

The 80's Called...
They Want Their
Magic Books Back
Volume One

Jonathan Friedman
INTRODUCTION BY DAVID REGAL

INTRODUCTION

The 1980s was a heady time for magic books. It was an explosion of information. It was also something of a personality parade as we got to better know seasoned magicians through the release of compilations of their work, and hear new voices in magic via the seemingly endless flow of publications. As the ability to record video became inexpensive (and omnipresent), the flood of information took the form of VHS tapes, then, when magnetic particles reached their life expectancy, DVDs. Books went the way of the white rhino – they continued to roam the earth, but in smaller numbers.

Those of us who were, and are, avid readers hold affection for books. In the 80s it felt like the new magic books were stuffed with ideas – it was a time of thoughts unchained. For many, the somewhat loose, loopy style of Paul Harris and others who published in the 70s and 80s is remembered as a point of departure. Those books often offered, in addition to tricks, a unique voice. The voice made itself known both in the scripting of the effects, and, at times, the nature of the effects themselves.

Jonathan Friedman has produced a book that would have been at home back then. His antic personality is as much a part of the whole as the effects he teaches – but the real finds are in the in-betweens, the details. As is true of the books he admires, one reads through the routines discovering elements that can be added to one's arsenal of solutions: a winning move here, an interesting approach or phase there. This is a book of tricks, yes, but more importantly a book of ideas from a voice we haven't heard from before.

Hello, Jonathan.

— David Regal

“We are the music makers...
and we are the dreamers of dreams.”

-Willy Wonka

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PREFACE

In a world chock full of DVDs, digital downloads, and free YouTube videos, who needs an actual, real-life magic book? Well, for starters, I do and since you have purchased this book, I'm going to assume that you also feel the same overwhelming "need to read". And for that, I truly thank you from the bottom of my page-turning, chapter-burning heart.

So, let's address the two obvious questions: What's the story behind the title of the book and really, what's up with the sunglasses? Well, since you asked, here goes. The 1980's



Age 12, wide-eyed and almost innocent.

were a very good time for me, magically speaking. It was during this glorious decade that I made the life-changing leap from department store, birthday present magic kits to purchasing shiny, yet sophisticated individual tricks from magic shops and catalogs. Add to this the very limited supply of general magic books available from the local library and I suddenly felt as if I had it all. My life was complete. An active library card and twenty or so gimmicked magical pieces of plastic and I was now ready to call myself a "man of magic", despite the fact that I was barely into my teens.

What I did not know was that outside of this safety net I liked to call "my magic", there existed an entire world of cutting-edge magical routines that were overflowing with personality, wit, and new exotic sleight of hand techniques designed to accomplish the type of miracles that I could barely even wrap my mini sponge ball brain around. I really could have it all and all I had to do was begin to look in the right places. Fortunately, I was lent a book to read through. My world changed like a black card to red overnight with a few casual turns of the page. The book in question? *Supermagic* by Paul Harris (1977). This guy thought "different". His books read "different". He was "different"...and so was I. It was then I realized that "different" is good, which was a very radical concept for a teenager. I soon gobbled up every Paul Harris book I could get my hands on. In the 80's, this was easy. It seemed that books were growing on trees. I really did have it all. I could now link playing cards together, slide coins into and out of mirrors, and so many other brain-melting effects, all because some guy in Las Vegas decided to share his close-up fantasies with the world. I was listening, but more importantly, I was reading.

But there were others as well. I devoured whatever I could by Richard Kaufman, Ben Harris, David Harkey, Jay Sankey, David Regal, Michael Weber, Stephen Minch, and countless others as well. I was hooked. I was influenced. I was well-read. I was ambitious. Mix all of that together with a kid that possesses a lot of time on his hands and you set the stage for what was to become my very own magic book. This was what I wanted to do. I was going to do. I just had to do it.

Well, real-life did its crazy thing and I found myself very fortunately making my way through the world as a working musician, which is probably one of the most “magical” things in the world. What can I say? My priorities shifted. The opportunity to make music was very important at that point of my life and I was very lucky to have had it. That being said, I just didn’t have the time to keep up with pursuing my magical dreams. It was the 90’s and I had some Grungy Alternative Rock to do and so I did it. But here is the thing. When I wasn’t tuning my guitar, I read. When I wasn’t writing songs to sacrifice at the altar of the rock gods, I read. When I was leaving my beautiful wife and two awesome kids at home to go play “hurry up and wait” at a gig, what did I do to pass the time and keep my sanity? I read. And that was enough...then.



Not a bad way to pay the bills. Magical in its own rockin' way.

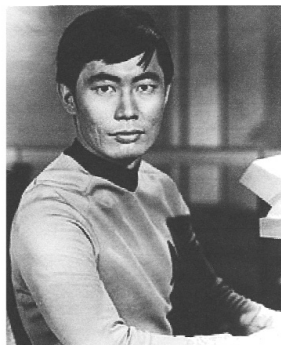
Well, I closed my eyes and realized about twenty musically rockin’ years had gone by and yes, they absolutely were filled with plenty of “magic”. Life seemed pretty “conquered”. What next?

Once the strings stopped vibrating and the fog machine dried up, I realized that it was time for my magical comeback/big debut. I was going to finally write that dang book. Well, I heard it from every corner. “Why don’t you just make a DVD?” “You should just make some videos and put them online”. “A book? What is this, the 80’s?” I thought those suggestions over for about nine seconds and then answered a great big “Nope” to all of that nonsense. Bottom line is this. I like to read. I want to read. But most importantly, I want to write a book that I would want to read. And that is what this is.

Every single one of the routines in this book has been performed outside the comforts of my own little head. Now, let's get this straight. I do not actively do birthday parties, restaurants, or trade shows. That's not my scene. I'm that guy who stuffs his pockets up with a deck, some coins, and then hits the real world. Maybe my miracles occur "on the fly" in social gatherings. Maybe they pop up at work, when everyone should probably have been doing something "productive". Well, thank goodness I have always been there to put a stop to that. That's not to say that my material hasn't been tested and performed in the usual working magician's environments. It has. I am blessed to have a "posse" of magician-friends that have always been willing to try out my latest and greatest in those restaurant, party, and trade show situations that define one as a "working pro". But here's the thing. You don't have to be a "working pro" to act like a pro and that's what I have striven to do. I thought very hard and I worked extremely diligently on this book, in order to give my own brand of originality back so that hopefully it can be the catalyst in making somebody out there want to pick up another magic book and read it. To me, that's what a "pro" should want to do. I've given you plenty to think about in this book. I've even given you complete scripts to use, which I personally would love for you to try. Hopefully, by jumping in and trying out some of these routines, you can take your magic to the next level and be whatever kind of "pro" it is that you have always wanted to be.

Oh yeah and far as the sunglasses go, well, they pretty much just make me feel cool.























Jonathan Friedman



*To Jonathan
What a magical man!
George Takai*

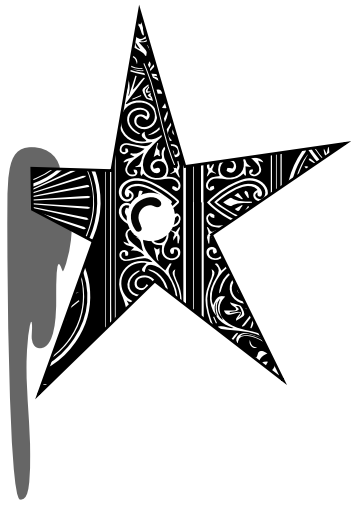
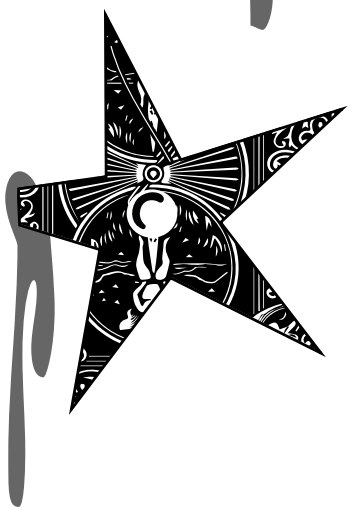
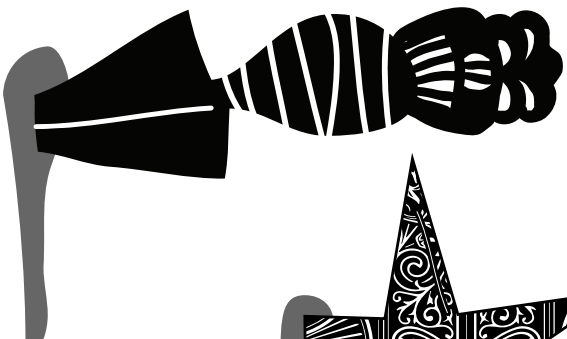
**Performing some of my magic for the legendary
George Takai at Market Magic Shop in Seattle, WA.**

 CONTENTS

	Wannabe Ninja	12
	The Trashcan Production	
	Slaptrap	
	Feats of Strength	28
	Twenty (by John Guastaferrero)	36
	Pencil Paper	52
	Coins ala Carte	62
	Atom Split	
	Up and Over Vanish	
	Emerge	
	Arcade Vanish	
	Denim Ditch	
	One-Hand Clap	
	Auto Repeat, Disengage	72
	Well Traveled (by Cameron Francis)	82
	The Kernel	92
	One Little Letter	98
	George and Abe	108
	White Light, White Heat, White Card (by Shaun Dunn) ..	124
	Selectigami	136
	Outside the Inside	146
	Spoonmelt	154
	This is Real (by Francis Menotti)	162
	Greasy Pretzel Fingers	172
	Hot Air	182
	The Sloppy Spectator (by Steve Mayhew)	192
	Guitar-Pick-a-Card	202
	Magic Eraser	212
	Jacked Up (by Joe Cole)	222
	Keycutter	236

WANNABE

Ninja



Effect

A booty-kicking, three-phase, “find-a-card” routine utilizing top-secret ninja techniques to get the job done. Playing cards are thrown, transformed, turned invisible, and the spectator even finishes the trick off by throwing this invisible “ninja star” card directly into the pack themselves, where it visibly appears right next to the selection. Inspired by “Stabbed In The Pack” by Johnny Benzais and Harry Lorayne (The Best Of Benzais, 1967), the origins of this type of effect go all of the way back to Gus Bohn’s “Face Up Location” in Walter Gibson’s *Two Dozen Effective Practical Card Tricks* (1927).

Featuring The Trashcan Production and Slap Trap: Two new moves to add to your ninja bag of tricks.

Needed

A deck of playing cards with a Joker.

Preparation

None

Performance

While keeping the face of the deck toward yourself, spread through it until you get to the Joker. Cut this Joker to the rear of the face-up deck and then turn the entire pack face down. The Joker is now the top card of the deck.

“Ya know, I didn’t always want to be a magician. Growing up, I wanted to be a ninja. That’s right, a ninja. I mean, who wouldn’t want to be a ninja? Plus, I had an Uncle Bob who was a ninja and he was pretty cool, so...that’s right, Uncle Bob the ninja. True story.”

Give the deck whatever set of shuffles and false cuts that will make you happy, as long as you keep the Joker on top.

“As a kid, I wasn’t able to go get the latest ninja weapons whenever I wanted like all the other cool ninja kids on the block. But I didn’t have to. I learned to improvise with a deck of cards.”

After shuffling the pack, hold it in left-hand dealer’s grip and slide the bottom card out with your right thumb and first two fingers. Give this card a gentle 360-degree spin in the air, catching it with whichever hand that feels more comfortable. I always shoot for the hand holding the deck, but sometimes I do need to adjust on the fly and catch it with the right hand instead. Once the card has been caught, bury it back into the center of the pack.

“Who really needs throwing stars when you can use throwing cards?”

Pick up the deck in right-hand Biddle Grip and swing cut the top half of the cards into your left hand with your right index finger. You are going to re-grip the cards in your right hand by straddling their outer corners



with your right index finger and pinky (fig. 1). By increasing the pressure on these corners, you will be able to let go of the cards with your right thumb. Re-position your thumb to the center of the outer end of the cards and perform a face-down one-handed fan, bringing it up to chest level as you tilt your right hand back toward you, displaying the face of the card fan to the spectator.

“Who needs a fancy ninja fan from the Far East when you can just use a card fan?”

You are now ready to perform “The Trashcan Production”, an original move that I have been performing for well over twenty-five years. It has its roots firmly planted in the Cardini Color Change, but here it is used as a production instead of a straight-ahead color change.

THE TRASHCAN PRODUCTION

Push over the Joker on top of the left half with your thumb and then pull it back, catching a pinky break underneath it. Everybody is looking at the fan at this time, so you are completely covered as you get your pinky break.

Both of your hands work in unison during this production. Lower the right hand’s fan straight down so that it is about three inches directly over the top of the deck, tilted forward enough to cover the front edges of the cards in the left hand.

This fan will be providing a screen as the left hand levers the Joker up at a ninety-degree angle (like a trashcan lid), bringing it perpendicular with the rest of the deck (fig. 2, exposed side view). Make sure that you are holding the cards in dealer’s grip, with the outer right corner of the deck gripped between the right index and middle fingers. The left hand’s grip



fig. 3



fig. 4

is crucial to ensure that the card levers up smoothly, as well as in the correct position to be stolen back under the fan. To make this happen, you will simply be straightening out your left fingers, causing the face-up Joker to completely lever over to a horizontal position. As you tilt the fan back to its original position directly over the deck, the bottom two

fingers of the right hand are freed to extend to the left to grab the card once it has been levered and revolved face up (fig. 3, from below).

“Let me actually introduce you to my very own ninja master. Here he is.”

Wave the right-hand fan over the left hand in a small circle. Allow your left fingertips to contact the back of the face-up Joker and then slowly slide it out from beneath the fan (fig. 4)

“I know he looks like an average joker, but he is a real-life ninja master. He’s dressed in black. He slices and dices his way through the darkness of the deck. He’s the real deal.”

Place the face-up Joker on top of the left hand’s cards and then close the one-handed fan in your right hand. Place the cards in the right hand underneath everything in the left and you are ready to proceed.

Take the Joker into your right hand and give it a couple of spinning tosses toward the deck. Your goal is to catch it on top of the pack. This very well may be the most difficult part of the routine, for me at least. Just give it a spin toward the deck and then lift the left thumb off of the pack so that you can trap the Joker with it as it lands on top of the deck.

“Once I teamed up with the master, I got pretty decent with the throwing card, my weapon of choice. As a matter of fact, my friends even called me... The Wannabe (rhymes with wasabi) Ninja. Pretty cool. I didn’t know what it meant. Wannabe. Probably means something like ‘way of the warrior’. Then, I realized that I read it wrong; not Wannabe, Waaaaaanabe (like ‘wanna be’).”

Adjust the face-up Joker so that it is squared with the rest of the deck in the left hand, if it didn’t already land that way. If it did, you rule.

“Ouch. That’s when I got angry, and when I got angry, I got good.”

 PHASE ONE (LETHAL ACCURACY)

Spread the cards from hand to hand and have a card selected. For explanation's sake, we will use the King of Clubs as our selection.

“Watch as I demonstrate. Please select a card. The King of Clubs. That will be our target card.”

You will be controlling the selected card to the second position from the top of the deck, directly underneath the face-up Joker. An easy way to do this is to utilize Dai Vernon's Depth Illusion a/k/a *Tilt* (*Tilt* by Marlo, 1963).

To get your Tilt on, square the deck back into left-hand dealer's grip. Your right hand momentarily approaches the deck from above, just enough for your right thumb to lift off the inner end of the top card of the pack about a half of an inch or so. Apply a small amount of pressure between the base of your left thumb and left fingers to both sides of this



fig. 5

top card, as well as the rest of the deck. This will hold the elevated inner end of the top card in this position as well as keep the outer end of this top card locked down in place with the rest of the deck (fig. 5, from behind). If you are proficient with a one-hand get-ready for Tilt, certainly feel free to “one hand” that bad boy.

Insert the King of Clubs face down into the gap at the inner end of the deck. Due to the depth illusion, from the front, it will look to the spectator as if the card were inserted directly into the center of the pack. Hold a left-pinky break beneath the King and the Joker as you allow the gap to close back down with the rest of the pack. Usually, my preferred clean-up to the move is to use the pinky to push up the bottom fifty cards to meet with the top two, instead of letting the top two cards fall back down to the deck. That does present a better illusion. But since the pinky

is busy holding the break, it's all right to relieve him of this extra duty.

“Let’s lose it back into the pack somewhere. Nobody knows where the target lies. A random occurrence, one through fifty-two.”

From above, lift off the two cards above the break in right-hand Biddle Grip, miscalling them as a “single” ninja card.

“Skill set number one of a ninja is the ability to attack with quick and lethal accuracy. Keep your eye on the ninja card.”



Place the remainder of the deck onto the table directly in front of you and then re-adjust your left hand so that it is in position to pick up the top half of the deck in left-hand Biddle Grip. After a “3-2-1” countdown, lift up the top half of the deck an inch or so, and throw the card(s) from your right hand

onto the table, bottom, half deck. Immediately drop the left-hand cards back onto the pack, trapping the Joker and the hidden selection in between the halves (fig. 6).

“3, 2, 1. There, I think I got it.”

Square up the cards with your right hand and place them into left-hand dealer’s grip.

“Let’s take a look and see if I still got it.”

Spread the cards between your hands and stop after you get to the Joker. Break the spread at this point, so that the Joker is the bottom card of the right-hand spread. Allow the spread cards in the left hand to close into dealer’s grip and then push the top card of this bottom half over to the

right with your left thumb. Flip this top card face up with the edge of the Joker, revealing the selected King.

“There it is, The King of Clubs. I guess I do still got it.”

PHASE TWO (MASTER OF DISGUISE)

Lay the Joker face up onto the table and then place the right-hand cards below the ones in the left. Use the opportunity of squaring up the deck into the left hand to catch a pinky break underneath the top two cards of the deck: the face-up King and a face-down “X” card. In this case, the “X” card will be the Ace of Diamonds, which is so obviously the “x-iest” of all the cards in the deck.

Use your right thumb to lift up the inner end of the cards above the break in preparation to perform “Tilt” again. Once the cards are propped into the correct position, use your right middle finger to slide the King toward you until your thumb can contact the card’s back. Turn the King face down and slip it into the break beneath the top card, just as before. Continue to hold a pinky break beneath the top card as you pick up the Joker with your right hand.

“Let’s go ahead and put it back into the pack as we go over ninja skill set number two, becoming a master of disguise.”



fig. 7



fig. 8

Place the face-up Joker on top of the pack, so now you are holding a two-card break.

“He can’t blend into the crowd very well dressed like this. He’d stand out like a ninja in a deck of cards.”

Pick up the two cards above the break by their opposite corners, your right thumb on the inner right corner and your right middle finger on the outer left corner (fig. 7).

“But if we give him a shake...”

You will be changing the Joker into the “X” card, in our case the Ace of Diamonds, by utilizing Marlo’s “In Lieu Of Vernon’s Through The Fist Move” a/k/a the Twirl Change (*At The Table* by John Racherbaumer, 1984). The change is executed by allowing your right index finger to extend so that it can reach the far left edge of the cards. If you apply a bit of downward pressure between your thumb and middle finger, you will cause the card(s) to bow just enough to allow your right first finger to extend over and under the left-hand side of the cards. By pulling this side up with the index finger, the card(s) will rotate 180 degrees on the axis of the thumb and middle finger, turning into our “X” card, the Ace of Diamonds (fig. 8).

In order to disguise this twirling action, give the card(s) a few downward shakes as you do the move. The smaller action of “the twirl” is covered by the larger action of “the shakes”. As you do the Twirl Change with your



right hand, use your left thumb to push over the top card of the deck, the King, catching a pinky break beneath it. The Twirl Change provides more than enough cover to hide this left-hand action.

“...he dons a clever disguise, making him able to get close enough for a sneak attack...”

Lower the right-hand cards, still in Twirl Change position, back onto the deck, in order to add the card above the break to them. Immediately pick up all three cards above the break and then drop the deck back onto the tabletop. An awesome bonus is that because the right middle finger goes across the front of the cards during the move, it obscures the three-card thickness.

Repeat the entire “lift, throw, drop” actions as before. As soon as the card(s) get trapped between the halves of the deck, square up everything nice and neat.

“... like this.”

Place the deck into left-hand dealing position and then spread the cards between your hands until you reach the face-up “X” card, The Ace of Diamonds. Break the spread so that the Ace is on top of the left-hand cards. Use your left thumb to pull the Ace and the face-down Joker beneath it back flush with the deck, but catch a pinky break beneath both of them as they square with the pack. While still holding the spread cards in the right hand, use your right fingertips to grab ahold of the two cards above the break (fig. 9, from below). Use this double to flip over the top card of the left-hand cards, revealing the King yet again.

“Once again, he hits the target dead on. The King of Clubs.”

Thumb the King off onto the table and then turn the left-hand cards face up end for end by simply turning your left hand palm down, as your left thumb grabs ahold of the “X” card and face-down Joker below it (fig. 10).

“What did you expect? He’s not some random card.”

Turn your left hand palm up as you square the double with the rest of the cards and then immediately thumb over the Joker as the right hand makes a magic wave with its spread cards.

“He’s the ninja master.”

PHASE THREE (INVISIBILITY)

Place the right-hand cards below the cards in the left hand and then square up everything into left-hand dealer’s grip.

“Let’s do it again one last time. In fact, I would like you to help out with the demonstration of the third and most exciting of the ninja skills.”

Pick up the King and perform one more false insertion into the deck, but this time, you will not be using Tilt. Instead, approach the back of the deck with the King, but this time, slide it straight to the very bottom of the pack, underneath everything. The spectator has been conditioned by now that every time the card is inserted into the rear of the pack, it is going into “the middle”.

“The target goes back into the pack.”

Transfer the deck to left-hand dealer’s grip, with the index finger now wrapped around the front of the deck, not along the side of the deck with the rest of the fingers. Turn your hand so that the cards are held horizontally with the Joker facing the spectator.

It’s time to make the ninja card turn invisible. To do so, you are going to use what is, in my opinion, one of the very best color changes out there: “The Cardini Snap Color Change” from *Card Manipulations 3* (Jean Hugard, 1934). It was discussed briefly in the description for “The Trashcan Production”, but in that instance, a card makes an appearance. We will be using it to make the card disappear or turn “invisible”.



fig. 11



fig. 12

“My favorite of the ninja skills is the ability to actually become invisible. Yes, invisible.”

To perform this absolutely glorious move, the right hand moves over in front of the bottom half of the face-up Joker, with the back of the hand facing the spectator. Flick the center of the Joker with your right index finger while continuing to allow the rest of the hand to do its important job of covering the bottom half of the card.

“With a flick, just like that...”

As soon as you’ve done the flicking, the left middle finger and pinky quickly pull the Joker’s right edge down over the edge of the deck, levering it up into a vertical position. The left ring finger is not involved in the pulling action, but it does act as a wall, stopping the card in its tracks. Because the right hand stayed in its extended position, the Joker is now completely hidden from view from the spectator (fig. 11, exposed side view). For all intents and purposes, the card just instantly “turned invisible”.

“...he pops out of sight...”

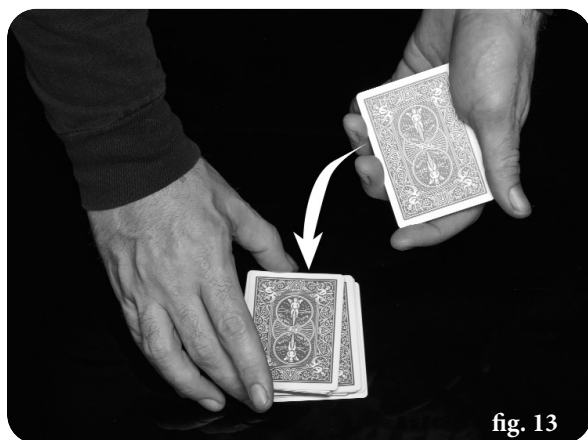
The last part of this move is the clean-up. Grab the bottom half of the deck between your right thumb and middle finger, while still covering the propped-up Joker. Simply lift the deck up an inch or so, using the left thumb as a pivot point, and then pull the Joker around to the face of the

deck with the left fingers (fig. 12). As the card rolls around in line with the rest of the deck, give the cards an upward riffle with the right fingers to “lock” everything in place.

“...ready for his final stealth attack. This one really is outta sight because you are going to do the dirty work. Trust us. He’s a professional ninja. I...am just an amateur.”

Pretend to hand the spectator the invisible card and instruct them to “practice” throwing it back and forth with you. There is plenty of room for some invisible shenanigans here—the classic “Tossed Too High Over Your Head” goof, or maybe the old “Invisible Paper Cut From Hell” chestnut, or perhaps the ever so funny “Invisible Card Impaled Through the Chest” bit. Kids love that!! Use your imagination.

“Take this invisible ninja card and practice throwing it to me, but be careful. This isn’t kid’s stuff. You could put out an invisible eye with that thing!”



After a few mimed tosses back and forth, spread the cards between your hands, showing the “middle”, but also showing that everything is on the up and up and there are no face-up Jokers hiding out, for those lovely few out there that may be looking.

“I’m going to cut the cards down to the table, and when I count down from three, you chuck that baby right into the middle of the pack, got it?”

As you close the spread back into left-hand dealer’s grip, grab a left pinky break above the bottom card of the deck, the Joker.

SLAP TRAP

“Slap Trap” is an awesome card production in which a card magically appears face up, sticking out of the middle of the deck. It can be used as a single-card revelation or as a multiple one. Perhaps as the final production in your 217th Four-Ace Production routine? Anyway, the manner in which it makes its appearance fits perfectly as the closer to this routine, because as you will see after going over it, it really does give an excellent illusion of a card visibly appearing, as if were just thrown by the spectator.

On the count on “one”, the right hand reaches over from above and cuts off about a third of the cards and slaps them onto the table.

“One...”

On the count of “two”, the right hand reaches over and again, cuts off another third, and slaps it onto the tabled cards (fig. 13).

“Two...”

Finally, on the count of “three”, the right hand cuts all of the cards above the break, as the left hand rolls slightly, but sharply at the wrist, clockwise (fig. 14). This will cause the Joker to roll off the left fingertips, revolving

face up as it hangs for a second in the air (fig. 15). The card is not thrown in any way. Just allow the card to do its gravity thing and it will flip over as long as you roll the wrist sharply enough.

“Three!! Do it!!”

As the cards in the right hand are getting ready to get smacked down to the table, they trap the free-floating, face-up Joker in the process and slap it down onto the tabled cards (fig. 16). Put some acting into it and follow the quick flight of the card with your eyes just before it makes its appearance. A little bit of timing on your part, combined with the spectator’s pantomime involvement/misdirection, makes this an incredibly visual and fun production.

“Oh yes!! Look at that!! Nice shot. Let’s take a look.”

Reach over to the deck with your right hand and cut to the face-up Joker. Dramatically lift up the cards to reveal the King of Clubs on the bottom of the top half.

“Very nice shot!!”

Table the top half face up and use both hands to remove the Joker. Stand it up on its end on top of the bottom half of the pack and then use both hands to make the ninja “bow”, by simply bending the top half of the card forward.

“From one ninja to another, we bow. The Wannabe Ninja strikes again!!!”



Oh Yeah....

Well, what can I say? This one really is my baby. Hopefully it will be your baby, too. There is a lot of strong magic going on during this routine. The audience participation makes this a treat to perform. Have some fun with various Kung-Fu sound effects and “hiyah”s as the cards are thrown. I have used both of the original productions, Slap Trap and the Trashcan Production, for many, many years. Both are staples in my regular work. For what it is worth, I often perform the Trashcan Production without using a fan as a cover. It is possible to do it with just your outstretched hand, but that is another lesson for another time, grasshopper.

I hope you carry on the ways of the Wannabe Ninja. Learn this routine and you will have a very dynamic piece of routined ninja magic that the audience will really get a “kick” out of. A very special "Wannabe" thank you goes out to two of the magic dojo's greatest publishing sensei, Richard Kaufman and Stephen Minch, for helping track down the appropriate historical references on this one. I was completely ready to give total credit to Bruce Lee and Chuck Norris until Richard and Stephen showed me the light.