



SAMLETTER 181



"This guy is good!"¹

On **Thursday, December 6, 2018**, a lecture by **Mike Hummer** at the SAM Assembly 181. The lecture will be FREE to all paid members of SAM 181, \$10 for guests. Doors open at 7:00 PM. Lecture starts at 7:30 PM

Mike Hummer's humorous magic combines state-of-the-art magic with outrageous comedy. His performance style adds up to just one thing ...ENTERTAINMENT! For 17 years, Mike performed full time at Al's Magic Shop, Washington's oldest magic establishment.

Within the magic fraternity, Mike is well respected. In the International Brotherhood of Magicians, he was appointed a territorial representative for the D.C. area for two consecutive years. Mike is in constant demand for private parties all over the D.C. area. He has performed at the White House Easter Egg Roll and at many embassies, including the embassy of Japan and Italy, just to name a few.

His demand in the business community is just as great. Satisfied clients include Bloomingdales, Continental Airlines, USPS, Booz Allen, and Joe Theisman's restaurant as well as many others."

S.A.M. Assembly 181 of Hightstown meets the first Thursday of every month, September thru June at the **First United Methodist Church, 187 Stockton Street, Hightstown, NJ 08520**. Doors open at 7:00 PM. Lecture starts at 7:30 PM

¹ During a 1985 visit to the shop, then Vice President George H.W. Bush saw Mike perform and commented "This guy is good!".

From the President

Definition of *onward and upward* idiom

: toward a better condition or higher level

That's right, SAM 181 is moving onward and upward. I can confidently say that we offer the best value when it comes to joining a magic club. This month we added another benefit to being a member of the SAM 181 family. Utilizing the manifold technical talents of member Mitch Geier, we are now providing a new monthly feature which is a Skyped interview with a well known current or past magician. Entitled "Close Up And Personal" these interviews are not your typical "how do you do that" questions but revolve around getting to know the performer as a person.



Mitch Geier chose a completely different path to the magic lecture interview. There are hundreds of sources to get tricks and techniques out there but we rarely get to see the performer as a human being with personal anecdotes, families, hopes, and dreams as we all have. The first interview Mitch had was with Steve Valentine. We learn about his childhood years, how he got exposed to magic and other interesting tidbits of information. It is entertaining to listen to, but more importantly, we learn that they are no different than you and I.

Mitch has put in a tremendous effort into this project and it should be deservedly recognized. Although a "great job, Mitch" would be nice to hear, it would really be impactful if you all took the time to watch and listen to this great production. As I noted previously, SAM 181 is the best value, below is a list of what we offer for your small investment of \$20:

- **NEW** Monthly Skyped Interview with well-known magician
- Monthly newsletter
- 8 member given workshops
- 2 Pro level lectures
- Free magic tricks
- Free magic magazines
- Free buffet dinner at years end
- Free coffee, water, soda at every meeting
- Free loaner library of 80 DVDs (deposit required to borrow DVD)
- An open mic session at every meeting in a judgment-free zone
- The opportunity to talk, watch and learn magic and make friends

What more can a club offer? If you haven't come to one of our meetings or if you had stopped coming, why not give us another try? Come and see what the excitement is all about.

EASY POCKET MAGIC

Have you seen the Mysterious Cross of India? It was performed as part of our "Easy Pocket Magic" workshop last month. The Cross of India is a fantastic coins across routine that uses no gimmicks and no extra coins. The version and there are several handlings available that Jeff performed was published by Daryl in "Secrets of a Puerto Rican Gambler" fit perfectly into our theme and is quite a magician fooler.



Reba Strong was conducting the workshop on "Easy Pocket Magic" and during her presentation, she taught Unlinking Drinking Straws. It looks for sure that you have linked the two straws but with one blow they magically separate. Easy to do, organic and a mind blower.

Reba is a Caring Clown in two hospitals and has been performing magic for over 35 years. Once on stage, her professionalism takes over in her routines and comical punch lines. She often performs as her Silly Reba character and is very well known and loved in this tri-state area as she regularly attends eight different magic club meetings each month.

After the workshop, Rob Francis, who performs on the street as the Dork of Deception did a joker trick, which is a magician in trouble with cards that is all resolved in the end. Joe Festa also performed with cards, as did George Hann. Magic Mike Dziubas finished the close-up items with a coin trick.

Congratulations to Jimmy Brown, an Assembly 181 member, and winner of the 2018 Milbourne Christopher Foundation Ambassador of Magic Award. The Milbourne Christopher Foundation was established by Maurine Christopher in 1989, and was created to perpetuate the memory of her husband and his lifelong interest in encouraging excellence, originality, and leadership in the art of magic and to helping keep conjuring on a level with

other popular entertainment forms including dance, drama, comedy, and music. Hats off to Ambassador Jimmy Brown.



Close-Up and Personal Video Interview with Magician/Actor Steve Valentine



Steve Valentine is a true renaissance man as an actor, celebrity and two-time Magic Castle Close Up Magician of the Year.

With 250 hours of television, four TV series, a dozen movies, countless commercials, two multi-award winning video games to his name, and countless animation voices to his name, Steve Valentine is best known for his series regular role on Crossing Jordan and stand out performances in Monk, Big Bang Theory and Mike & Molly.

With this interview by Mitch Geier, S.A.M. Assembly 181 is beginning a series of Close-Up and Personal Interviews with members of the magic community that will be posted on a free streaming service.

Sit back and enjoy this hour-long interview with Steve Valentine without commercial interruption at <https://vimeo.com/294858105>

Future interviews and videos will be posted on the S.A.M. Assembly 181 Vimeo channel at <https://vimeo.com/magicsam181>

Psycho Path - Magic for the Mentalist

Slo Motion by Joe Litvinchuk



It is difficult to find things to write about on a monthly basis since I am not sent products to review. Either I have to write about something that I actually own or something I know someone has. In addition to finding a topic, I also try to review something current.

However this time I'm going to review something that was only available for a short period of time, became unavailable, reappeared and then disappeared in a flash once again. If you are ever able to find it on the web definitely pick it up.

What I'm talking about is Slo Motion by Joe Litvinchuk. Slo Motion is a device that will allow you to take a candy like a Life Saver, place it on a wooden coffee stirrer and make it spin in either direction. The magic can be either under your control or under your spectator's control. What you get is a specially made thumb tip embedded with a small vibrating unit. The gimmick is the size of a thumbnail and is totally under your control. You take an ordinary individually wrapped Life Saver and have the spectator remove it from its wrapper and place it on the stirrer. You hold each end of the stirrer with the thumb and forefinger of each hand. When the time is appropriate the Life Saver starts to spin. Its direction can be reversed by changing the angle of the stirrer by rotating slightly front or back.

The unit is virtually silent and the handling permits you to cover up the dirty thumb naturally. The reactions are remarkable. What's more, they can eat the candy eliminating the thinking that it is something special. If you wanted to get more mileage out carrying the thumb tip, use it first to produce a silk streamer or something like that. I would not recommend salt or sugar for obvious reasons. After the silk production, you can then go into the rotating candy effect. Do you want a triple play, then follow up with another Life Saver effect. That's a lot of magic from a couple of small objects.

I've performed Slo Motion numerous times and it always got a great reaction. I would recommend getting a small bag of mints and carrying that around so they can dip into the bag and pull out any mint which would eliminate any

suspicion of a special candy. I always find it funny afterwards that they inspect the candy and the stirrer like they were forensic scientists. As they are doing that I nonchalantly slip the thumb tip into my pocket and wait with a smile on my face.

Tricks are for Kids - Magic for the children's performer

Sugar Rush by Brian Platt



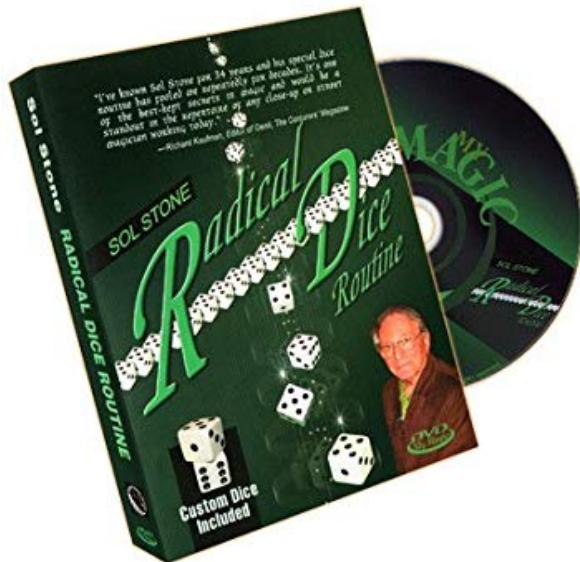
Are you itching to show your copper/silver routine but would like to use something more organic? If you are, check out Sugar Rush by Brian Platt. Sugar Rush is a modern-day copper/silver but with objects, everyone can relate to. Sugar Rush are replica miniature chocolates. You get a few chocolates and two shells which also look like chocolates but are hollow. The gimmicks can be comfortably carried in your pockets and whisked out at a moments notice. The trick is especially handy when there is a bowl of miniature chocolates setting around. Included with the non-melting gimmicks are labels to customize your chocolates. The labels provided are Hershey's milk chocolate, Krackle, and Mr. Goodbar. The quality of the product is superb and there is a multitude of routines that can be done with the gimmicks.

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Traditional transpositions, disappearances, and appearances are made easily with these easy to hold objects. Standard coin sleights such as palming, nesting and un-nesting of shells are simple given the size and shape of the gimmicks. The included DVD has some suggested routines but more than likely you would be able to develop your own presentations. The quality of the DVD leaves much to be desired. It is probably the worst produced DVD I have ever seen provided with a trick. Although the methodology demonstrated is simple, I find it amazing that someone would look at what was filmed and consider good enough to show. The opening shot is extremely weird obviously due to Mr. Platt's offbeat sense of humor. A good minute or more was wasted

watching him shove candy in his mouth all the while gesturing for us viewers to hang tight while he continues to shove three or four pieces one right after the other. The video quality is worse than a home movie and the moves taught are basic at best. The presentations are not inspiring and it may have been slightly improved if there were some live footage performing the trick. Regardless of these negatives, Sugar Rush is a clever, easy to perform trick that will elicit wows and gasps.

Do you believe in magic? - Magic for the general magician



How many times has it happened that when someone finds out you know magic they ask you to perform something? Of course, many shy away from that question and squeak out a reply like "I don't have anything with me". Wait a minute, if you are a magician, can't you conjure up something? I know, we need our props, but who wants to carry extra things in our pockets unnecessarily. Can you carry two small dice in your pocket? If you can, maybe you would be interested in *Radical Dice Routine* by Sol Stone.

One of New York's legendary magicians, Sol Stone was highly respected in the magic community. *Radical Dice Routine* was one of Sol Stone's signature pieces. *Radical Dice Routine* is a multi-phase routine where the dots on the dice change places, duplicate themselves, get removed and relocated and migrate through the center from one side to the other. That's a lot of magic from a small pair of dice. Almost weightless and taking up virtually no space, you can carry a 2 - 3 minute routine on your person and practically not even know you have the props on you.

Did I say props? Yes, included with the DVD is a pair of specially produced dice which allows you to perform the effect. Alternating from one die to the other, both dice come into play at different times. One of the dice can be inspected and although slightly gimmicked the anomaly is not observable. Along with the needed props the DVD covers the handling and has a bonus effect as well on it. The DVD looks like a videotape transfer and the production quality is not stellar. However, you don't need high definition video and music to get the idea on how to handle the props. Sol Stone is very late in years when this was done and the explanation and handling is a bit slow and laborious to watch but as mentioned above, this is not complicated legerdemain.

Like any other magic trick, make sure you know the handling well to perform this. Though it initially appears simplistic, it is not. The actual handling of the prop is basic but remembering where you are and which side is showing is the difficult part. Done well and seamlessly presented, it appears to be a virtual miracle. If you are looking for an entertaining plot with small props, check out *Radical Dice Routine* by Sol Stone. I think you would like it.



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The Magic Library - A Book Review

The Long Goodbye by Stephen Minch and Stephen Hobbs



There are a plethora of books on card magic. There are virtual encyclopedias of card magic, for example, *Card College* by Giobbi comes to mind. Coin magic, however, not so much. Other than various writings by magic's greats, compilations of exclusively coin magic are rare.

The most well known compilations are *Bobo's Modern Coin Magic*, *Coinmagic* by Kaufmann and *Expert Coin Magic* by Roth.

I'm not involved in magic long enough to theorize why there wouldn't be a Coin College type of series, however, some of the void has been filled with a new release by Hermetic Press called *The Long Goodbye*. *The Long Goodbye* is a body of work assembled and performed by the late Geoffrey Latta. Geoffrey Latta was a well respected, underground magician based out of New York. Latta was considered one of magic's foremost creator and innovator when it came to slight of hand. Latta was a regular at the New York Coin Seminars and had started the planning stages of the book in the early 1990's.

Several factors delayed in the publication, not the least was his untimely death at an early age. The book has been simmering over the last twenty years. Edited and posed by Jamy Ian Swiss, the book finally came into fruition. *The Long Goodbye* is comprised of 344 pages with over 720 photos. It teaches more than twenty-five sleights and forty-eight tricks and routines. Interspersed there are insights and comments by Geoffrey Latta. Also included are anecdotes of times spent with Latta by his friends who not only seen him perform but knew him as more than just a magician. Besides the attractively produced and prolifically photographed routines, the first edition includes excerpts from the legendary but closely guarded video recording Latta made in Peter Samuelson's apartment called *The Pink Purse Tape*. The *Pink Purse Tape* had card and coin routines but the included DVD has just coin work. Within the

initial introduction, Jamy Ian Swiss hints that another volume would follow. If you do coin work or if you just want to see what a magician's magician does, I suggest you invest in *The Long Goodbye* and see what amazing magic is all about.

RABBITS AGAINST MAGIC



The Junk Drawer Challenge - *Bafflin' Boomerangs* or The Jastrow Illusion



The concept of the *Junk Drawer Challenge* is to address those odd, quirky tricks that seemed good at the time but ultimately for want of a good presentation went into the junk drawer. The challenge is to bring them back out and work on a presentation. Hopefully, the presentation would be shown to the club. The previous challenge was the Steel Ball and Tube. This month's challenge will be the *Baffling Boomerang*

trick or more secularly known as the Jastrow illusion.

The Jastrow illusion occurs when two curved pieces of the same arc and length are shown one above the other. It appears the bottom piece is longer than the top, but when the places are exchanged the seemingly shorter piece is now longer than the previously longer piece. It is a very confusing optical illusion. There have been several attempts to make this optical

illusion and entertainment piece but it has always been relegated to children's magic and presented as a puzzle.

In everyday life, we come across examples of the Jastrow illusion and don't even notice. For example, sleeves for coffee cups and the tracks for play train sets are perfect examples of Jastrow illusions. Peter Prevos of magicperspectives.net has written an e-book on the history, science and magical applications of the Jastrow illusion. He feels compelled to re-energize the magic community on not just this but other illusions that have entered into the magic performance venue but waned after a few years. The struggle is always the same, how do we take what is an obvious physical illusion and breath magical life into it. If you are looking for a challenge, I would love to see a great presentation of this illusion that makes sense and has appeal. So go steal some Brio train tracks or coffee sleeves and figure out a presentation. Who knows, maybe you'll be the next entry into Peter Prevo's book?



Steve Valentine's Magic On the Go

For Magicians. Astonish. Anytime. Anywhere. Stream over 200 mini Magic Masterclass Videos, more added every month.

"Like Netflix but for Magic", Steve Valentine's Magic On The Go, Want to learn magic, wherever you are? Want to have a ton of tricks techniques and fun stunts.

<https://www.stevevalentine.com/magiconthego.html>

MAGIC CALENDAR

	THU NOV 1	S.A.M. Assembly 181 meeting is Thursday, November 1, 2018, with a workshop lead by Dave Zboray on "Coin Gaffs" at the First United Methodist Church, 187 Stockton Street, Hightstown, NJ 08520. Doors open at 7:00. Workshop at 7:30 PM. http://magicsam181.com
	SAT NOV 10	The 2018 Kutztown Magic Convention Committee wishes to regretfully inform everyone of the cancellation of the 2018 convention scheduled for Saturday November 10th, 2018. https://www.facebook.com/Kutztown.Magic.Convention/
	MON NOV 12	I.B.M Ring 6 , The Delaware Valley Conjurers Club regularly meets every 2nd Monday, with a meeting on Monday, November 12, 2018, at the Hancock United Methodist Church, 542 Wesley Road, Springfield, PA.
	MON NOV 12	S.A.M. Assembly 161 meets on the second Monday of each month at the Stoney Brook Grille, 1285 Easton Turnpike in Branchburg, NJ 08876. Lecture by Michael Vincent. https://www.facebook.com/groups/SAM161CALENDAR/about/
	THU NOV 15	S.A.M. Assembly 4 will be meeting on Thursday, November 15, 2018, at the Polish Home, 9150 Academy Road, Philadelphia, PA 19114, doors open at 6:30 PM.
	SUN NOV 18	Bob Little's Super Sunday "The Best One Day Magic Convention in the World" No Registration Required. Sunday, November 18, 2018, 10:00 AM - 10:00 PM All for a Low-Low Fee of \$40.00 http://www.boblittlessupersunday.com/
	TUES NOV 20	I.B.M. Ring 200 meets on Tuesday, November 20, 2018, 7:00 PM at the Stelton Community Center, 328 Plainfield Ave, Edison, NJ 08817.
	WED NOV 28	I.B.M. Ring 123 will be meeting on Wednesday, November 28, 2018, at the King of Kings Lutheran Church, 250 Harmony Road, Middleton, NJ 07748 starting at 7 PM
	WED NOV 29	The Association of Children's Entertainers is meeting on Thursday, November 29, 2018, at the United Methodist Church, 187 Stockton Street, Hightstown, NJ 08520. Doors open at 7:00 PM. Meetings start at 7:30 PM
	THU DEC 6	Lecture at S.A.M. Assembly 181 on Thursday, December 6, 2018, by Mike Hummer at the First United Methodist Church, 187 Stockton Street, Hightstown, NJ 08520. Doors open at 7:00. Workshop at 7:30 PM. http://magicsam181.com

Visit the Magic Calendar on our SAM 181 website at http://magicsam181.com/?page_id=95