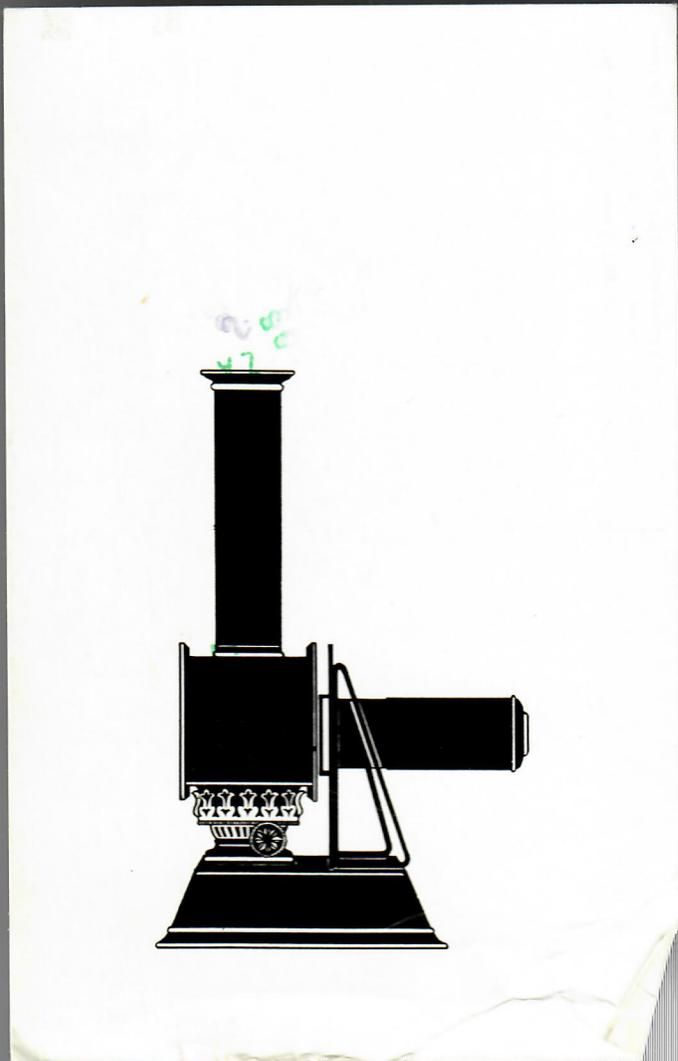
Have read & enjoyed your paper & received numerous books & packages from you.

I am swamped & feeling much quit about not replying in detail.

I will as soon as possible

Many thanks

v.j. regards to Pat



By air mail
Par avion

POST CARD

HELP
LEPRA
FIGHT
ADDRESS



Spoke to Trevor Hall
but won't be able to
see him.
Am supposed to see
a trance materialization
medium give a seance.
No kidding
Wish me luck, wish her luck!
Ducky

MARCO TRUZZI
Dept of Sociology
E. MICH. UNI.
YPSILANTI, MI
48197
USA

Nº2 from set of 6
A toy lantern by Wrench. English
Specially drawn by Patricia Dugdale for the Magic Lantern
Society of Great Britain 1983 International Convention.



Eastern Michigan University

Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

4/8/84

Dear Ricky,

Good to talk with you last night. I so very much regret not having been able to make it to the collectors' meeting.

But I do hope to see you in late May. Plan right now is to go to Palm Spring with Pat on May 20-22 and then to L.A. on the 23rd, probably leaving Pat with Gianni there for a couple of days while I go up to San Jose on the 24th for the PEA convention thru the 28th. Then to S.F. thru the 30th. I have a lunch date with my potential publisher (editor at J.P. Tarcher's) at noon on the 23rd. Beyond that, hope to see you.

Enclosed are copies of the type-scripts of my first two columns for the PEA newsletter, VIBRATIONS. Probably nothing you don't already know (By the way, I think it almost certain that Fitzkee is wrong about both Bishop and Cumberland being assistants to Brown.) I have since been told by Kreskin (who should know) that Dunninger never did contact reading despite what I read to the contrary.

Kreskin seems immensely knowledgeable about the history of conjuring. He has 2500 volumes on hypnosis, too. Kreskin is planning posthumous publication of a devastating revised history of conjuring based on tapes he has with ex-Houdini associates. Kreskin told me that it was a damned good thing Houdini died when he did, for he was about to pull off some terrible things. Kreskin is quite close to Walter Gibson, by the way, so I presume some of his information has been corroborated by Gibson. Kreskin is a guy with rather strong views, but he seems well informed and apparently has some collection. I think you should try to meet with him at some point to talk about your mutual historical interests.

Did I mention to you that I am now in touch with Uri Geller? I may be the only guy in the world who communicates with Randi, Geller and Kreskin -- all of whom seem to despise one another.

Hope to see you on May 23.

Best,

Marcello Truzzi



Eastern Michigan University

Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

June 1, 1984

Dear Ricky,

Good to see you, but I wish we could have had more time together.

Enclosed is ZS#11 as promised.

The address for Loompanics, is: Loompanics Unlimited; P.O. Box 1197; Port Townsend, WA 98368. You need to send them \$2 for the catalog, but I assure you that you will find it well worth it.

The PEA meetings were fun. I am now on the governing council and Vice President. Much political nonsense, but I hope that will soon be dealt with. I learned a lot from the gathering, and all in all it went better than I had feared it might.

Met with T.A. Waters in San Francisco. Anton LaVey and I went to visit him. An interesting guy, but apparently rather mystical in personal outlook, and he apparently takes occultism rather seriously. I suspect that his outlook contributes to his lack of economic success. But in any case, it was a pleasant evening with him, and I wish him well. It is possible that Anton--who liked him-- may be able to help him on the occupational front. I know Anton plans to contact him again later.

All in all, my trip west was very successful. But I now face a big backlog of mail and work, so I must keep this short.

Keep in touch.

Best,

Marcello Truzzi

P.S. I think I was supposed to xerox some out-of-print conjuring book(1et) for you but now can not remember what it was. Let me know and I will do that.



Eastern Michigan University

Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

9/27/84

Dear Ricky,

1) Thought you might like to see an advance copy of my revised paper on Alpha and Randi.

2) I am looking for materials on the great Russian mentalist Wolf Messing. Have a good bit of stuff in the psi books, but I am looking for stuff on his act or personality from a conjuring standpoint. It is hard to separate the myth from the reality on him. He seems to have been at least the equal of Rubini. His alleged hypnosis at a distance stuff sounds too incredible to be true. Perhaps Lev Shneider knew him or saw him perform. Could you check Lev for me (given the language barrier plus your own likely interest in Messing, this seems the best way rather than my just writing to Shneider)?

Hope all goes well with you. Yesterday, I sent you a copy of an article on the Turnbull project which you may not have seen and might like to have.

Some while back, you promised to give me some references to early fire walking. I still would like to see that stuff.

Any chance of your getting anywhere near here?

Best,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marcello".

Marcello Truzzi

Department of Sociology
(313) 487-0012



WILLIAM ANDREWS CLARK MEMORIAL LIBRARY

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LOS ANGELES

2520 Cimarron Street, Los Angeles, California 90018

(213) 731-8529

September 28, 1984

Dear Friends:

On October 31, 1984, Halloween night, the Clark Library will host a very special evening of historical magic. Mr. Ricky Jay, who is one of the world's premier sleight-of-hand artists as well as a historian and book collector, will present a lecture and demonstration, "Conjuring and Conjuring Literature from Elizabeth to Victoria."

Mr. Jay has written and starred in his own variety special for BBC television, London, and has appeared on many other shows, including "Saturday Night Live" and Johnny Carson's "The Tonight Show." He has served as a consultant for and acted in Joseph Papp's "Midsummer Night's Dream"; more recently, he taught Robert Redford sleight of hand for his role in "The Natural." He will be advisor for the largest auction of books on magic ever to be held in this country, to take place this coming December at the Swann Galleries in New York. Mr. Jay was recently given the International Platform Association's prestigious Magician of the Year award. Currently, he is writing a history of unusual entertainment, to be published by Random House.

Please join us at 7:30 p.m. for this unusual event, which will begin with wine and hors d'oeuvre and a preview of an exhibition of books, broadsides, posters, and magicians' apparatus, mostly from Mr. Jay's own collection. His presentation will follow, and then, over a gourmet dessert buffet, guests will have an opportunity to talk with Mr. Jay. Los Angeles printer Patrick Reagh will provide a broadside program for each guest as a memento of the occasion.

As the Clark Library enters its second fifty years as a research library in a world much changed from that of its founding in the 1930s, we are presenting this program to attract vitally needed funds. We request a contribution of \$100.00 per person, or \$150.00 per couple, of which \$75.00 and \$100.00, respectively, are tax deductible.

Our hope is that the event will enlarge our circle of Clark friends and reinforce the close association we have with our long-time dedicated friends. We ask you to respond by October 15 on the enclosed reply card. Parking will be available within the patrolled grounds of the library; we look forward to your attendance.

Sincerely,

Thomas F. Wright
Librarian

R  J

D.M.

Thanks for the
Trumbull story, I
hadn't seen it.

Lew hasn't been around
for a while - I'll ask
about wolf messing if
I see him, but it's
unlikely he'll say anything.

He likes to play cryptic -
to me at least...

Dip to muzzas in the
soon - Finished Bishop, Brown
chapter, also chapter on
five resistors - working
every day now.

The show at the Clark
lecture
also occupying time —

Best — R.J.



RICKY JAY

1257 North Flores Street
Hollywood, California 90069

P.S. I really don't touchle fire-walking at all
in my chapter - just resistance to heat, fine
handling, poison swallowing
Did you ever receive the broadside I sent
from the Clark Library Lecture?

28 Dec 1984

Dear Marcello

As usual I am surprised & delighted
by your recent offering. The clippings are splendid -
so many of them for people I'm writing about -
and as you guessed more than a few which
are new to me.

The only problem is making a copy of what
in many cases are very faint originals. Do you
think it would be possible to get another copy from
your source. (At my expense, of course) I'd like
to know before attempting anything with these.

I'm up to my ears - which for you no doubt
would be a light work load - The book goes well,
Bishop and Chabert chapters are complete -
I'll see my editor in N.Y. next week.

Went to part of the Cisco gathering in Palo Alto -
primarily to hear Pesi speak (his was by far the
best of the talks I heard) and ran into many
mutual acquaintances. I was actually quite surprised
at how unexciting the conference seemed. The
talks, with few exceptions seemed trivial and

almost frivolous. I felt a real
sadness for folks on both sides
of the issues... dedicating so
much time and energy to issues
with so little conclusive or even
interesting results.

Obviously these are the superficial ramblings
of a preoccupied and confused correspondent
but I'm sure you could draw something out of me
at a later date.

Finally, I enclose some entries of fire resistors
& fire walkers assembled for my Chabert
Chapter. Hope they are of some use.

Best to Pat et al

July
By the way my talk at the Clark Library went very
well and I'm doing something similar at Harvard
Library of Dec 10th. (I've sent you a broadside of
the Clark event under sep. cover) - Also, I've been
made curator of one of the great rare magic book
collections (The Mulholland Collection from the Players
Club) which will be coming to Los Angeles next month.
I'm excited!

DM - just got back, forgot to mail this before
leaving! sorry. Enclosed are the notes on fire walking and
resisting by Mansergh-Frost with some additions of my own
I have some other material as well, but can't find it,
The East coast trip, Harvard, N.Y. etc. was great -

later - Happy New Year



Eastern Michigan University

Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

3/22/85

Dear Ricky,

Ho ho ho and Merry Xmas! Here is a gift of some additional clippings xeroxs which I just received from Dennis Laub. Add them to the ones you already got from me earlier.

I trust your publisher will send a review copy of your book to me for ZETETIC SCHOLAR review.

And I hope you will be able to send me a copy of the Cumberland chapter before that.

Can you provide me with an address for Harry Blackstone, Jr.? I assume Charlie Reynolds is still vacationing or I'd write him about it. (I did find some stuff on Hanussen which I sent Charlie, by the way, Fascinating figure. Martin Ebon tells me he saw Hanussen perform and, as a child, volunteered to go on stage with him. A small world...)

Seen Douglas Hofstadter's new book, METAMAGICAL THEMAS? Looks good. He published some of our correspondence in it -- editing my comments and having the last word, of course, but still not offensive. You might like some of the stuff in the book. It is his old SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN columns plus elaborate postscripts.

Lemme know how things are going.

Best,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marcello".

Marcello Truzzi

Department of Sociology
(313) 487-0012

Conference on Magic History

The Mulholland Library of Conjuring & the Allied Arts

Los Angeles, November 2-4, 1989

CONTRIBUTION TO MAGIC HISTORY THROUGH MEMORABILIA OF MY COLLECTION

Jacques Voignier

Bonius Genius (Hoccius Doccius) - [Figure in wood or ivory, the head vanishes within its own clothing]

Since 18th century, **Bonius Genius** is known in France as **Jean de la Vigne** (or Jehan des Vignes, the name of a famous quack operating at the end of the 16th century). The former French word for Jean de la Vigne was « **godenot** » a word completely lost in today vocabulary and at least since two centuries. The word « **godenot** » was never printed in a conjuring book but it can be found in general literature of 16th and 17th century with the same magical meaning as Bonius Genius. However, I was able to find the word **godenot** in a manuscript of tricks dating of 18th century (Blind Collection).

#1 : ALMANACH POUR L'AN DE GRACE 1641 - (Calendar for the year 1641)

(9 etchings with printed text - 56 x 39 cm) - The large etching represents the siege of Arras, a city in north of France, where the French Army of Louis XIII defeated the Spanish in 1640. The other eight etchings named : « Les cris de Paris » (the cries of Paris) are showing 16 different scenes of the street : the chimney-sweep, the coppersmith, the book-hawker, the dentist and ... the street conjurer named here « **Godeno** ».

#2 : ALMANACH ... 1641 Street conjuror with his « gibecière » and « godenot ».

Cardinal de Retz writes in his Mémoires (1644) : « Cardinal MAZARIN [Prime Minister of the Queen Anne d'Autriche] is like a **godenot**, he is always appearing and disappearing in an unexpected time and in an unexpected place ».

#3 : Wood painted Bonius Genius (height : 24.3 cm) belonged to the famous ventriloquist COMTE. Original cloth lost by the formely owner Georges Gaillard.

The origin of the word « **godenot** » according to the Robert's dictionary might come from the word **godon** (meaning a small and hum backed man). **Godon** was the name given by the French to the English during the 100 years war (1337-1453). At the end of the war, the English were often called « **godonds** » because their favorite oath was : « **goddam** ! »

#4 : Piluland's Hocus-Pocus frontispiece (Frankfurt und Leipzig - no date).

#5 : [Béricourt Etienne] : Original pen drawing (end of 18th century) 29 x 45 cm.

#6 : [Anonymous author] : Curious manuscript (c.1785) containing only coloured drawings without text - 16 colour plates - each plate reproduces magic lantern views and many conjurings tricks from the répertoire of this unknown author magician. 32 x 26 cm. Plate n°1

#7 : Plate n°2 : 30 numbered tricks, one with Bonius Genius.

Bonius Genius was frequently used in combination with cups and balls routine.

#8 : [Joly] : « L'Escamoteur » (1818) - etching - Plate n°10 extracted from a suite of prints called " Les cris et métiers de Paris " (trades and cries of Paris). 18 x 10 cm.

Often Bonius Genius is shown standing upon the box where the cups and balls were put in after the show.

9 : Pasquier : « L'Escamoteur » Colour print engraved by Moretti [1812] - 40 x 50 cm. The gibecière of this street conjuror seems impressive.

#10 : Chalon John-James : Original painting on wood (dated on the left 1819) - The back of the painting is handwritten : « A juggler performing tricks upon cards - A Parisian Scene » (signed) : J.J. Chalon. - (33.5 x 24.5 cm).

#11 : Chalon John-James : « L'Escamoteur » Colour litho - Published by Rodwell & Martin, London, August 1, 1820. - 21 x 16.4 cm. The colour print was made after the original painting with less details, chiefly on the background.

#12 : Bellangé : « Grande réussite à coeur » (1827) - Colour litho - Plate n°7 from an album including a suite of 12 plates. - 21 x 17 cm.

#13 : [Anonymous] : - L'Escamoteur à la campagne (The country conjuror) - Litho of Charpentier, Nantes, (no date). 18 x 22 cm.

#14 : Bourdin : Original drawing in colour - (c.1860) - Street magician with the gibecière (bag), cups, balls and Bonius Genius (Jean de la Vigne) on the table - 24 x 16 cm.

#15 : Bommier : Street conjuror with Jean de la Vigne - Place de la Bastille Litho H. Jannin, and H. Rousseau, éditeur, Paris. - Cover of a magic set (c.1860) - 19 x 30 cm.

PINETTI'S ROYAL PERFORMANCE BEFORE LOUIS XVI AND MARIE-ANTOINETTE

A Pinetti's performance before the Royal Family at the Castle of Fontainebleau is reported on December 23, 1783 in the « Mémoires Secrets » of Bachaumont. Every year, on December, the Royal Family and the Court were moving to Fontainebleau.

#16 : BELLERVAL (M. de) : Autographed and signed letter to his brother (Lyon, October 16, 1785) - 4 pages - 26 x 19.5 cm.

The presented letter is related to a Pinetti's performance at Versailles Castle in 1785. This letter was written by Monsieur de Bellerval living at Lyon to his brother staying at Belley, a small city near from Lyon. The first part of the letter is related to domestic life. The second part is referring briefly to the famous Queen necklace affair which broke out on August 15, 1785 with the arrest of Cardinal de Rohan at the Galerie des Glaces of Versailles. Cardinal de R... and Madame de La Motte are cited in the letter. The longest part (2 pages) is devoted to a presently Pinetti's performance at Lyon and to a Royal performance at Versailles before the King, the Queen and the Court. Monsieur de Bellerval is completely deceived by the Pinetti's fantastic performance. The effects of the following tricks are given : the mysterious inkstand which is writing different colours and only on the Pinetti's command, the trick of the signed note found inside of a pear selected by the audience; at Versailles, says Monsieur de Bellerval, the Queen wanted to find his signed note into an orange placed on a designated orange tree. Pinetti's signed note trick is indubitably an anteriority of the Robert-Houdin's disappearing handkerchief presented before King Louis Philippe and the Royal Family at Saint-Cloud castle in November, 1848. But the most surprising Pinetti's trick according to Monsieur de Bellerval is the borrowed watch and snuff-box of Louis XVI. The restauration of the royal watch and snuff-box after their destruction into a brass mortar looks very similar to the Comte de Grisy story reported in the Robert-Houdin's "Confidences"

#17 : [Pinetti's stage setting] : anonymous colour print referring likely to Pinetti.
21 x 41 cm.

[The Mysterious Clock - the Divination Tower - the Self Fire Gun - the Doll Chest - the Hunter (automaton) - the Little Turk (automaton) - etc...]

THE LITTLE LEARNED TURK OR THE GREAT SULTAN

#18 : DECREMPS Henri : « La Magie Blanche Dévoilée... » Paris, 1784.

The first 23 tricks explained are taken from the repertoire of Pinetti. According to Halle's Fortgesetzte Magie (Wien, 1796, vol.8, p.506), Pinetti was beginning his séance with the little Turk which is also the first Pinetti's trick to be explained by Henri Decremps.

Generally, the Turk or the Sultan were moved with 3 different sets of levels (or pedals) and placed upon a magic table which had the same corresponding number of pistons.

#19 : DECREMPS : « La Magia Bianca Svelata ... » Messina, 1793

#20 : ENCYCLOPEDIE METHODIQUE des Amusemens des Sciences..., Padoue, 1793.

#21 : PINETTI de WILLEDAL de MERCI (Joseph de) : - Genealogical tree.

Two descendants of Pinetti were magician. One Pinetti's descendant was living in Paris in 1949 and bore the Pinetti surname.

#22 : Aupré, Hollandais : « Par Permission Spectacle Nouveau Unique en son genre Jeudi 18 janvier 1787 ... » - Salle du Chapeau Rouge (Bordeaux ?) 39 x 48 cm.

Large printed poster surrounded with wood ornamental illustrations. A Grand Sultan moves his head and replys to the questions of the audience, etc.

#23 : Original Turk from the Pinetti's era (middle or end of XVIIIth century). - Carved and painted wood, original silk clothes. Height : 34 cm. The little Turk was fixed on a mahogany support. Height : 9 cm.

This magician automaton was working with 3 wires which were moved from wings. At the end of the show, the wires were falling down on the ground and the Turk could be visited by the audience. A sliding door is fitted in the support for proving there is nothing to see. The Turk has been transformed into a real and musical atomaton by a former owner but the original support has been preserved !

#24 : Anonymous magician [initial letters : J. D.] - Complete stage setting - wood print (c.1830-40)

#25 : Anonymous : - Complete stage setting of a magician. [Maybe a stock poster provided by a magic dealer as the Père Roujol]. Large litho [c.1840] - 65 x 50 cm

#26 : Lauzun François (Bourg St-Andréol) : Unpublished manuscript [1858-1859]
Description (and explanation) of a improved Turk made by the dealer Voisin who was honoured at the Exposition Universelle of 1855. The Voisin's Turk works with 5 pedals and pistons : he says yes or no, smokes, whistles and hits the bell.

#27 : Le Mercure Galant : Original automaton - [repaired by Roujol] - (c.1810)
Painted carved wood and metal. - Height : 61 cm. - Works with 3 pedals and pistons : he says yes or no and hits the bell.

#28 : Piece of printed paper found inside the basement of the Mercure Galant with this inscription : Rue de Richelieu N°5 - ROUJOL - Ferblantier - Lampiste - Mécanicien Constructeur et inventeur d'appareils de physique...

COMTE'S ROYAL PERFORMANCE BEFORE LOUIS XVIII

#29 : Comte Louis : « Nobis Miracula Joci - La Carte Pensée » colour print relative to a famous historical séance before Louis XVIII and the Court in December, 1814 where Comte received the title : « Pysicien du Roi » (35 x 25 cm.)

The story is reported in the Robert-Houdin's « Confidences » [see p.104-106 in the English edition and p.146-147 in the American edition]. Comte invited his majesty to select a card from the pack [it was the king of hearts] and begged to his august spectator to fix his eye on a vase filled with flowers. Comte next took a pistol, fired and the bust of Louis XVIII appeared among the flowers. The King asked Comte the meaning of this strange appearance. Comte replied : « I appeal to all Frenchmen whether that bust does not represent the King of all hearts ! »

#30 : Comte Louis : « Théâtre de M. Comte, Physicien du Roi. Aujourd'hui, jeudi 7 février 1822, 12 expériences de physique amusante » Printed playbill 39 x 32 cm

#31 : Comte Louis : Autographed and signed letter dated Lyon, July 17, 1812 to his future father in law where Comte asks the hand of his daughter. 4 p. 24 x 18 cm
Very clever, important and interesting letter in which Comte gives the estate of his fortune. Comte was 24 years old and signed « Comte, professeur de physique et ventriloque, privilégié par Sa Majesté l'Empereur ».

ROBERT-HOUDIN'S SOUVENIRS

#32 : Robert-Houdin : Grand Portrait (lithographie de Léon-Noël) dedicated and signed by Robert-Houdin to Comte, January 1846. (66 x 52 cm.)

#33 : Robert-Houdin : « Soirées Fantastiques de Robert-Houdin - tous les soirs à 8 heures précises, Palais Royal, Galerie de Valois 164 et rue de Valois, 13. »

Lithograph of Pruche (53 x 41 cm) - The text is drawn by hand - The best Robert-Houdin's poster showing his complete stage setting in 1845-1846.

#34 [Robert-Houdin] : « Chromatope-Nouvel effet fantasmagorique-Comicorama »
Lithograph, J. Rigo et Cie, 20.5 x 27.5 cm.

[Auriol et Debureau-Le Favori des dames - La pêche merveilleuse - Les cartes obéissantes - le Foulard aux surprises - La Pendule cabalistique - Le pâtissier inépuisable - Pierrot dans l'oeuf - La Couette sascinatrice - La seconde vue - l'Oranger mystérieux - Le secret de contrebande - La bouteille aux faveurs - Le Miroir des dames - Le Chasseur Tyrolien - Le coffre de sûreté - Les tourterelles sympathiques].

#35 : Robert-Houdin : « Aujourd'hui vendredi 17 mars 1848... » Printed poster with lithograph illustration [suspension éthérée] before his first tour in England. 54 x 70 cm

#36 : Robert-Houdin : « 136^e Séance - Aujourd'hui Mardi 18 novembre... »

Poster found in 1948 in a loft. The oldest Robert-Houdin's printed poster still in existence. The year is 1845.

#37 : Robert-Houdin : « Palais Royal - Soirées Fantastiques - Aujourd'hui 14 janvier 1852 ».

A note written on the poster by Robert-Houdin says : before last séance given by me at the Palais-Royal. This poster is presently at the Museum of Blois.

#38-39-40-41 : Robert-Houdin's souvenirs given by him to his audience.

#42 : Robert-Houdin : Autographed and signed letter - Paris, July 13, 1868.

The letter is relative to Robert-Houdin's financial conditions for making of a chess automaton for theatrical purpose.

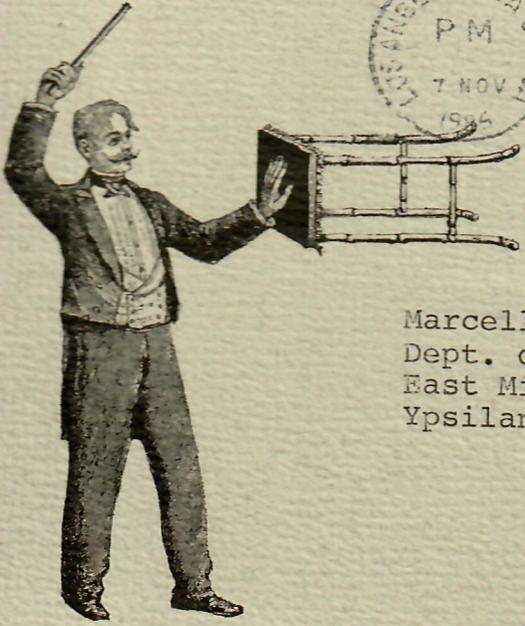
- #43 : Adenis et Gastineau : « La Czarine » Paris, Michel Lévy, 1868.
Text of the play for which Robert-Houdin constructed a chess player automaton.
- #44 : Dupuy-Mazuel Henri : « Le Joueur d'Échecs » film de Raymond Bernard.
Charles Dullin was playing the Baron de Kempelen (1927).
- #45 : Robert-Houdin : « Catalogue des Objets composant le Cabinet de M. Robert-Houdin » Blois, Imprimerie Lecesne, 1871. [Catalogue of Articles Belonging to the Estate of Robert-Houdin to be sold by auction at Hotel Drouot, November 1871].
The sale did not take place. All the 40 apparatus and automata [two chess player automata in working condition!] described in the catalogue were duplicates constructed by Robert-Houdin for touring. The catalogue says that Auriol and Debureau works with 10 pistons.
- #46 : Robert-Houdin (Théâtre) : Inside of the second Robert-Houdin's theater, Boulevard des Italiens, in 1862. - Colour print (36.5 x 28 cm.)
The magician Cleverman was the director (1862-1872).

ARLEQUIN THE TRAPEZE AUTOMATON OR THE FRENCH CLOWN

- #47 : Lauzun François (see #26) : « L'Arlequin dans sa boîte » Manuscript with illustrations (1858-1859). (Effect with explanation).
- #48 : Theatre Robert-Houdin's Magic table with Arlequin chest (c.1860).
The table is completely tricked with 6 traps + 1 servante + 10 pistons + 5 electric contacts through a back hollow leg.
- #49 - 50 : The Magic table with the little Turk and the Arlequin.
- #51 - 54 : Arlequin jumps outside his chest.
- #55 - 57 : What the audience should not see.

THE FIRST PHOTOGRAPHY REPRODUCING A COMPLETE MAGIC STAGE SETTING ?

- #58 : Anguinet (Mademoiselle Bénita) : « Théâtre de prestidigitation de Mlle Anguinet au Pré-Catelan » in : *"L'Illustration, Journal Universel"* - November 8, 1856 - Wood engraving of Marc [18 x 25 cm] and printed text of Philippe Busoni.
Mademoiselle Anguinet was performing in 1856 at the «Théâtre de Magie» of Pré Catelan, a walking "promenade" located in Bois de Boulogne, (Paris).
- #59 : [Hanquelle H.] (A pupil of Buisson?) : Original photography of the complete stage setting of Mademoiselle Bénita Anguinet (Théâtre de Magie, Pré-Catelan). Her name appeared on the portfolio located on the right of the photography.
Original albumen paper [1856] 31.5 x 22 cm fixed on hard paper 54 x 40 cm.
Mademoiselle Anguinet was performing in 1856-1858 at the Pré Catelan. After 1858, the magician Victor De Ville was playing at Pré Catelan. (see *le Moniteur Universel, Journal Officiel de l'Empire Français, n°183*).
The stage setting of Mademoiselle Anguinet was impressive : 10 different tables, side tables and supports - a portfolio with her name - a Cabalistic Clock - a lot of metal covers and vases - 2 orange trees - a crystal casket - a crystal bowl - a mortar - large vase filled with flowers - a very curious and high column with a playing card on the top (reproduced also on the print) - a magic mirror (reproduced on the print) - a pistol - the wool ball trick with the coin appearing in a crystal vase - different bottles and vases - and, of course, an Arlequin jumping outside his chest !



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Dept. of Sociology
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Dear Marcello

A book should be on the way. The publishers are the most frustrating people on the face of the earth.

As for you bib - which sounds great why not include fiction relating to cold reading such as MAMETS The Shawl

All the best

Pick

Marcello -

17 June 72

Back from Spain & England. Shows went well lots o' fun.

Thanks for the assortment of photos, articles, & info which cross my desk in a new reading always interesting stream.

best to Pat, V.J.

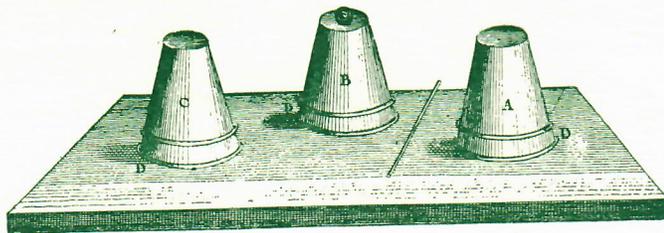
»RICKY JAY» A TEASE AT EASE WITH THE BARD «



© TOM BLOOM '82

RICKY JAY
as PHILOSTRATE
» Master of the Revels «

in a Joseph Papp Production of
» A MIDSUMMER NIGHTS DREAM «
At The New York Shakespeare Festival in Central Park
August 3 → September 5 1982



The Mulholland Library of Conjuring
& the Allied Arts, and Ricky Jay,
extend the best wishes for
the Holiday Season & the New Year

Government and military figures, as well as watchdog groups and reports.

rasing That 'Echoed'

In its letter, The National Journal did seven examples in arguing that the Inquirer article followed its own. Three of these were citations of common materials, such as a commission report. Two others cited phrases in the Inquirer article that "echoed" the National Journal's. For instance, the National Journal referred to the National Security Agency as a "global electronic vacuum cleaner," and The Inquirer called it "a global vacuum cleaner of intelligence."

Two other examples involved similar quotations. The most striking of these was from Thomas S. Amlie, a Pentagon official, who was quoted by the National Journal as saying: "There are three reasons to have black programs. One, it deserves to be black. There may be five of those, and Stealth isn't one of them. Two, you're doing something so dumb you don't want anyone to know about it. For three, you want to rip open the money bag at both ends and get out a big scoop shovel, because there's no accountability whatsoever."

In The Inquirer, Mr. Amlie also said the military had three reasons for black programs.

"One," he is quoted as saying, "you're doing something that should genuinely be secret. There's only a couple of those and Stealth ain't one of them. Two, you're doing something so damn stupid you don't want anybody to know about it. And three, you want to rip the moneybag open and get out a shovel, because there is no accountability whatsoever."

A Question of Credit

Mr. Weiner said that he had not read The National Journal article before he interviewed Mr. Amlie, who is a recognized gadfly in this area; Mr. Weiner suggested that Mr. Amlie found a colorful way of making his point and repeated it.

The National Journal argues that so much similarity should have compelled Mr. Weiner to credit Mr. Morrison and The National Journal as sources for his article.

Mr. Weiner said in an interview that he had mentioned Mr. Morrison, though not The National Journal, in an accompanying article, but that the accompanying article was eliminated by editors because it was "boring."

He described Mr. Morrison's arti-

two faint hints of humor.

But Mr. Nixon makes the subject of geopolitics dramatic in "1999." Partly this is because he raises all the timely questions about the present state of the world, and then answers them both systematically and thoroughly. Partly it's because of the coherence of his world view.

By EDWIN McDOWELL

One of the fastest-growing book categories is New Age, a catch-all for everything from self-help and spirituality to extraterrestrial travel and spirit possession. G.P. Putnam's Sons largely resisted the New Age trend — until a psychic medium gave its executives "readings" with the dead that so bowled them over they signed him to a six-figure deal.

The book is "We Don't Die: George Anderson's Conversations With the Other Side," by Joel Martin and Patricia Romanowski. In it Mr. Anderson, a 35-year-old Long Island resident, describes how he receives messages for the living "from their dead loved ones." With 60,000 hard-cover copies in print, the book is a contender for the best-seller list. But its publication last month alienated a Putnam best-selling author, Andrew Rooney, a syndicated columnist and the resident curmudgeon of "60 Minutes."

Mr. Rooney wrote a column stating that anyone who says he can communicate with the dead "is 1) crazy, 2) a dreamer or 3) a con artist."

Mr. Rooney concluded: "It is unclear to me what obligation there is on the part of a reputable publisher not to issue irresponsible trash. 'We Don't Die' is irresponsible trash and it will make big money. . . . G.P. Putnam's Sons published my last book and I think it's the last book of mine they're going to publish."

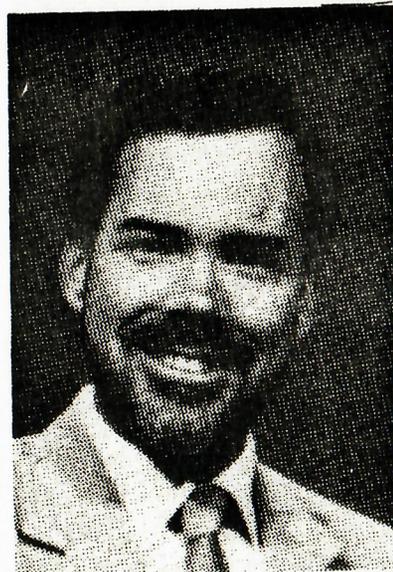
'No Outrageous Claims'

Faith Sale, who acquired the book for Putnam's and who attended the first session with Mr. Anderson, denies that the book is irresponsible. "There's no speaking in tongues, or speaking with the voice of people long past," she said. "There are no UFO's and aliens, no predictions and no outrageous claims."

Other New Age books are less staid. "Communion," a best seller by Whit-

ney the Palestinian question, it only "forge closer ties" with the countries in the region of the Persian Gulf that will act as a buffer against a Soviet push to the south.

Of course there are faults here and there in the wholeness of Mr. Nixon's argument. Events in Afghanistan and Nicaragua have overtaken his text,



John Smith

George Anderson brought Putnam's into the New Age age.

ley Strieber published by Avon, describes what the author says was his kidnapping by intelligent humanoids. Shirley MacLaine's "Out on a Limb," a best seller after its publication in 1983 and a television mini-series last year, is about reincarnation and meetings with mediums.

Passive Receiving, Not Trances

Mr. Anderson earns his living giving readings at his home, for which he charges \$50. He also has a cable-television show on which he says he puts callers in touch with the dead.

THE JEWISH HERITAGE WRITING PROJECT

Under the sponsorship of The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, The Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, The New York State Council on the Arts, The Joe and Emily Lowe Foundation, The Samuel Bronfman Foundation, and Consolidated Edison Corp., an intensive

Union as the source of the world's evil while at the same time considering China one of the great hopes for the United States' future. Both are Communist countries, he keeps reminding us, and Communism as an ideology is not only bad, but also "has lost its appeal." Yet the Soviet Union must be defeated, while "a productive Chi-

what needs to be done to ensure the main "1999" reflects what admirers have always insisted is the better side of him. In short, if there is a residue of the political opportunist in these pages, it is by and large overwhelmed by the student of statecraft that he has aspired with such doggedness and energy to become.

Putnam's Joins New Age: Dead Men Do Tell Tales

Unlike psychics who call up spirits, Mr. Anderson is a "passive receiver" who does not go into a trance, does his readings in well-lighted rooms and does not have a spirit guide speaking through him.

David Shanks, the president of the Berkley Publishing Group, said he was initially so skeptical that when offered the book, he told Roger Cooper, Berkley's publisher, "Unless the guy does it in my office, right here, we're not buying the book."

Soon afterward, however, Mr. Anderson, Sarah Lazin, the agent, and the book's co-authors came to the Putnam for a meeting with about a dozen executives and editors. Mr. Shanks asked if Mr. Anderson would be willing to receive communications right there.

When Mr. Anderson asked for volunteers, Mr. Shanks did so reluctantly. Everyone else filed out of the conference room and a half-hour or so later Mr. Shanks emerged — visibly shaken, according to observers.

Names and Causes of Death

Mr. Shanks said Mr. Anderson told him the names of each of his mother's seven sisters and two brothers, told him correctly that his Aunt Mary had died of stomach cancer, told him exactly how his other aunts died and even told him the names of his mater-

nal grandparents, who died before Mr. Shanks was born.

Mr. Shanks then told Mr. Cooper to go in for a reading. "After a half-hour Roger came out looking like a ghost," Mr. Shanks said. "He said George went into his whole relationship with his father and even told him the Yiddish nicknames of his brother."

"Here were these two nonbelievers and the readings knocked their socks off," said Sabra Elliott, a Berkley vice president and marketing executive. She too was skeptical, she said, until Mr. Anderson began telling her specifics about her dead father.

After Mr. Shanks and Mr. Cooper had their readings, Ms. Lazin said, "They made an offer right on the spot, and we accepted."

Word of the readings spread throughout Putnam/Berkley. Eventually Mr. Anderson was asked to return to do public readings at a meeting of 30 or so staff members. He also gave readings for the sales staff.

Futures/Options:

Monday through Friday,

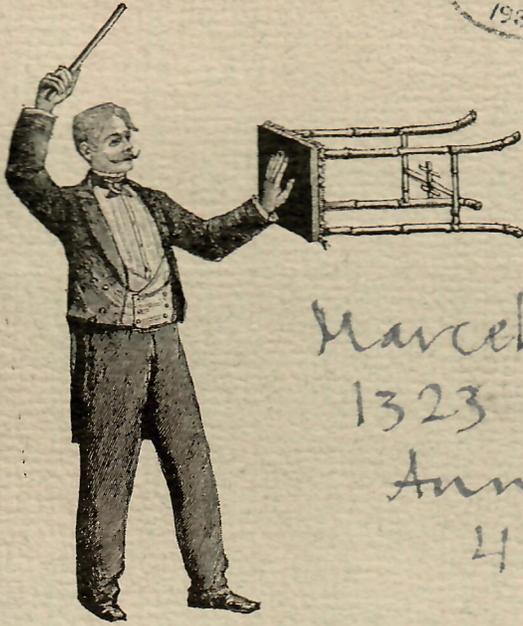
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The New York Times

NY TIMES 4/11/88

In Memoriam

Joseph T. Consolino



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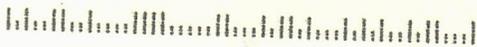
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DM

Will check the juggling
books for references to ur. dad
Unfortunately no index in
either.

Hope all is well - Pat, kids, etc.

vj.

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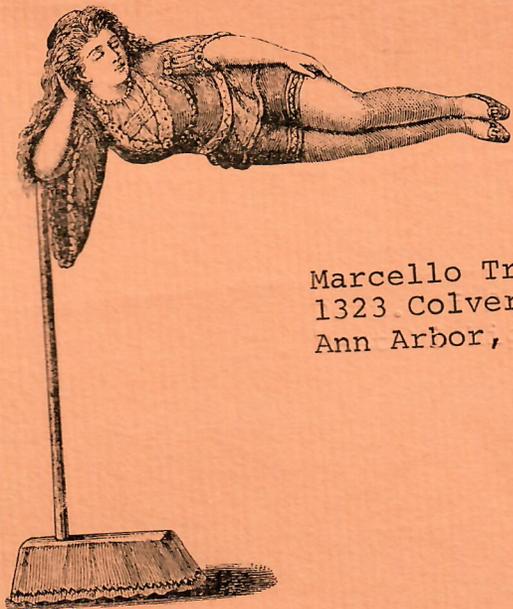
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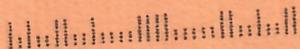
Marcello -

Thanks much for the copy of
SPANGLE. Now if you could only
provide the year required to read
it! Hope all is well, best to PAT

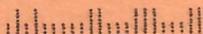
vj.



Marcello Truzzi
1323 Colver Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48103



MARCELLO TRUZZI
DEPT OF SOCIOLOGY
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Dear Marcello -

Thanks as always for your
crazy clippings. Hope you
and the kids are all well
best Ricky

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MARCELLO

MANY THANKS FOR THE ^{SA} (ASSORTED)
MATERIALS - GOOD STUFF.
MUCH APPRECIATED.

ALL THE BEST

Ricky



RICKY JAY

1257 North Flores Street
Hollywood, California 90069



Marcello Truzzi
1323 Culver Rd
Ann Arbor
MI 48103



RICKY JAY

1257 North Flores Street
Hollywood, California 90069



Marcello Truzzi
1323 Culver Rd.
Ann Arbor
MI 48103

Thanks for the Breath-
arian info. I had
the Bay Area skeptics
version but fun to
have the Australian
as well.

Hope all is well
best to Pat

P.S. Congratson the reviews must
confess smiling at "not a crude
Randi - The debunking" line... best of luck on it.

DM

4 March 91

Your book finally arrived
and I'm enjoying the
read. Thanks, Congratulatory
The cartoon of the
rabbit/shadow was great

best to Pat
rj.

Marcello
Thanks for
dr. note on
Twins hope
to see you
in Cheap
best boy.



EARNED PIGS & FIREPROOF WOMEN

Marcello:-

The Vernon article as promised -
best picks
hi to Pa

RICKY JAY

Marcello

thanks for your various
enclosures

here's one you'll enjoy.

is it possible for you to send
stuff to the library address
rather than home?

it would be very helpful.

was just at the collectors
convention in Chicago -
& the Rare Book Fair in N.Y.

Nothing sensational -

Hope all is well - best to Pat

-R.J.



Marcello Fuzzi
5010 Willis Road
Grass Lake
Michigan
49240

Thanks much for the article
on psychology & Spiritualism.
A extremely good read. I'll
let you know if I come up
with anything on Zuelan.

Best to Pat et al.

TJ.

Marcello Truzzi, Ph.D.
Consulting Anomalist

5010 Willis Road
Grass Lake, MI 49240 USA
517/522-3551 • FAX 517/522-3555

Jan. 27, 1994

Dear Ricky,

I heard from Charles Reynolds that your performance was met with enthusiasm and proper appreciation. I hope your show is a big success for you and gets you the rewards you deserve. I only wish my schedule here would have allowed me to come see your opening. Charles tells me you are sold out, too.

Thanks for sending me the nice copy of Big Top Rhythms which I did not have and am happy to add to my collection. I just finished reading a manuscript on the rebirth of the one-ring circus that has managed to greatly revive my interest in that institution.

I don't know if you try to keep up on gypsies, but I just got a book on the scams of the "gypsy mafia" the basic information about which I enclose here for you.

Uri is off in Israel helping with the movie being made there about his early life (fictionalized, written and directed by Ken Russell). That should prove an interesting film.

Again, I'm glad your show seems to be going very well. If my psychic powers work (but alas they are fallible), I think you may get a McArthur award yet. God knows you deserve the recognition in my book!

Best from both me and Pat,

Cheers,



P.S. I hope your apartment and collection in Hollywood was undamaged by the earthquake.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1994

The Living Arts

The New York Times

Review/Theater

An Artful Deceiver Baffles His Audiences

By BEN BRANTLEY

Ricky Jay is an exceptionally easy man to listen to. His voice, which flows steadily throughout the evening of sleight-of-hand tricks he is performing at the tiny Second Stage Theater in Manhattan, is calm, softly rough-edged, self-amused and distinctly nontheatrical.

For much of his entrancing one-man performance, "Ricky Jay and His 52 Assistants," which has been directed by David Mamet, one has the feeling of being less in a theater than in the apartment of a new, mildly eccentric friend who has brought you up to demonstrate aspects of a beloved hobby. The wall between performer and audience seems truly nonexistent.

This sense of accessibility may be the most impressive illusion of all in a show in which cards seem to levitate, metamorphose into other cards and effortlessly arrange themselves into perfect, high-stakes hands. The open-mouthed sense of wonder inspired by Mr. Jay relies greatly on his deceptive air of intimacy. He encourages us to look as closely as we like at his various eye-befuddling machinations — repeatedly inviting audience members on stage to play a few hands with him — confident that it's not going to bring us anywhere near an understanding of how he does what he does.

Mr. Jay, a burly, bearded man with the look of a gentle gangster, has acquired a sophisticated cult following in recent years, and tickets to this already sold-out show have become the most coveted in town. For Mr. Jay is more than a first-rate prestidigitator. As a scholar "in the field of deception and unusual entertainment," according to his program biography, his books on the subject include the best-selling "Learned Pigs and Fireproof Women." Here he maintains a running commentary that steeps each individual trick in a rich context of history, punctuated with period anecdotes, thumbnail sketches of his favorite magicians (not the obvious, flashy ones, like Houdini) and mountebanks and descriptions of variations on classic subterfuges over the centuries.

Accordingly, Kevin Rigdon's Victorian-flavored single set, which suggests a cozy library-cum-playroom stocked with the conjurer's arcana, seems to represent a matrix of lore from which Mr. Jay, in a sense, has been born and from which he can step confidently as a contemporary into the world of his audience. Instead of a



Ricky Jay in his one-man performance, "Ricky Jay and His 52 Assistants," at the Second Stage in New York.

Continued on Page B4

Ricky Jay, Artful Deceiver, Leaves Audiences Baffled

Continued From Page B1

magician's cloak, he wears an authoritative, invisible mantle of accumulated traditions.

It is a mantle he bears with both light irony and courtly respect. His language leans toward anachronistic bombast, often taking the form of the ornate chains of words of the spielmaster or the carnival barker, but he speaks it without archness. He is clearly a man in love with the patois of his profession, in all its aspects, and he is equally at home reciting a melodramatic broadsheet ballad about a card shark and his son, a translation of a poem by François Villon about how a gambler's money disappears and the grittier lingo of the contemporary con artist.

Correspondingly, the tricks themselves range dizzily from the genteel to the street-smart, each presented as a self-contained piece of theater. He performs vertiginous variations on the old cup-and-ball trick, using three sets of props that span the centuries. He also lays out three bent cards, which, he points out, "if you live in New York City, should fill your hearts with fear" and proceeds to deliver an extremely sophisticated demonstration of the fine art of three-card monte.

Mr. Jay is slyly funny, expert in the throwaway aside (in showing how one deals from the bottom of the deck he announces deadpan, "This is cheating") and in incorporating audience members into card games with off-handed charm, playing wryly to their understandable suspicion. Referring to an 18th-century illusionist who once produced his wife from under a tiny cup, he says, "Practice though I have, I have been unable to get married."

It is difficult to single out precisely what Mr. Mamet — a director and playwright with his own obsessive attraction to the art of deception and for whom Mr. Jay has worked as a consultant (and actor) on several films — has contributed to the evening. But the show has been paced with a subtly accelerating momentum that allows its star to become ever looser, and more outlandish, as the performance wears on.

By the end of show's second half, Mr. Jay has introduced an army of

Ricky Jay and His 52 Assistants

Written and performed by Ricky Jay; directed by David Mamet; set by Kevin Rigdon; lighting by Jules Fisher; consultants, Jim Steinmeyer and Michael Weber; Mr. Jay's clothing by Alan Bilzerian; production stage manager, Matthew Silver; associate producer, Carol Fishman. Presented by Second Stage Theater, Carole Rothman, artistic director; Suzanne Schwartz Davidson, producing director. At 2162 Broadway, at 76th Street, Manhattan.

bizarre wind-up toys (including a turtle with a woman's head) to assist him in finding a lost card. He has also demonstrated his fabled ability as a user of "cards as weapons," by variously flinging them in boomerang fashion, cutting them with scissors in midair, tossing them across the stage at a row of wind-up animals and slinging them with such velocity that they stick into the "pachydermatous" of a watermelon.

One can learn many things from "Ricky Jay and His 52 Assistants": the origin of the phrase "the only game in town," how the only man who knew how to deal from the center of the deck was finally tracked down by admirers in Wichita, Kan., in 1931, how Max Malini began his glorious rise as a mountebank by biting the button off a politician's lapel.

One is far less likely to discover how Mr. Jay achieves any of his tricks. At one point, he purports to explain his method of stacking a deck of cards, urging, "Go home and do this yourself." It is extremely unlikely that anyone who witnesses this will be able to do so.

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Suzanne Schwartz Davidson, Producing Director
presents



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Written and Performed by RICKY JAY

Directed by

DAVID MAMET

Scenic Design
KEVIN RIGDON

Consultants

JIM STEINMEYER
MICHAEL WEBER

Lighting Design
JULES FISHER

Mr. Jay's Clothing by
ALAN BILZERIAN

Production Stage Manager
MATTHEW SILVER

Associate Producer

CAROL FISHMAN

Press Representative

RICHARD KORNBURG

Ricky Jay photographed by Richard Avedon for *The New Yorker*
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RICKY JAY &
HIS 52 ASSISTANTS

Written and Performed by RICKY JAY

Directed by DAVID MAMET

Marcello Truzzi, Ph.D.
Consulting Anomalist

5010 Willis Road
Grass Lake, MI 49240 USA
517/522-3551 • FAX 517/522-3555

March 20, 1994

Dear Ricky,

Thanks for your recent note. Hope things continue to go splendidly for you (I enjoyed the nice caricature of you in the front section of the current New Yorker).

This is mainly a note to tell you how very much I enjoyed the first issue of your Jay's Journal of Anomalies. Wonderful stuff.

If you are not already well aware of Candland's book, I enclose some relevant xeroxes of pages.

Cheers,



P.S. Did you hear about the psychic with Alzheimer's? She kept forgetting what was going to happen.

■ SHOW BUSINESS

TRICKY
RICKY

A master conjurer and scholar takes his bafflements onstage, accompanied only by a deck of cards

By JAY COCKS

THE EIGHT OF CLUBS, WHICH had gone missing, had no business turning up where it did. No way. Except Ricky Jay's way.

It happened last week, midway through the performance of *Ricky Jay & His 52 Assistants*, a dextrous, funny and entirely elegant revue of card conjuring at an off-Broadway theater in Manhattan. The missing card, boldly marked and closely watched, appeared—after several comic digressions—in a totally unexpected place that only a master manipulator can navigate (and that would be wrong to divulge here).

The audience, thoroughly flummoxed, responded with prolonged applause. As the full-bearded, heavysset Ricky Jay stepped forward to take a bow, a voice shouted from the fourth row, "How did you do that?" "I wasn't aware," replied the conjurer, allowing himself a small smile, "that we'd come to the question-and-answer portion of the show."

But there is an even more pertinent question: How can one man with a deck of cards create an evening of theater brimming with such unflagging surprise? "The trend toward overelaborate theater led me to this," he explains. "The kind of thing where people think more about helicopters than actors. The idea of walking onstage with a deck of cards and entertaining for an evening seemed a lovely way to go against the trend."

This does not speak, however, to the unforced skill with which the star manipulates his 52 assistants. A masterly

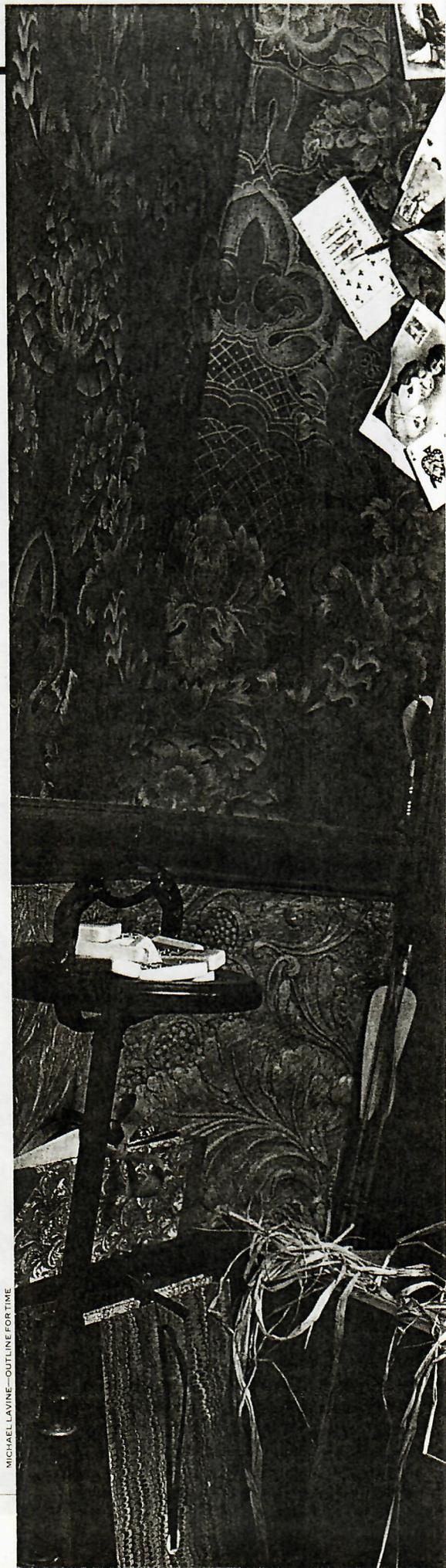
marksman, he can scale an ordinary playing card across the stage with such force that it pierces a watermelon, and can rocket a card to decapitate a plastic duck. He can make a card rise from the deck as if by levitation, or tear one up and make it reappear whole. In Jay's supple hands, what is commonly known as a card trick is something approaching art.

To watch him work a deck is to see him write haiku in the air, four times a week and three times on weekends.

For anyone whose notions of magic are bounded on the one side by the rattle and roll of Penn & Teller and, on the other, by the glitzoramas of David Copperfield, the Jay show will seem highly unconventional, perhaps even radical. "Other magicians are more prone to showing off, to letting us see how good they are," says Jules Fisher, who did the lighting for the show and who studies magic with Jay. "But Ricky's virtuosity is hidden." The show's scale and intimacy hark back to the 19th century tradition of such masters as Robert Houdin (from whom Houdini extracted his own stage name), and, along with card manipulations and effortless demonstrations of false dealing and three-card monte technique, Jay delivers a limber-fingered course in magic history and gambling ploys.

As he shuffles, flicks and flips, he expounds fondly on the achievements of George Devo, a 19th century sharper and headbutter, and warmly evokes the memory of his two contemporary masters Dai Vernon and Charlie Miller, both now de-

Ricky Jay on the set of his show. Says his director and friend, David Mamet: "I don't even know how he does these things."

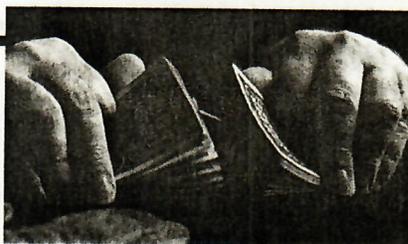


MICHAEL LAVINE—OUTLINE FOR TIME



ceased, who shared their secrets with their gifted acolyte. Photos of Vernon and Miller can be seen on the bookcase of the fin-de-siècle gaming room that serves as the show's sole set, and a *carte de visite* featuring a picture of the 19th century illusionist Johann Nepomuk Hofzinsler actually shows up in a prop for one of the show's loveliest effects.

IN THE OFFHAND AND SOMEWHAT bemused fashion of the waywardly curious and the deeply knowledgeable, Jay also quotes Thorstein Veblen and François Villon during the show, and belts out a snatch of Neil Sedaka. He is not, altogether, your average Siegfried-and-Roy production. He dotes on well-turned literary phrases as well as street-tempered slang with a scholar's appreciation and a showman's panache. Language is one of the secret weapons of this show, which, given the fact that it was staged by Jay's friend,



Where did the eight of clubs go? The answer is all in the cards.

playwright David Mamet, is not surprising. "I'm not a magician; I know nothing about magic," Mamet insists. "The show's all Ricky. He's the ultimate repository of arcane information. I don't even know how he does these things. Whenever there was a question of something with a trick when we were rehearsing, Ricky just went into deep magic conferences with his myrmidons."

The theater advises that the show may not be appropriate for anyone under 17. This has nothing to do with content. Jay insists on the seri-

ousness of his craft. "Magic," he says, "has been thrown away as just something for kids. If the curtains opened and there were 20 kids in the audience, I couldn't do the show." Michael Weber, Jay's business partner, suggests that "Ricky's trying to redress the focus of magic."

He has, in fact, been doing that ever since he was a kid himself. "Ricky's repertoire goes on forever," Mamet says. "He's been working on it for 40 years." Jay was born in Brooklyn and raised in New Jersey (he slips away from chronological specifics—"Just say I'm in my 40s"), and can recall performing sleight-of-hand tricks at a backyard barbecue for the Society of American Magicians when he was four years old. Vernon was in the audience. "The Professor," he remembers, "was too kind to give me the devastating critique I deserved."

Jay kept working on his technique until he was good enough to appear on local television at the age of 7. After drifting through a number of jobs and a handful of colleges, he found his way, in the '70s, to Los Angeles, where he apprenticed with Miller and Vernon, and played gigs wherever he could find them, including opening for acts as various as Anita O'Day and Cheech and Chong. Between times, he began studying and writing about the history of conjuring. His first book was *Cards as Weapons* (1977), an amusing discourse illustrating the various ways that an ordinary playing card—or a whole deck—can deliver awful injury to an attacker. His next, *Learned Pigs & Fireproof Women* (1986), was a history and tribute to "unique, eccentric and amazing entertainers," among them, "the Great Peters," a bungee-style leaper who dove off a 75-ft.-high rigging with a rope fixed to an elastic collar around his neck.

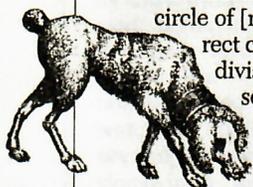
Now regarded as a true authority on the conjuring arts, Jay has elevated his status with a new publication, *Jay's Journal of Anomalies*, a quarterly dedicated to the lives and achievements of the sort of historic characters who populated *Learned Pigs*. "There's nothing like the feeling of seeing the *Journal* come off the press," says the bibliomaniac Jay, who has amassed a library of 4,000 to 5,000 books, "except being onstage."

Being onstage is Jay's lifeline to the past and his throughline to the future. For the audience, it is a paradigm of dazzlement. If wonder is truly the beginning of wisdom, then *Ricky Jay & His 52 Assistants* is the smartest show in town. ■

MICHAEL LAVINE—OUTLINE FOR TIME

Of Dogs and Other Marvels

A sampler of historical vignettes from two of Ricky Jay's publications, *Learned Pigs & Fireproof Women* and *Jay's Journal of Anomalies*:

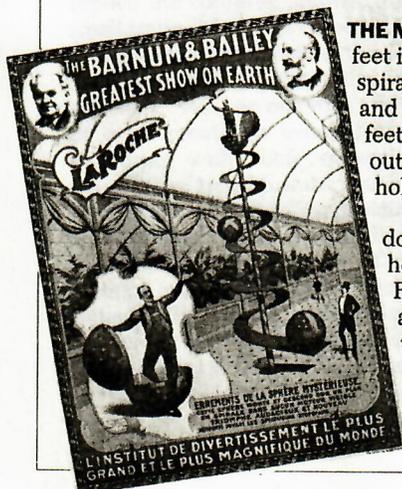


CLEVER DOG. A highly manicured poodle, [Munito] was introduced into a circle of [numbered] pasteboards. With his teeth Munito picked up the correct cards to solve problems in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. For inquiries in . . . geography, botany and natural history, he selected appropriate alphabet cards. He could identify colors . . . and was adept at dominoes . . . The most logical explanation . . . was Munito's exceptional sense of sound, not smell . . . As Munito circled the cards with an "air of reflection," the trainer would . . . make an almost inaudible clicking noise with his fingernail or a toothpick. This would alert the dog to the proper selection.

SWORD SWALLOWING MADE EASY (from a turn-of-the-century pamphlet): Use a peacock feather dipped in oil to tickle the throat, which helps you become familiar with the sensation. Swallow a rubber tube—when the sword is swallowed, it will be encased in the tube. [Make] an imitation sword . . . out of licorice covered with tinfoil or aluminum paint; the licorice sword is swallowed and a real one produced from behind the back, giving "the impression the sword has passed entirely through you." Hire somebody to do it for you, as it may save you much annoyance.

THE MAN IN THE BALL. A metal sphere just over two feet in diameter was placed at the bottom of a long, spiral track. The ball moved, as if by magic, slowly and smoothly up the perilous incline. Almost 24 feet in the air, the ball stopped . . . A pistol shot rang out, and hands holding flags emerged through holes in the ball.

Descending ominously, the ball traveled back down the spiral and settled on the ground. The hemispheres split and . . . LaRoche [born Leon Rauch in 1857], a full-sized man, emerged . . . to a tumultuous reception . . . The skill to move the ball up the long spiral, constantly shifting the center of gravity forward but not from side to side, was considerable.



ILLUSTRATIONS FROM LEARNED PIGS & FIREPROOF WOMEN



SECOND STAGE THEATRE

Marcello —

Thanks much for
yr note -

All the best —

best to Pat —
cheers,

—vj

Marcello Truzzi, Ph.D.

Consulting Anomalist

5010 Willis Road
Grass Lake, MI 49240 USA
517/522-3551 • FAX 517/522-3555

April 12, 1995

Ricky,

Here's the missing replacement page for you for the article.

I have since written to Dr. Daston who, it turns out, is also the author of the paper on marvels in QUESTIONS OF EVIDENCE which I think I sent you earlier (or at least something about that excellent book). I located another article in my files about Daston which I don't think I sent you earlier and enclose here. She sounds interesting. I hope I hear back from her (among other things I asked her about possible articles of hers).

Since she is at the U. of Chicago, it is a shame you two could not have gotten together when you were in Chicago.

Thanks again for reminding me about Beulah Miller's being mentioned in Rinn. Checking that out, I see that he simply swallowed Munsterberg's debunking whole despite its inadequacies. Rinn mentions that some later tests were conducted, but alas gives no details for follow-up.

Best,



Marcello Truzzi



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THURSDAY, JUNE 15, 8:00 PM



Now you see him

The staff of The
Mulholland Library of Conjuring
& The Allied Arts,
and Ricky Jay, curator,
extend very best wishes
for the Holiday Season and the
New Year



Now you don't



4 March 1996

Marcello,

I inadvertently erased your recent phone message. I believe you were giving me the name of a book about deception. I'm sorry to trouble you again, but perhaps you can provide me with the details.

All the best to you and Pat,

Ricky

Ricky Jay 9121 SUNSET BOULEVARD LOS ANGELES, CA 90069 Phone 310 276-9522 Fax 310 276-0242



JAY'S JOURNAL of ANOMALIES



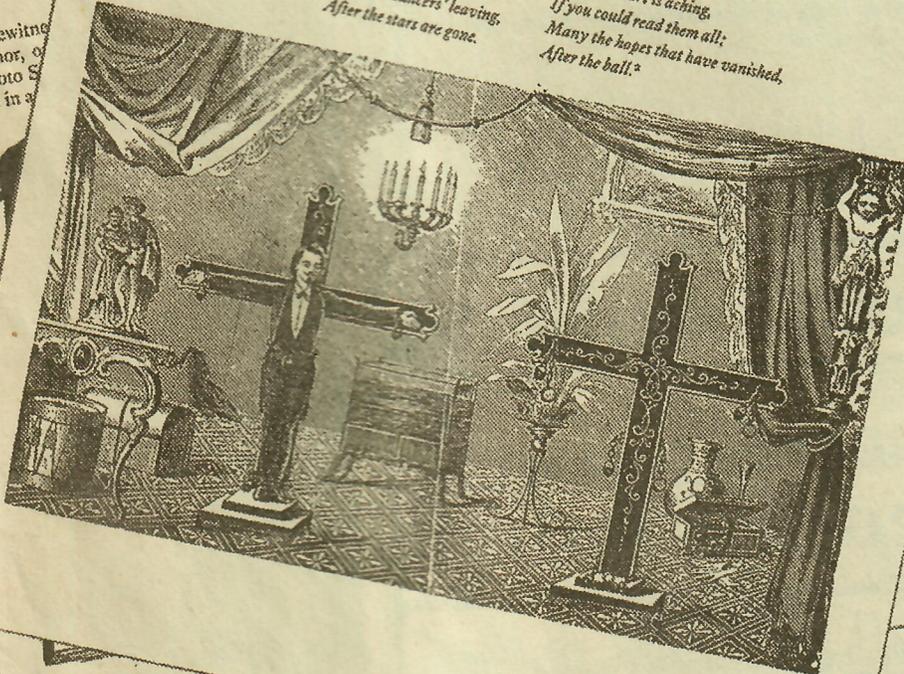
VOLUME ONE, NUMBER FOUR WINTER, 1995 PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

Fact & Crucifixion

AS THE LAST CENTURY drew to a close, Tommy Minnock was singing "after the ball is over" to a wildly enthusiastic audience in a Trenton, New Jersey, music hall. Since Mr. Minnock was not known for the exceptional range or quality of his instrument, and this selection was one of the most popular songs of the 1890s, the event hardly seems worthy of our attention a hundred years later. I would be remiss, however, if I failed to mention that the singing was effected while Minnock, in a supposed hypnotic state, was impaled, hands and legs nailed to a cross, his head hanging to one side in "similitude of the picture of the crucifixion of Christ." Oblivious both to the pain and his surroundings, the entranced Minnock crooned:

*After the ball is over,
After the break of morn,
After the dancers' leaving,
After the stars are gone.*

*Many a heart is aching,
If you could read them all;
Many the hopes that have vanished,
After the ball.²*



From Jay's Journal of Anomalies by Ricky Jay (W. & V. Dailey Antiquarian Books)

while Minnock, in a state, was impaled, to a cross ..." the journal will be Mr. Jay's 1986 book, "Fireproof Women," aagerie of history'sainers, like Harry five different wordsces of chalk held in his mouth; or Ivan century Frenchman oven with two un emerge unscathed eaks ready to eat.

The journal, a labor of love that grew from Mr. Jay's desire to continue writing on the kinds of subjects that filled "Learned Pigs and Fireproof Women," has remained something of a secret.

UNADVERTISED, DISTRIBUTED solely out of a bookstore in Los Angeles (W. & V. Dailey Antiquarian Books, 8216 Melrose Avenue, L.A. 90046, telephone 213-658-8515) and priced at \$90 a year for 4 issues of from 6 to 12 pages each, it has fewer than 300 subscribers. They include academics like Laurence Senelick at Tufts

University and Neil Harris at the University of Chicago, who share Mr. Jay's intellectual attraction to oddities; auteur observers of the peculiar like Mr. Mamet, Woody Allen, Stephen Sondheim and the cartoonist Matt Groening, and celebrity performers with an eccentric bent, like Steve Martin and Whoopi Goldberg.

"It's a wonderful publication," said Mr. Senelick, a historian of popular entertainment and the Fletcher Professor of Drama at Tufts. "There's a bit of a competitive thing. Whenever I get a copy, I look in my collection to see if I have anything Ricky

Continued on Page 13

A Prestidigitator With His Own Journal of Oddities

By BRUCE WEBER

THE SUBJECT OF A FORTHCOMING issue of Jay's Journal of Anomalies, its creator, Ricky Jay, said recently, will be cheating at bowling, half a dozen or so pages of text about scams involving alleys and pins. Mr. Jay is, of course, the sleight-of-hand artist and cardsharp who will reprise his peripatetic one-man show, "Ricky Jay and His 52 Assistants," for 10 weeks beginning Wednesday Off Broadway.

But he is also a historian of magic, chicanery and freaky entertainment, which he proves four times a year with his highly idiosyncratic journal. And though he is a

CHICAGO

**Ceiling walkers?
Houdini imitators?
Ricky Jay, who is
reprising his solo
show Off Broadway,
describes them all in
his favorite sideline.**

professed non-bowler, he said he has plenty of material for his planned issue; what he is pondering at the moment is whether to include a digression, an experience of his own he refers to as "my bowling synchronicity story."

The story is simply a series of coincidences that continues to amaze him, the single morning on which an ex-girlfriend invited him to a reunion at a community bowling event, a friend announced she would be working as a producer on a television show about bowling, his housekeeper revealed she played on a women's bowling team, and a bowling shirt arrived in the mail as a gift from his friend the playwright David Mamet.

Taken together they would constitute an anomaly, perhaps, and thus fit within the rubric of Mr. Jay's four-year-old quarterly publication. But they are hardly of academic concern. And, oddly enough, much of the journal — devoted to tales of enterprising hoodwinkers, bizarrely gifted performers and other entertainment oddities — is.

Oh, well, the combination of rigorous scholarship on subjects like flea circuses, ceiling-walkers, faux nose amputations and people who are so oblivious to pain that they allow themselves to be crucified, with whimsical, sometimes personal, rumination is among the things that makes Jay's Journal of Anomalies an anomaly in itself.

"I wonder what an academic thinks when I do this stuff," Mr. Jay said in a recent interview in Chicago, where he had stopped to deliver a lecture on the history of swindling. "It's insane, in some way. No academic journal would do this. But it's not an academic journal. It's whatever I want it to be."

One thing he wants it to be is beautiful. And it is, printed by letterpress on elegant, handmade paper by a master printer, Patrick Reagh. (The two men share credit for designing the journal.) In each copy are tipped-in period illustrations, in color, from Mr. Jay's museum-quality collection of woodcuts, prints, advertisements, broadsheets and posters.

"I like the idea of doing it handsomely," Mr. Jay said, acknowledging that the side-show aspect of his area of expertise has always carried a seamy aura. "This is material that hasn't always had nice treatment. I love the accomplishment of these strange people. Certainly I love the humor of it. The challenge is dealing with it respectfully."

In his writing, Mr. Jay walks the line between scholarly sobriety and wry amazement. "As the last century drew to a close," he wrote, to begin one journal issue, "Tommy Minnock was singing 'After the Ball Is Over' to a wildly enthusiastic audience in Trenton, N.J., music hall. Since Mr. Minnock was not known for the exceptional range or quality of his instrument, and this selection was one of the most popular songs of the 1890's, the event hardly seems worthy of our attention a hundred years later. I would be remiss, however, if I failed to mention that



JAY'S JOURNAL of ANOMALIES

VOLUME 1

VERSATILITY WAS THE times Sanchies, San skylark, danced on the hands while so balance (led full overtures. His orchestra, the draped of Billy Purvis, the for creating an ac ceiling.

An eyewitness The author, Michailotto S engaged in a



JAY'S JOURNAL of ANOMALIES

VOLUME ONE, NUMBER FOUR WINTER, 1995 PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

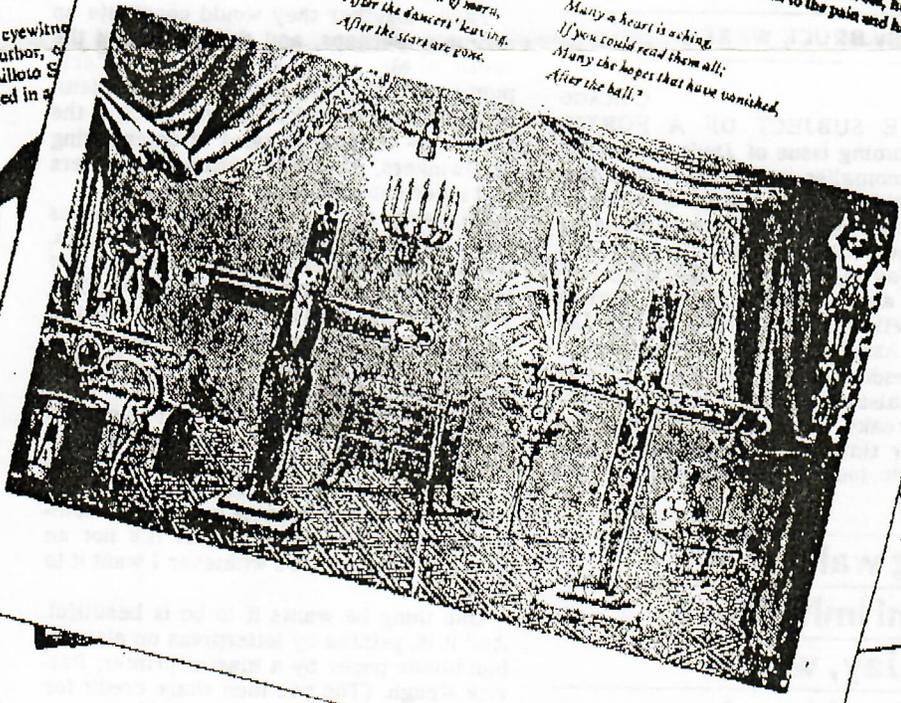


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Many the hopes that have vanished,
After the ball?



From Jay's Journal of Anomalies by Ricky Jay (W. & V. Dalley Antiquarian Books)

SPECIAL DELIVERY
The journal's mailing list includes such stage magicians as Steve Martin and Whoopi Goldberg.

the singing was effected while Minnock, in a supposedly hypnotic state, was impaled, hands and legs nailed to a cross . . ."

Indeed, the tone of the journal will be familiar to readers of Mr. Jay's 1986 book, "Learned Pigs and Fireproof Women," which presented a menagerie of history's more peculiar entertainers, like Harry Kahne, who could write five different words simultaneously with pieces of chalk held in each hand, each foot and his mouth; or Ivan Ivanitz Chabert, a 19th-century Frenchman who could walk into an oven with two uncooked slabs of beef and emerge unscathed himself but with two steaks ready to eat.

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Continued on Page 13

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Other me
and



Journal of Oddities

Continued From Page 10

doesn't have. Much of the time it's not easy, because he's really covered the field. The journals are thoroughly researched, and he makes connections that go beyond ordinary show business connections to wider cultural fields."

In most academic studies of entertainment, Mr. Senelick said, the tendency is toward grandiose social commentary. But Mr. Jay, he added, is less interested in what the prevalence of certain kinds of entertainment at a certain historical point might mean than he is "in recon-

'I love the accomplishment of these strange people,' Jay says of his journal.

structing how it's done, what it looked like."

"The problem with academic writing about popular entertainment," Mr. Senelick went on, "is that the people doing it don't have the experience of what they're writing about. What Ricky brings to it is where the performer is in all this, the performer and the audience."

Mr. Jay, who is somewhere around 50 (he is famously uninformative about dates, either purposely or because, as he says, he has a selective memory), is a burly (not to say rotund), bearded man with a tired, exasperated look around the eyes and an appealingly cranky manner that goes with the look. He has been plying his myriad, if somehow related, interests for decades, since he first began performing magic tricks at the age of 4. It was from magic, he said, that his interests naturally expanded outward, into other less-than-mainstream artists and entertainers.

He never graduated from college, though he has attended several; it was from an early book-collecting habit, he said, that his predilection for library research grew. A key figure, he said, the man who opened up the horizon for him, was Matthew

Buchinger, an 18th-century German prestidigitator who had no hands or feet and never grew taller than 20 inches.

"In the standard magic histories, he's a major figure," said Mr. Jay, who ended up being drawn even more to Buchinger's other gifts. He played several musical instruments, was a marksman, a trick-shot bowler and a master micro-calligrapher. A chapter of "Learned Pigs" is devoted to Buchinger. "And I'm still finding new material on him all the time," Mr. Jay said. "In the bowling issue I'll bring him back."

Today, Mr. Jay's personal entertainment universe is wider than ever. Not only is he among the world's great "card handlers," which his one-man show, directed by Mr. Mamet at the Second Stage Theater on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, proves. (The 52 assistants are, of courses, playing cards.) But he is also a lecturer and a consultant on film and theater productions. (Mr. Jay's wizardry helped hide the legs of the actor Gary Sinise from the camera and made him such a persuasive paraplegic in "Forrest Gump.") What's more, he is increasingly acting in films. He is currently appearing in "Boogie Nights" and in the James Bond movie "Tomorrow Never Dies" as Gupta, a character he describes as "the father of technoterrorism."

"What could be better than that?" Mr. Jay said, with a laugh.

But the journal, he said, is what he loves best: "I just really like what I'm writing about. It makes me really happy."

HIS HECTIC SCHEDULE, he said, may require him to cut back to three issues annually. In any case, he has material for years of further issues (there will soon be one about Houdini imitators, like the Hungarian who performed in chaps and a cowboy hat, chained to a cactus). In the meantime, he is also working on a book about unusual wagers, one of which journal readers already know about.

When Edward Bright, the fattest man in England, died in 1750, two of his neighbors bet on whether five grown men could be buttoned into his waistcoat. They underestimated. Seven men could. □

