

Magic Messenger

The Ann Arbor Magic Club

I.B.M. Ring 210

February 2021

S.A.M. Assembly 88

A Candle in the Dark

Dr. Joaquin M. Ayala – President

Hello everyone and welcome to the first official newsletter of 2021! As you all know we ran into some technical difficulties last month with the newsletter and with our ZOOM meeting – those have been fixed now so we are back!

First some news – I am proud to announce your newly elected Board of Officers for 2021 and 2022:

President: *Dr. Joaquin M. Ayala de Cedoz*

Vice President: *Mr. Dan Jones*

Secretary: *Mr. Frank Machniak*

Treasurer: *Mr. Rob S. Krozal*

Sergeant-at-Arms: *Mr. Sean Naes*

Congratulations to all of you! On behalf of the rest of the Board members, I would like to thank all of you that sent in your votes via email and for your votes of confidence – I am looking forward to working with the fine members for this term as we work to bring you some great content this year, whether virtual or in person!

Dues are DUE!

We sent out an email with this information (which was supposed to be in the January newsletter) but here it is again: We know that the pandemic has put many people in some awkward and tight spots, and as much as we hate to ask you to part with some of your hard-earned cash to support membership in our club, we must appeal to you because it is through your generosity that this club is able to thrive and continue on spreading and sharing our magic. Dues have not changed at all and are as follows: **\$25/Single, \$30/Couples, \$35/Families**. You can mail checks, which should be made out to The Ann Arbor Magic Club, directly to our Treasurer, **Rob Krozal** at

35414 Veri Street Livonia, MI 48152-2854 OR the Ann Arbor Magic Club P.O. Box 532244 Livonia, MI 48153.

You can also use the club website and pay via PayPal under the Membership tab, here: http://aamagic.org/wp/?page_id=217 Otherwise you can send it directly - please send PayPal dues to AAMC_BOARD@AAMAGIC.ORG and pretty please send it with the Friends & Family option so we can avoid the fees. (Once again if the direct link to the website does not work, simply copy and paste it into your browser).

For those of you who have already renewed, THANK YOU for your continued support!

RAFAEL BENATAR LECTURE

By the time this newsletter goes out, an email will already have been sent announcing the upcoming lecture that our club is sponsoring. Rafael Benatar, who is originally from Venezuela and living in Spain for many years, is going to be appearing virtually for us on **Saturday February 13th, 2021, 17h00 (5 p.m.) E.S.T.**

This lecture is FREE to all our members and will be recorded for viewing at a later date in a passworded section of our site!

I am looking forward to this because when I was young, I met Rafael a few times, and that was because of working and being a student of Arturo de Ascanio. Rafael has translated quite a few essays and books written by both Ascanio and Juan Tamariz into English. He is an excellent performer in his own right, he appears regularly at the Hollywood Magic Castle and has been featured on the cover of Genii Magazine, as well as giving a Penguin Magic LIVE lecture and an At the Table lecture for Murphy's Magic.

You MUST register to attend this lecture – see the email for further details or contact me directly at chefayala99@gmail.com if you missed it!

Linking the Rings

For some time now I have been trying to coordinate with **Ring 68** in Toledo, Ohio and **Ring 22** in Clawson, Michigan to come up with things that the Rings can participate in together. Members of Ring 210/Assembly 88 were excited about this idea, and so were members of those two groups.

President **Johnny "New York" Smith** of Ring 22 and President **Steve Israel** of Ring 68 (both of whom are also members of Ring 210!) have pledged to cooperate and collaborate on future endeavors with us. We are proud to announce that we have officially invited both clubs to join us for the Benatar lecture this month, and I am certainly eager to see what wonder-filled and magical things we can all do together in the future!

Have a wonderful February everybody!

Dr. J.

NOTE: We WILL attempt to hold a meeting at Senate Coney Island in MARCH 2021 – they are expecting us and if anything changes, we will let you know! Anyone not wishing to attend in person will be able to attend the meeting via ZOOM, which will livestream directly from the restaurant!

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### ***Notes from the Quill***

Many of you may know by now that in January, the magic community was hit very hard with the loss of some veritable giants in the art. **Siegfried Fischbacher**, partner and one half of *Siegfried & Roy*, passed away on January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The very next day the man that The Professor Dai Vernon called "...the best coin magician in the world..." **David Roth** passed away. Three days later, master machinist and magic craftsman **Joe Proper** passed away after a battle with COVID-19. On January 19<sup>th</sup> the man needs no introduction, and the one widely credited by a very large number of magicians as the one responsible for introducing them to magic, **Mark Wilson**, passed away.

All four of those names are easily recognized by magicians and both Siegfried and Mark were as close to a household name as most magicians ever get among the laypeople. A favorite quote of mine best sums up the loss of these giants, "**Remember kid, there are heroes and there are legends. Heroes get remembered, but legends never die.**" These four magicians were heroes to many, but legends to us all.

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Our Zoom meeting in January was a rousing success, even though it was delayed by the technology! At the peak we had 12 people join us, and to those of you who were not able to because of the hiccup with the ZOOM link, our sincerest apologies!

**Dan Jones, Bill Rabe, Dr. J., and Sean Naes** all shared some magic with us. Dan performed the Harbin-inspired effect where a Queen is placed into a plastic holder, her middle is separated from the rest of her, and then restored. Bill Rabe produced a bunch of silks from his sleeve and then he and Karl shared the ingenious set up with us. Dr. J. performed an effect without doing anything! He directed participants to hopelessly mix several red and black playing cards, and at the end, somehow, everyone found that their cards were separated into reds and blacks! Sean Naes performed his Cap'N Sean Cups & Balls, and then told some wonderful stories about how he came up with his current routine.

A fun time was had by us all and we are looking forward to bringing you more fun meetings like this!

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The first board meeting took place after the general ZOOM session ended last month. There are meeting minutes available if anyone would like to see the topics which were discussed. Chief among the topics were the approval of the Benatar lecture (which was unanimously approved), some ideas for meetings this year as well as the Michigan Close-Up Magic Convention in November 2022.

We hope to see you all soon!

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

Hello everyone and welcome to the Ex Libris article for February 2021! Recently I had a look back at the previous sixty-nine(!) articles that have been written thus far and notice that there have only been one that focused on mostly or all "self-working" magic.

Well, I am going "old school" this month and have decided to talk about a trio of books that all discuss a common coin gaff that I bet most of you

actually own...a Scotch & Soda, Gin & Tonic, Dime & Penny or other similar sets.

The trio of books is *Scotch and Soda Part 1, 2 & 3* by **Ken Simmons**. All three books are 5.5x8.5, saddle-stitched softcover booklets, each featuring a wizard on the cover. They were part of the old Magic City Library series, all of which focused on specific props, gaffs or techniques. Over the years the colors of the covers have been fairly consistent – orange or yellow for Part 1, blue for Part 2 and red for Part 3.

**Part 1** is a 30-page booklet first published in 1982 by Ken Simmons and Magic City. This covers some origins of the gaff, how to tighten the gaff, and a few sundry sleights. The bulk of the items in this volume are transpositions and changes, but the real standout in this one, in my opinion, are the final two effects which feature the use of the bang ring\* - very unusual because the bang ring is usually a secret part of this gaff set!

**Part 2** is a 53-page booklet first published in 1986 by Ken Simmons and Magic City. This one goes a little further down the rabbit hole, discussing various ways to show both sides of the shell and the insert, ways to use the insert as a Copper/Silver coin, a few more transpositional effects, effects where one coin changes, and more. The standout here is more of a feature effect, a long routine called '*Two, Two and Two*' which features, not surprisingly, two hands, two cards and two coins.

**Part 3 – Finalé** (sic) is a 92-page booklet first published in 1988 by Ken Simmons and Magic City. This is the big boy of the three, and if you only find one of the three books, this is the one to go for. This one relies on more intermediate and advanced coin sleights, but there are other ways around that. This book introduces a bit more work on a loose Scotch & Soda set – that is to say, a set that is non-locking. There are routines involving Okito boxes, additional gaffed coin sets like a Sun & Moon set, two further variations on the *Two, Two and Two* from the Part 2 booklet, and more. This volume teaches one of my favorite coin vanishes (not the easiest to acquire) with the *Hirata Master Move* (from Haruhito Hirata of Japan), and the standout here in my opinion is the *International Transit* by **Dave Neighbors**.

Some of you might have some of these books already, and if you do, it is probably because you bought a Scotch & Soda set and wondered what the heck you can do with it, besides the "standard effect". As mentioned earlier, these effects will work with other similar gaff sets like the Gin & Tonic and the Dime & Penny, or any number of the ones made with international currency.

Scotch & Soda is bought/owned by many, many magicians the world over and is usually part of the "beginning arsenal", but they are rarely used after a short while of playing with them. If you do not have these books, pick one, two or all three of them up, dust of your coins and have fun exploring these – the effects are all very good and very commercial!

\*If you have the old Scotch & Soda accessory called *Breakout*, which was made by Sterling Magic Co. and long a personal favorite, that can be used in place of the bang rings. It also would provide you with some further interesting effects when used in conjunction with the stuff in these booklets!

That is all for book review #70 (are you people really reading these things?! THAT is a lot of articles!) I hope you join me again next month, same place, different book! **-J. M. A.**

We have come to the end of the newsletter and usually here you would see the Board of Directors contact information – that has not been updated completely yet so please send any correspondence, inquiries or other business information to [annarbormagicclub@gmail.com](mailto:annarbormagicclub@gmail.com) and we will respond as soon as possible.