

## **Ex Libris** by Joaquin M. Ayala, Ph.D.

Hello everyone and welcome to the Ex Libris article for June 2020! Did I just say *June*?! This year has just disappeared quickly and believe it or not it has been three months already since we started delving into the Paul Harris *Art of Astonishment* books. This month, we will wrap up our focus on that trilogy.

*The Art of Astonishment Volume 3* by **Paul Harris** is a 324-page hardcover book published in 1996 by A-1 MultiMedia. As with the first two volumes this one was also published by the incomparable **Tony Dunn** and contains additional writing by **Eric Mead**.

The material in this volume follows the pattern set by the other two with everything from the classic to the quirky and outright ridiculous. One perfect example of the latter is *Peanut Butter and Jellyfish* where you cause the top slice of a peanut butter & jelly sandwich to float up off the sandwich, move around and float back down again. This can also be done with fast food burgers, etc. and yes, it really does work.

*Rumpled Splitskin* is a great bit with a signed business card that ends up as an impossible object, with the layers of two cards melded together. In *Leaf*, you tear a leaf off a tree and then restore it. How many of you remember the *Screwed Deck* where you have two solid halves of a deck that are literally screwed together, only to turn into a real deck? Well there is an impromptu version in this book! Right along with that odd bit goes *Unhinged* where a full deck inside the case is folded in half!

*The Bent Copper-Silver Transposition* is a nice bit where one of the coins is bent, and it happens in the hand of a spectator! *Sweet Stuff* is a pretty sweet transposition (pun intended!) of a coin and the sugar inside a sugar packet. For anyone that works in an office or group setting, there is an entire section dedicated to magic to suit – *Breakroom Boredom Buster* is a coincidence effect using a number of business cards which are torn in half, *The Client Confidence Sugar Shocker* is a number force using sugar packets, which I bet many of you are already familiar with. There is even a stunt called *The Burbling of a Pea* where you tilt your head back and use an air stream from your mouth to float a pea (a.k.a. *burbling*).

There is a lot of material in this book using various implements, along with essays and interviews and an experiment for how to create a real invisible human at the end. I encourage you to check out the whole trilogy but even just owning any one out of the three would provide you with plenty of

excellent material to practice and perform. Until next time, take care and I hope to see (or hear) you on our next Zoom meeting!

J. M. A.