

Zoom Meet-Up

Tuesday, February 16th

7:00 PM

Zoom Meet-up

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84135461849>

From the President | Out of My Hat



February is African American History Month, and while we salute the achievements of many African Americans, like Dr. Martin Luther King, there have been a number of professional black magicians that have taken the stage over the years. One of them, Black Herman became one of the most important Black magicians in history.

Black Herman's most famous act was Buried Alive. He would be buried in an outdoor area called "Black Herman's Private Graveyard", in full view of his audience. He would slow his pulse by applying pressure under his arm and would be proclaimed "dead" by a local doctor (someone in on the secret). As the coffin was lowered into the ground, Herman would slip out unnoticed. For days, sometimes a week, people would pay to look at the grave, building suspense over the fate of Black Herman. When the time was up, the coffin was exhumed with great drama and fanfare and out walked Herman to lead his audience into the nearest theater, where he performed the rest of his show. Of course, during the time of the burial, Black Herman was free to travel to another town to set up the same trick, returning in time to slip back into the coffin for the amazing revival.

Black Herman died in Louisville, Kentucky after collapsing on stage, the result of a heart attack. The Buried Alive trick was so effective and Black Herman's mystical message was so strong that many people in the audience refused to believe he was really dead.

So many people clamored to view the body that the city insisted that his remains be moved to the railway station. His assistant, Washington Reeves, took full advantage of this and charged a dime admission to view Black Herman's corpse. Several thousand people took advantage of the chance to see Black Herman for the last time- and even to poke him with a pin to see if he was really dead.

Other notable black magicians were Fetaque Sanders, Ellen Armstrong, who was the first African American Female Magician, and more recent ones like Kendrick "ICE" McDonald who was the first black national president of The Society of American Magicians, and Arsenio Hall who was a late-night talk show host. Magic has a rich history and we can learn much from the masters of the past. You can also learn from the masters of the present, and we hope that soon we will be back together in person so we can once again learn from each other, tell stories and see some great magic. Until then, please try to attend our monthly Zoom get-togethers and feel free to tell a story, perform or just hang out.

Wisdom from Tarbell

Simplicity of Tricks

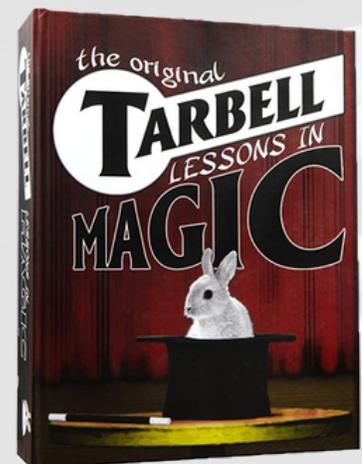
I want this fact to sink in: **SOME OF THE GREATEST TRICKS AND ILLUSIONS ON THE STAGE ARE UNBELIEVABLY SIMPLE.**

Don't forget that you were once one of the spectators and believed these tricks to be almost superhuman feats. Now, when you learn how very simple they are, remember that to those who are not "in the know," they are still deep mysteries.

Do you know that some of the greatest tricks used on the stage today are centuries old? My Linking Ring Trick, for instance, was invented by a Chinaman in 1735, almost 200 years ago. And now in 1926, I use this simple trick. In 200 years no spectator has discovered the secret of it. Yet it is based on the simplest move imaginable.

There are tricks that are so old that their history cannot be definitely traced. Some were supposedly originated by the court jesters of France way back in the Middle Ages. Others are said to have been performed before the notorious Henry VIII., who reigned in England in the first half of the Sixteenth Century, more than 300 years ago. Still, others are believed to have come down from antiquity. These very tricks are some of the simplest in the whole art. They have survived the ages and their secrets are still undiscovered. These same tricks are used today to mystify and entertain people. What further proof do you need that the simplest tricks are often the most mystifying and never lose their charm?

The amateur most often has the idea that a trick must be very elaborate. He thinks that the method of doing it must be very difficult and that there must be a great deal of complicated equipment to do it with. **I want you to get that idea out of your head and remember that in the simplicity of your tricks lies their great power to mystify the other fellow.**



Editor's Magic Pick of the Month

This video showed up in my suggestions on YouTube. It's a very entertaining routine on Penn and Teller Fool Us.



[Watch the Routine](#)

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EDITORIAL NOTE:

Please have all articles for inclusion in the next bulletin issue to us by the 20th of the Month.