

January 2021



I Practice
Magazine

Intro



Hello Friends!

Welcome to the second edition of the I practice magazine.

Just like last month, my name is Rico Weeland and I will be your editor, narrator and friend throughout this magazine.

In this edition of the magazine Michael talks about working on old routines, get your old routines out of your closet, because there is something beautiful to be worked on. Don't neglect the classics for the latest and greatest.

After we have looked into Michael's piece we will have a short intermission and talk about meditation, yes meditation! Being a whole human being with his/her own ideas is a very important aspect of any art, however, if

you want to learn more about it you should read the article.

After that we will move to Chris Wood talking about the importance of theory and how to apply it to the real world. According to Chris some people miss the point of proper theory entirely.

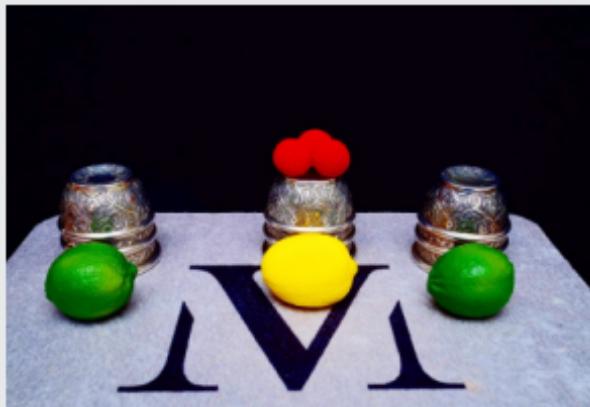
Finally we will be moving to an Essay of Photographer and artist Liz Wolter. Liz will talk about vision for new projects and where her ideas arise from.

So sit back, get a nice cup of coffee and enjoy the magazine. I know that I will. This time I'm enjoying a nicely hand made cappuccino made with an Aeropress and some Italian coffee bean (I know, I couldn't be more vague).





Routines are Never Finished. Routines are Never Finished



Welcome to another Monthly Meditation. I would like to share with you some thoughts I have about progress.

After 40 plus years of studying magic, it amazes me when a routine I first learnt as a boy knocks on more door at this stage of my life.

I got Stars of Magic in 1978 and this is where I first learnt The Impromptu Cups and Balls of Dai Vernon.

This set me on a journey that has lasted to this very day. Recently, I became interested in Cups and Balls again because I was selling my DVD.

The last time I touched my Sherwood Cups was 12 years ago, this was for my DVD project at that time. I wanted to record a video of the routine to promote the DVD recently during this pandemic.

I have never been 100 % happy with my routine and presentation. I was feeling sick and tired of the historical context for my presentation.

After the DVD was released in 2008, I had had enough of Cups and Balls magic.

Would you believe I am excited again?

I went back to the original routine I learnt as a boy and started again with Coffee Mugs and rolled up paper.

I began to appreciate the simplicity of using real ordinary objects.

This impromptu routine is glorious, it's organic and it's magical.

The purpose of this meditation is to get you all thinking about routines you have long forgotten in favour of the latest

newest download or DVD or Trick of the month you can buy from online stores.

I will lay money that you have routines in your repertoire begging for attention that you have long forgotten.

For me, Cups and Balls is a glorious piece of magic. I actually prefer the routine with ordinary Cups, my routine a simple, it's direct and you don't see the loads coming. And the big finish is spectacular.

What I find really interesting is, I had to go down the tubes and learn everything I could get my hands on regarding Cups and Balls in order to come full circle to fully appreciate the beauty of a simple, well constructed, well designed routine using Coffee Cups I could find in someone's home and rolled up bits of paper and a kitchen Knife for a magic wand.

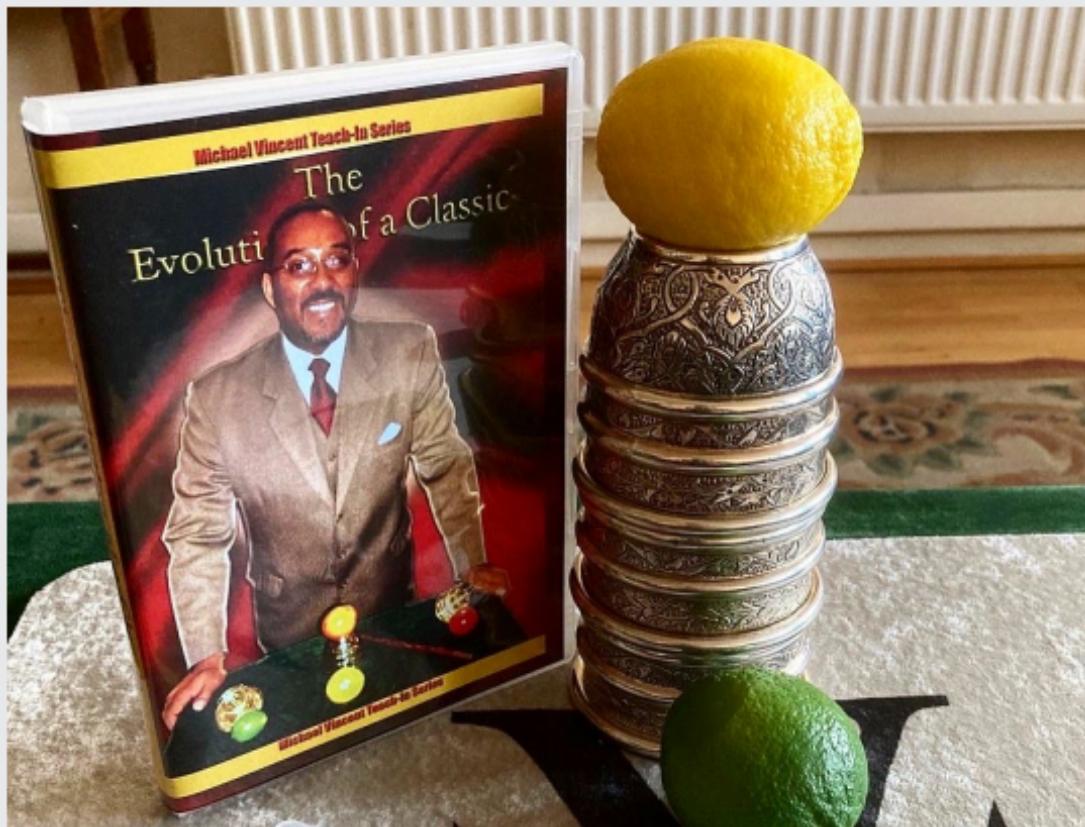
Trust me, I've done this in someone's home and the reaction was beyond magical.

No don't get me wrong, I love performing Cups and Balls with my Sherwood Cups and in the right situation and context my Sherwood Cups and the stories that I tell is 100% valid and of obviously, I have more options in terms of the effects I can perform. But for laypeople there is something really pure and beautiful about ordinary Cups that they use every night for their cup of tea.

Now that you've read this meditation, get out a piece of paper and a pen and make a list of 10 routines you haven't performed for the last 10 years.

Once you've made the list, pick three items that appeal to you and go back to basics and start again.





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You now have 10 years of experience to apply to routines you haven't touched for a very long time. See if you can take these routines to another level. I promise you, this is a great exercise because it will show you how much you have grown as a magician.

To complement this Monthly Meditation, I'm going to feature a link (click video below) that will take you straight to YouTube so that you can enjoy my impromptu performance of Cups and Balls using Coffee Mugs.

I look forward to seeing you next month with another Monthly Meditation.

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Meditate



Meditate

Meditate? Yes, meditate! You might be wondering what the title meditate does in a magic magazine? Have I gone all crazy and am I trying to convert you to my new religion? Hahaha, well not really. Meditation is an idea that is not bound to any religion or spiritual beliefs, moreover it is becoming increasingly popular with highly effective people and people

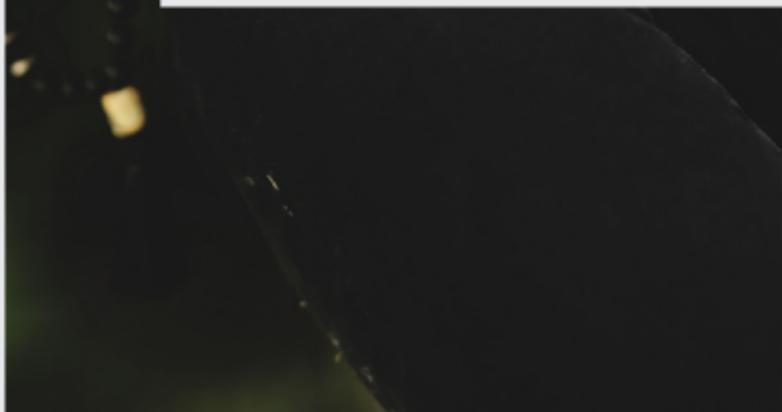
seeking to find themselves alike.

As some of you might know, I firmly believe that it takes more than just knowing a magic trick to be a good magician. However, in magic we tend to focus too much on the newest trick and coolest method to do things, completely neglecting the individual who does it. This was one of the reasons for this magazine, to learn from other arts and so we have contributions each month

from artists who practice other arts than magic.

If magic takes more than just knowing a few cool tricks and a few cool presentations, then what does meditation have to do with it? When I meditate, I come into a different kind of state, I open up. Often, I am busy doing one thing I close up around that one thing. All of my thoughts and ideas go in one direction and I create a sort of tunnel vision. This

is useful for getting something done, however, it is not useful for solving problems. Magic is about solving problems. When I have a problem with a method, with a presentation, with a structure, et cetera, and I meditate usually the answer will come to me. The reason for this is that when I'm expecting the problem all my attention is closed off into one direction, I can't see clearly or the whole picture. Whenever I start to



meditate my attention relaxes, it goes off the subject and all of a sudden many cool ideas and solutions just come to me. It has something to do with the wisdom of the mind, when we are not doing with something it is still being processed in the background until we find a solution or finish the thing. This is called the Zeigarnik effect.

I also use meditation to learn more about myself, according to doctor Peterson we can only know ourselves by watching our actions. This means that I can only know myself by taking a step back and observing how I behave. Looking from a different perspective at this, according to Alan Watts we can only know ourselves in the moment. He says that when we are asked "who are you" you will give a whole list of history, your house, your address, your favorite music, your passion. But, rarely will you ever answer "I just am". Which I know,



sounds very floaty and spiritual, but stay with me.

Just being in the moment is something that I practice with meditation. Not only that, while I'm meditating, I'm watching my thoughts, instead of co-operating with them. This means that I can observe myself but I can also see how I think about things and I can create core values for my life. This is very important, because, when an unexpected situation happens, I like to think that I

act from my intellect. I.E., making the best decision I can possibly make. This is not true however, I tend to act more from my emotion in such situations, just like all people do. We are emotional beings after all.

I learn to know myself through meditation. That is important because I then have my core values in place and when that unexpected situation happens I can act from such a value rather than from my emotions.

More importantly, I get to know myself through meditation and this is something that I can then project to my audience and this will make my magic more interesting and memorable.

I see magic as an experience together with my audience, for me, it is important in that experience to be authentic and to create the experience with my audience. But, how can I be authentic if I don't know myself?

Exactly!

I can't. This is why I meditate and some of the benefits I have found from it, I hope that you will find the same.

-Rico Weeland, 2021



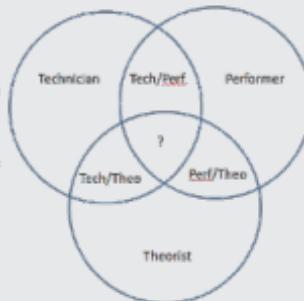
REFLECT - REFINE - PERFORM PART 1

REFLECT - REFINE - PERFORM PART 1

I've been writing and lecturing on magic theory for a while now, it's an aspect of magic that I find as absorbing as performing or developing technique but I certainly don't consider myself as being anything other than someone who is on the same journey as many others. The bulk of credit for anything I write must go to my mentor Alan Alan who taught me how to think about magic and how deep the rabbit hole is. Whilst many in the magic world are

not keen on theory, seeing it as something esoteric, I would argue that the reason the Spanish are leading the world in close-up is due to the solid base of theory that Ascanio laid down for them that Juan, Gabi and others have built on. In Spain theory isn't looked down on, it is respected and used. However I would add the caveat that performing is ultimately what informs theory and it's worth noting that Ascanio based most of his on watching Kaps

perform. The problem is that we can all think of magicians who are either great Technicians, great Performers or great Theorists. Sometimes we can name those who excel in two aspects but oh so rarely can we name anyone who hits the trifecta. (I'll let you play the game of filling in names for the diagram on the right.)



All my lectures highlight the importance of refining and paying attention to detail, using effects from my repertoire as exemplars so the theory has some context. For Rico and this magazine I've just submitted the concluding essays in the hope that some will find them interesting



Reflect, Refine and Perform (from my Lecture Notes Vol. 1)

I have a broad repertoire as I enjoy learning new effects and more importantly the process of crafting them. Once I have finished solving problems and developing script, choreography, misdirection and

polishing performance issues I find I'm keen to go through the process again. I don't believe anything is truly finished but you do reach a point where you are satisfied. If you've read my lecture notes you will have an insight into the level of detail one can go into regarding a routine. The caution I will give is that it is all about performing in the end. If you spend a year reflecting and refining something before you perform it again the balance is wrong.

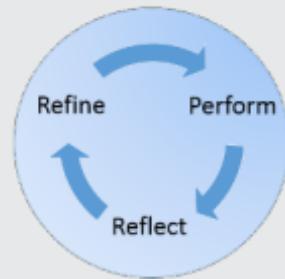
Reflect, Refine, Perform. Then reflect, refine and perform again. It's a cyclic progression and although thinking about things is important, it means nothing unless you validate it against the fire of performance. I find that the first twenty performances bring the most changes and



refinements. However I have a trick I've been performing for 40 years and even with that I still occasionally tweak delivery, timing and lines.

Find some friends in magic you trust, brainstorm, try things out, and then apply them in the acid test of a real performance for lay people. Then re-evaluate. You will find your magic will grow as your experience and attention to detail does.

-Chris Woods, 2015



Where Ideas Arise alongside the road to the unknown



When Rico asked me to write about my art and how other artists could benefit from it or be inspired by it, my imposter alarms immediately went off and nearly embarked on yet another wonderful existential-crisis-journey. However, after some second thoughts, (and ignoring that little imposter voice that no one needs anyway), I figured that I would just write down what I know and what I do with that limited, yet valuable knowledge. In this way, you as a reader can decide for yourself if the upcoming lines will be of any substance or benefit to what it is that you're doing or pursue achieving.

As a passionate videographer and audiovisual storyteller, I often think of what it is that I want to communicate and share with others. What does my idea contribute to this world and what can people gain out of it? Oftentimes these questions already help me identify whether they will come to reality or remain floating around in my head. Once that idea is set though, magic starts happening (for some, even in a literal sense as well). It's that moment of time where all the doors still stand open, making room to go in any direction you want. And that, I think, is the most beautiful thing about art in any

of its forms. You never know where it will take you.

When starting off a video project with a concrete idea, I never know how it will look like in the end. I might have some preconceived notion or feeling about what it is that I'd like to include or leave out, but in the end, it's all as much of a surprise to me as it is to the audience that will see it once it's done. And I'm certainly not the only creative or performer feeling that way. Just ask an improvising jazz saxophonist if he/she saw these notes coming at the beginning of the evening.

So it is right here that we, my dear reader, come to the point where any artist can draw his/her inspiration from one's open-mindedness and curiosity towards the unknown. Some might label it as a childish or a naïve approach, but for me, it's a necessary step to look at things with eyes, ears, and hearts wide open to become an ever-growing artist or person for that matter. May that be a political debate between two friends, a philosophical point of view in a textbook, or a meme on 9gag, each encounter that we make with different things and people we don't know much about, offers us

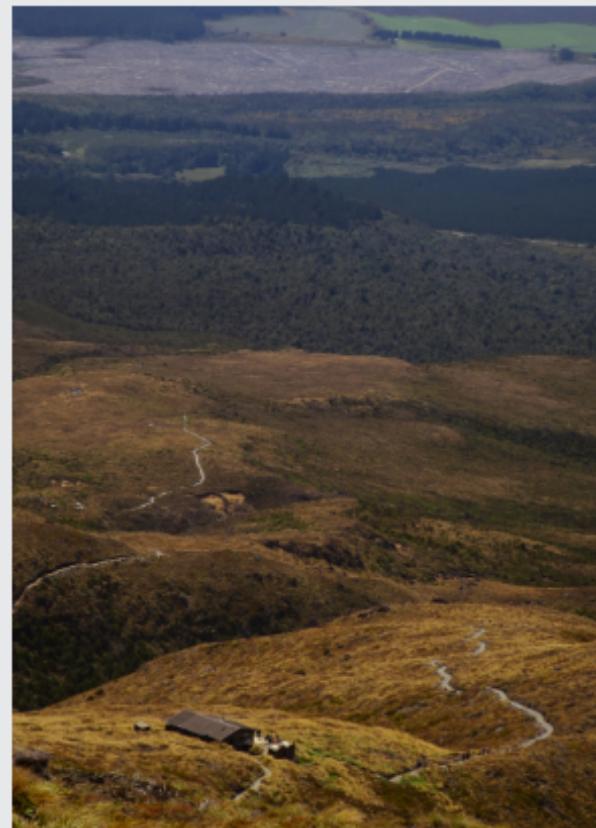


two options: we can either remain stubborn in our own ignorance or be open to watch and listen to what others have to say and share with us. It is the latter option that might leave you daydreaming or sleepless during some nights, but it is also the option that becomes an opportunity. An opportunity to grow, an opportunity to go beyond yourself, an opportunity to be a better person, a better artist, a better magician.

And it is exactly for this same reason, this open-mindedness towards “the other”, that Rico asked me to write this post. I might not know much about

tricks, I might not know anything about magic itself, hell some would even say I know nothing. But if there's one thing that I am sure of, then it is that all of us would know way more if we decide that everything we hear, see, feel and experience could be the source for a new idea. Because it is.

-Liz Wolter, 2021





Bio Chris

Chris is an accomplished full time performer who created and runs the highly successful "Close-Up @ The Magic Circle" show. For the last 7 years he has also produced the show in a variety of theaters, performing every week alongside others with an aim to showcase quality close-up magic. He has been a long term director of the charity "Centre for the Magic Arts" whose aim is to preserve the heritage of The Magic Circle and educate the public about magic as a performing art as well as being a former secretary of the Magic Circle itself.

To find out more about Chris you can visit his website: [http://
www.chriswoodmagic.co.uk](http://www.chriswoodmagic.co.uk)

Bio Mike

Michael Vincent is an UK based professional magician, teacher, student and pioneer.

Michael is one of the patrons of the classic school of magic and he will make you see the most wonderful things with just a deck of cards.

This man really needs no introduction, however, what some of you might not know is that Michael makes photographs that are just as beautiful as his magic. You will find a truly authentic expression in everything that Michael does.

To Follow Michael you can find him on instagram with [@michaelvincent_magic](#)



Bio Liz

Liz is a photographer, traveller and videographer from Luxembourg.

I could give you a big and complex description about Liz but even that wouldn't do her justice. Just like any interesting person Liz can't be described in a few sentences. She is full of life and does amazing work.

To discover more about liz and her beautiful photography, you can follow her on Instagram with

[@Wolzel](#)

Bio Rico

Rico Weeland is a Dutch magician, writer, lecturer, magical philosopher. And editor/writer of this magazine.

He has lectured in places all over Europe such as the Magic Circle in London and the Krakow Magic Session in Krakow.

Rico loves to think about magic, play music and drink coffee. When Rico is not practicing or performing magic you will most likely find him reading a book or playing ukulele, guitar or bass.

To follow Rico on instagram you can find him with [@rico_weeland](#)



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The magazine will stay free for all time to come and I want to bring you many more amazing articles, stories and insights.

You will notice that on the patreon there is also another option. This option is to become part of the patreon lecture program. The idea is to organize a lecture each month about magical theory, books and how to apply theory.

If you want to check out the patreon you can either click the picture above or follow the link below:

<http://www.patreon.com/invisiblepractice>

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On the instagram you will find different essays and tips about magic. Click the picture or the link below to find out more.

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