



# MAGI-GRAM



Official Newsletter of IBM Ring 50 -- The National Capital Ring -- Volume 75 No. 2 February 2021

## DIY: Mario 'The Maker' to Make March 3 Meeting Memorable

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Mario "The Maker Magician" Marchese, called "the best kid's magician in the world" by David Blaine, will give an exclusive lecture for Ring 50 members March 3 starting at 7 p.m. Look for a Zoom link in an upcoming email.



Mario's lecture for magicians won him the 2020 Lecture of the Year Award from Penguin Magic. Mario had been scheduled to lecture and perform at Magi-Whirl in 2020, before the event was cancelled because of the pandemic.

Known for his use of robotics

and do-it-yourself gizmos, Mario's humor and punk rock slapstick style of performing are a hit with young people and adults as well. He has performed on Sesame Street, NBC's Universal Kids, HGTV and did a live tour with David Blaine.

### International Brotherhood of Magicians Ring 50 The National Capital Ring

#### President

Craig Fifer  
president@ibmring50.org

#### Vice President

Danny Selnick  
vp@ibmring50.org

#### Secretary

Drew Owen  
secretary@ibmring50.org

#### Treasurer

Bob Patterson  
treasurer@ibmring50.org

#### Sergeant-at-Arms

Reggie Rice  
sgtarms@ibmring50.org

#### Magi-Gram Editor

Larry Lipman  
magi-gram@ibmring50.org

#### Youth Activities Director

Louis Meyer  
youth@ibmring50.org

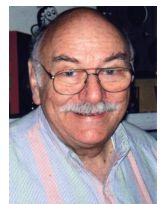
### Broken Wand Ceremony for Al Cohen, Feb. 24

A Broken Wand Ceremony for the late Al Cohen will be held at a special Ring 50 meeting on Feb. 24, beginning at 7 p.m. This Zoom meeting will be open to the entire magic community. Go to:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/ztZlofuntqjlsGdPbCTj8iJYNFAVZDhqZkKq6>

Al was president of Ring 50 in 1957-58 and served for many years as the I.B.M. territorial vice president. He was the owner of Al's Magic Shop in Washington for more than half a century.

Persons who wish to speak at this special meeting should contact Larry Lipman at [lorenzomagic@cox.net](mailto:lorenzomagic@cox.net).



# Mahdi Gilbert to Lecture April 7

Mahdi Gilbert (pronounced Jill-bare), a Canadian sleight of hand card magician and motivational speaker who was born without hands and feet and fooled Penn



and Teller with an oil and water trick, will be our guest lecturer at the April 7 meeting.

*Mahdi Gilbert holds "Fool Us" Trophy*

Mahdi has been gaining significant worldwide attention for his manipulation skills and his inspiring life story. Imagine learning sleight of hand with no hands.

Mahdi had been scheduled to be a lecturer and performer at the 2019 Magi-Whirl, which was canceled due to the

coronavirus pandemic.

You can hear and see more from Mahdi at The Magic Word Podcast with Scott Wells.

Check it out at:

<https://www.themagicwordpodcast.com/scottwells/magic/536-mahdi-gilbert>

To see Mahdi's amazing performance on *Fool Us* with Penn and Teller, check out this video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2S8hB2XoUb4&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2S8hB2XoUb4&feature=emb_title)

Mahdi also has his own podcast called "The Caged Canary" on the BeforeMagic.com website.

**Free Mahdi Gilbert Show for Ring 50 Members**  
*Mahdi Gilbert is allowing Ring 50 members to watch his March 5 online show for free. A code will be emailed to Ring members later. Or, you could pay \$30 and get the deck of cards he sends with each ticket at <https://mahdithemagician.com/magic-in-your-hands>*

# Chris Capehart to Lecture May 5

Master magician Chris Capehart, who also was a "Fool Us" winner recently, will lecture for Ring 50 at our May 5 meeting.

Chris is an old friend of Ring 50 and performed at Magi-Whirl in 2017. He is an acclaimed children's performer and has been doing magic for more than 50 years. His ring routine is legendary. So is his comedy.

On "Fool Us" he did three routines including a "Jedi Card Trick" in which he made a card fall down just by pointing at it and popped one balloon inside another one—magically. The balloon trick is the one that Penn and Teller said they were fooled by, but Chris isn't sure they really knew how he did any of the tricks.



Chris began his magic career with a performance at the legendary Apollo Theater in Harlem in 1969 when he was 19 years old. He later performed as a street magician in Philadelphia and New York City.

He has performed at The Magic Castle, Monday Night Magic in New York City, in Las Vegas and at the Blackpool Magic Convention in Blackpool, England.

Here is a link to Chris' performance on Penn and Teller's "Fool Us."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=92GWTTYZjq0>





# Test Your Knowledge of Magic Trivia Do You Know As Much As The Conjurors?

Sure, you know that David Copperfield vanished the Statue of Liberty and that David Blaine hung in a clear box for 44 days over the Thames River.

But do you know to whom Harry Keller passed the magic wand to designating the next Royal Dynasty of Magicians? Or who was the magician known for stumping Houdini? Or which famous magician is believed to have



*Rare video of Harry Houdini being handcuffed before plunging into a river*

been the inspiration for the Wizard of Oz?



Members of The Conjurors showed they are full of magical knowledge and the history of magic in a fast-paced trivia game at their meeting Feb. 3 hosted by Youth Activities Director Louis Meyer with assistance from Sgt. at Arms Reggie Rice.



*Louis Meyer plays host*



*David Blaine forces a card.*

Interspersed with the questions, Louis showed some videos of these legends of magic, including footage of Houdini, Criss



*The late great Mark Wilson*

Angel and Mark Wilson. The game

ended with ties for first place and ties for second place.

All of the 15 questions were promptly answered, some almost before Louis could finish asking

the question.

Know any kids 8-12 interested in magic? The Conjurors meet at 6 p.m. the first Wednesday of every month for magic, learning and fun.

Contact Louis at Youth@IBMRing50.org

*See the Quiz on page 6*

# Alejandro Navas' Card Lecture Breaks the Screen Barrier

By Drew Owen

For Ring 50's meeting on February 3, our guest lecturer was Alejandro Navas. Alejandro is a

professional magician, producer and actor from Costa Rica who has transformed virtual magic with his "Evolution Project," which features magic that works beautifully in virtual performances. Many of the tricks are versions of classic card effects but instead of the magician handling the cards, the participant makes the magic happen in their own hands with their own cards.

At our meeting, Alejandro showed and explained five tricks. For the first one, Alejandro wrote a prediction

on the back of a black slate with a piece of chalk. He had member



*More than three dozen Ring 50 members participated in the virtual meeting with Alejandro Navas.*

Chuck Jones help choose a random card. This card matched the prediction written on the slate.

Next, Alejandro performed a do-as-I-do trick he calls "Empathy." Chuck chose a card from his own deck while Alejandro did the same. The cards matched!

Alejandro showed us what he does if the spectator forgets their card or something goes wrong with a trick. He keeps a bulldog clip hanging from an elastic band around his neck at all times. A folded piece of paper is held in the clip. When the paper is removed from the clip and unfolded, written on it will be any card the spectator may have just named.



*Chuck Jones does as Alejandro does.*

For the next trick, an impressive ambitious card and two card transposition combination, member Marc

Carrion was the assistant. Marc used his own deck and followed the instructions Alejandro gave him to choose and mark a card without actually looking at it. This was mixed into the deck and then Marc chose another card from his deck that he did look at.

Somehow, the marked card rose to the top of Marc's deck.

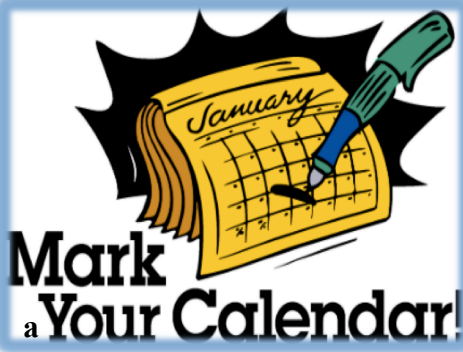
Alejandro then took a card from the top of his own deck and Marc did the same. He asked Marc to hold the card between his hands. It seemed impossible that Marc could be holding the same card he had looked at earlier, since it had been mixed into the deck.

Alejandro showed Marc the card he had taken, which was not the one Marc had chosen. But then, Alejandro's card transformed into Marc's card. When Marc opened his hands, he found he was holding the same card Alejandro had chosen. The two cards had switched places!

The last trick was an ace assembly. Alejandro removed the four aces from his deck and laid them in a row. Marc did the same with his cards and laid his aces to mirror Alejandro's. They both dealt three indifferent cards onto each of the aces.

*Continued next page.*





# Alejandro Navas' Virtual Card Magic

## Ring 50 Meetings

(All meetings will be held on Zoom at 7 p.m. and are exclusively for Ring 50 members unless otherwise indicated.)

**Feb. 24—Al Cohen**  
**Broken Wand Ceremony. Open to the entire magic community.**



**March 3—Mario**  
**'The Maker Magician'**  
**Marchese**

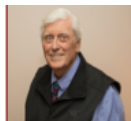


**March 24—Mystery Prop Night**

**April 7—Mahdi Gilbert ('Fool Us' winner)**



**Broken Wand Ceremony for John Roberts at start of meeting.**



**April 22—Magic maker/dealer Show & Sell**

**May 5—Chris Capehart ('Fool Us' winner)**



**June 3—Ring 50 Open Performance Night**

The last trick was an ace assembly. Alejandro removed the four aces from his deck and laid them in a row. Marc did the same with his cards and laid his aces to mirror Alejandro's. They both dealt three indifferent cards onto each of the aces. After some mixing and redealing of the piles, they both picked up the pile containing the ace of



*Alejandro displays a prediction.*

spades, "the most important ace." Marc was told to sit on that pile. One by one, the aces vanished from the remaining three piles from both Alejandro and Marc's decks. The aces were found together with the ace of spades in Alejandro's pile and also in the pile Marc was sitting on!

We were lucky to have Marc, a native of Spain, to translate for us during the explanations as Alejandro is not very comfortable with English. These tricks were the result of a challenge Alejandro set for himself sometime before the pandemic. He gave himself three restrictions: he would



*Marc Carrion helped with a trick and in translating when Alejandro needed it.*

not touch the cards, he would not use gimmicks, and the effects would not be pick-a-card tricks. He imagined doing these tricks in person but with the participant sitting some distance away and doing all the handling of the cards. Alejandro became frustrated and put the project away for a while. After Covid hit, he realized it was a good time to return to the challenge. He thought if he didn't find a solution, some other magician would. This gave him hope that this kind of magic would be possible and he persevered, eventually creating these tricks and others which make up his "Evolution Project," which is available to magicians through several online magic dealers.

The methods are very clever, relying more on mental misdirection and the creation of false memories than sleight of hand. These tricks work because of careful construction and scripting which allow the magic to happen in the mind of the spectator. Since the magician can't actually touch the participant's cards, the wording and communication are crucial to the success of the tricks. These are good concepts to keep in mind with any kind of magic performance whether on Zoom or in person.

# Do You Know As Much As The Conjurors?

## See if you can answer the Conjurors Quiz

1. What magician is most famous for making the Statue of Liberty disappear, levitating over the Grand Canyon and walking through the Great Wall of China?
2. What magician lived in a transparent case suspended 30 feet over the River Thames for 44 days without food or sleep?
3. What famous magician was born with the name Ehrich Weiss?
4. What private club for magicians in Hollywood, Calif., features Imma, an invisible ghostly piano player who can play almost any song suggested by visitors?
5. What magician did Harry Keller pass his magician's wand to in 1908, thus extending the Royal Dynasty of Magicians?
6. Lee Grabel eventually passed the title to which magician?
7. What magician was known as "the man who fooled Houdini"?
8. A magician put a rabbit in the top of a box and opened the door in the front. The box was empty. What is the magic word for this illusion?
9. Which magician performed in the TV show "Magic Circus"?
10. How many cards are used for the Asher Twist?

10a. What magician performed on primetime TV more than any other?

11. Many illusionists use misdirection to trick their audiences. What magician born in 1849 was such a master of misdirection that many believe he was the inspiration for the character of the wizard in L. Frank Baum's book *The Wizard of Oz*. Name this illusionist.

12. The 1785 translation of *1001 Nights* from French into English gave us a popular phrase used to unlock closed and hidden doorways. What phrase is it?

13. How would you describe a pack of Svengali cards?

14. Said to be the last prestidigitator from the "Golden Age of Magic," who was the man (don't confuse him with an author) who gave us the magic exclamation "Sim Sala Bim"?

15. If someone invites you to play a game of Three Card Monte, what is a sure way to win?



*Lance Burton's elegant magic.*

## Answers

If you can't turn your computer upside down, stand on your head.

1. David Copperfield (born David Seth Kokin).
2. David Blaine was put on a liquid diet until his body was deemed ready for solid food.
3. Harry Houdini was born Ehrich Weiss on March 24, 1874 in Budapest, Hungary. His name was a tribute to magician Jean Eugene Robert-Houdin.
4. The Magic Castle.
5. Howard Thurston. The Dynasty began in 1896 when Alexander Hermann passed the mantle to Keller.
6. Grabel retired in 1959, but waited until 1994 to pass it to Lance Burton.
7. Dai Vernon (born David Frederick Wingfield Verner) did an "ambitious card" three times for Houdini.
8. Disappearance
9. Mark Wilson, who died earlier this year.
10. 4 cards. It's a version of Twisting the Aces without an Elmsley Count.
- 10a. Criss Angel of *Mindfreak* fame.
11. Harry Keller, who seemingly grew a rose bush in front of an audience.
12. "Open Sesame."
13. Every other card is shorter.
14. Dante the Magician (born Harry Jansen).
15. Don't play! You can't win.



# Who's Who in Ring 50

## Tommy Halladay – Magic Without Trick Photography

Hello, my name is Tommy Halladay. I'm 24 years old and currently living in Alexandria and teaching preschool. I first got into magic when I was about 10 years old. My family took a trip to New York City and one day we went to the huge Toys-R-Us store that used to be in Times Square. There is where I bought my first magic kit. I probably learned no more than three or four tricks from the 100-trick kit, but seeing how those few tricks amazed people is what got me hooked.

I joined Ring 50 when I was about 12 years old after meeting Danny Selnick. Danny had a huge part in getting me into the magic community. The main genre of magic I perform would have to be close-up/street magic. I love performing live for people, but I also love to create magic videos for social media. When I was in high school, I started a series of videos on my Instagram called Magic Monday's.

When I first started performing magic for video/social media, I was just sitting in my bedroom filming me doing quick visual tricks on my cellphone. As time went on, the quality of my videos and magic would get better. I graduated high school and then went to Northern Virginia Community College for a degree in Photography & Media. While I was studying photography, I thought it would be a fun challenge to try and incorporate magic in with photography.



I then learned to perform short magic tricks for video, and then I went to learn to perform a magic trick in a photo. This is how I started my project, "No PhotoShop."

My goal was to create magical photos that looked like they were created using PhotoShop, but not using PhotoShop at all. It was a tough challenge.

I went from performing magic live with real people and it was all about the experience. Now I had to

create something magical in a still image. A lot of magic involves many movements, moments, talking and distracting. I couldn't do any of these. I had to take what I knew from performing magic and learn to take many magical moments and freeze them into one visual moment.

I continued this project through many of my semesters at college and I still work on it since I have graduated.



You can check out my "No PhotoShop" project on my website

[www.tommyhalladay.com/nophotoshop](http://www.tommyhalladay.com/nophotoshop) and my Magic Monday series on my Instagram [www.instagram.com/tommygotmagic](https://www.instagram.com/tommygotmagic)

Thank you so much, Tommy Halladay

## Color Face

**Effect:** Predict what poker chip color the spectator will select.

**Method:** The effect is based on two principles. The Gypsy peek and the magician's choice. Hand four different color poker chips to the spectator. While she is examining the chips, write down any of the colors--we will use Red for this explanation. Put the prediction away but in a place that is obvious you can not reach and change. Cover your eyes with your left hand and extend the right hand to a position where you can see using the Gypsy peek. Ask the spectator to hand you two of the chips.



1. If he hands you the Red and another one, ask him to put the ones he is holding in his pocket and ask him to take one of the ones in your hand.
    - a. If he takes the Red, put the other one away.
    - b. If he takes the other one, ask him to put it away and then ask him to hold the one you are left with.
  2. If he handed two of the other colors, put them away in your pocket and ask him to hand you one more.
    - a. If he hands you the Red, ask him to put the other one away.
    - b. If he hands you the other one, put it away with the ones in your pocket.
- At the end we are left with the Red poker chip.

You can now reveal the prediction, or do a little bit more of presentation. Use four questions and ask the spectator to say YES to all of them...

*Did you pick the white chip? YES.*

*Did you pick the red chip? YES.*

*Did you pick the green chip?... and then eliminate two where you 'think' he lied.*

Then ask them to answer NO to the next two questions.

*Did you pick the red chip? NO.*

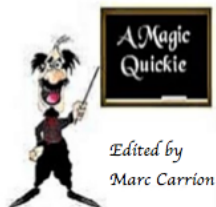
*Did you pick the blue chip? NO.*

*I see... it's not the blue... you picked the RED.*

That is when you can tell them: What if it was not a free choice at all? What if you had seen the future? What if you were able to predict their choices from the beginning?

Ask them to read the prediction (which you have not touched)

**Note:** The name is based on an effect by Pablo Amira using gimmicked poker chips, called Poker Face



## Conjurors to Learn Cups & Balls at March 3 Meeting

A typical cups and balls routine includes many of the most fundamental effects of magic: the balls can vanish, appear, transpose, reappear and transform. Basic skills, such as misdirection, manual dexterity, sleight of hand, and audience management are also essential to most cups and balls routines.

As a result, mastery of the cups and balls is considered by many as the litmus test of a magician's skill with gimmick style tricks.

Magician John Mulholland wrote that Harry Houdini had expressed the opinion that no one could be considered an accomplished magician until he had mastered the cups and balls. Professor Hoffman called the cups and balls "the groundwork of all legerdemain."



**We are adding new members to The Conjurors. If your child loves magic and is between the ages of 7 to 16 then they can join us for our monthly Zoom meetings. They are free to all; we simply want to encourage kids to learn magic. Contact Louis Meyer at [Youth@ibmring50.org](mailto:Youth@ibmring50.org) with your child's name and your email and your child will be added to the list!**



**Be Sure to  
Keep Your  
I.B.M. Member-  
ship Current**



Bob Patterson of the I.B.M. Membership Committee reminds us that you must be an active member of I.B.M. to belong to Ring 50.

**If you haven't already, don't forget to keep your membership active in the International Brotherhood of Magicians to enjoy the benefits of membership. Send dues to: International Brotherhood of Magicians, 13 Point West Blvd, St. Charles, Missouri, USA 63301.**



## You Know You Are a Magician When...

- ◆ You spend \$20 for a half dollar.
- ◆ The only unbent forks in your house are plastic.
- ◆ You carry six decks on you.
- ◆ You worry about spending certain change in your pocket.
- ◆ You bottom deal when playing Go Fish.
- ◆ A Bike to you is a deck of cards.
- ◆ All your water bottles have the caps inside the bottle.
- ◆ Your left hand is constantly in a mechanics grip.
- ◆ You have more decks of cards than you've had hot dinners.
- ◆ People stop lending you money, or borrowing it due to the fact you can never quite give it back to them.
- ◆ You have an ace of spades taped to the back window of your car.

-- Author unknown

## RING 50 NEW MEMBERS AND APPLICATIONS

New members are always welcome at Ring 50. You must be interested in magic (full time or part time performer, hobbyist, collector, etc.)

You must join and be an active member of International Brotherhood of Magicians to belong to Ring 50.

Be sure to keep your membership active in the I.B.M. to enjoy the benefits of membership. Send your I.B.M. dues to: International Brotherhood of Magicians, 13 Point West Blvd, St. Charles, Missouri, USA 63301



Arnold Levin  
Tom Beutner  
Alan Anderson  
Dan Miller  
Drew Owen  
Bob Greenwald

March 4  
March 8  
March 14  
March 15  
March 15  
March 20

## The Treasurer is Now Collecting Dues for 2021

Ring 50 annual dues of \$20 for 2021 are due by Feb. 28. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic suspension of group meetings, you may begin paying your dues now by mail or PayPal. Ring 50 Treasurer Bob Patterson requests that you pay by check, as this eases the record keeping. Make checks payable to **IBM Ring 50**. Please send your check to his home address at:



Bob Patterson, 3450 Wainscott Place, Lake Ridge, VA 22192-5362.

Or you may pay by PayPal at [Payments@IBMRing50.Org](mailto:Payments@IBMRing50.Org). Your 2021 Ring 50 membership card will be sent upon receipt of payment.

Enjoy your Ring activities and the Magi-Gram throughout 2021 by paying your dues now.