

Ex Libris by Joaquin Ayala, PhD.

Hello folks and welcome to the Ex Libris article for January 2017 - Happy New Year! Another year has come and gone, so too has another holiday season. We all know that along with that holiday season comes the exchange of a necessary evil: *money*. More often it is vanishing from our pockets and reappearing in the purses of others, usually a business or some sort of vendor in exchange for goods or services. That leads me to the first book for 2017, *Expert Coin Magic* by **David Roth**, illustrated by **Richard Kaufman**.

Anyone that has been studying, reading about or performing magic for any length of time probably knows the name of **David Roth**. He is a New York native that is regarded as one of the best coin magicians in the history of magic and he was even called a 'master coin magician' by none other than "**The Professor**" **Dai Vernon** – now *that* is some accolade! David Roth has influenced the magic world in many different ways but his major contributions involve the *Edge Grip Technique*, the *Persistence of Vision Vanish* (also called the *Retention of Vision/Retention Pass*), *The Shuttle Pass* and his own original *Chinese Coin Assembly*. He is also very well known amongst coin magicians for his work on Okito Box magic, perhaps even more than anything else he does.

His handling and teaching of these techniques has been very influential and caused many other expert coin handlers to explore the use of them in great detail. His *Chinese Coin Assembly* was the first published coin assembly using only the bare hands and many great variations have been published since then, most notably the *Shadow Coins* by **Michael Ammar** and *No Extras* by **Dean Dill**. With all of his prowess, technical and performing skill and contributions to coin magic, many people are shocked to hear that David is also a *very* skilled card technician and loves card magic – possibly even more than coin magic!

As for the book itself, it does indeed contain all of the aforementioned items in it. It is a 370-page hardcover book published in 1985 by **D. Robbins & Co**. It is very aptly titled but it may be a bit misleading – while it is not necessarily aimed at beginners, one could argue that the necessary sleights and techniques are described at the beginning of this book with such great attention to detail that one could easily, after learning them well, learn the effects given later in the book without needing to look elsewhere for details.

One effect in particular that David Roth is quite well known for, perhaps as much for its cleanliness in handling as for its ease of execution, is the *Shell Coins Across*, which is given in this book along with his other famous effect, *The Hanging Coins*. Other classic effects such as *Tenkai Pennies*, *Winged Silver*, the *John Ramsay Cylinder and Coins*, *Copper/Silver* and *Wild Coin* are included among many other effects as well, all given the unique Roth treatment.

The entire middle section of the book is dedicated entirely to his work on the **Okito Box** and its variations such as the **Boston Box**, the **Sokito Box** (sometimes called a **Plug Box**) and the **Nokito Box**. This is widely regarded as both the largest selection of and most complete instruction on

Okito Box work in all of magic literature, and certainly nothing of its equal has appeared in print before or since this book was published.

There are also sections of this book that detail what I call “Coin Acts” – these are mini routines each containing multiple individual effects. To name a few examples: **The Tuning Fork** is a routine that uses a tuning fork to manipulate the sound of the coins as you cause them to physically vanish from your hand, and the sound appears in a glass *before* the coins! **The Micrometer** uses a micrometer to relate the size of a coin, which visibly and visually changes size multiple times. **The Table** is another Roth favorite using a dollhouse-sized coffee table to do a *Coins through Table*, and at the end, the miniature table actually penetrates the tabletop for an eye-popping finale!

Along with the **J.B. Bobo** book *Modern Coin Magic*, this book is considered a must-have for all serious coin workers. Even if you do not perform the effects exactly as detailed, the instruction is indeed expertly written and once you practice the basic techniques, you will have in your arsenal all you will ever need for a lifetime.

That is all for this month folks – I am looking forward to a great year and to sharing lots of magic with all of you. - **JMA**