



THE BUZZ

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AMS ANNIVERSARY EDITION

JARON LAMMERTINK



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This magazine is a production of the Amsterdam Magic Society. If you like to contribute, send this to our editor & designer, Frans de Groot: amsterdammagicsociety@gmail.com

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DEAR READER

As I write this, the football team of the Netherlands has reached the semi-finals. What a match! Also, the Amsterdam Magic Show celebrated its 8th anniversary. Even though Taylor Swift was in Amsterdam, we managed to get a full house at Theater De Cameleon with an amazing line-up including David Globe, Alex Conradi, and Rob Mollien. You can read a review of the show further on.

In fact, I did a one-man show at De Cameleon years ago. My inspiration to start doing one-man shows was my friend Joshua Jay. I was performing a lot of walkaround magic and challenged myself to see if I could entertain an audience with magic for 60 minutes. My previous shows were loose, meaning I knew the tricks that I wanted to perform but had no scripts.

However, for this show at De Cameleon, I decided to script it. Afterward, my friends told me that this scripted style was not me. From that moment on, I decided to implement a middle ground: a loose script. Interestingly, a loose script will become a script the more you do it. When working on a new effect for the stage, I know the techniques and the sentences to get into and out of the routine, but the rest comes from performing the routine for an audience. Filming yourself and making notes after the show (either on paper or mentally) helps to improve your act. And the more you perform your act, the faster it will improve. In this issue of The Buzz, you will read about Okito and reviews of various shows.

Enjoy reading!

Fritz with a Z



Hans Klok and Okito's legacy

Okito was born in Amsterdam on July 15, 1875. He was taught magic at an early age. He also did pantomime and shadow play. At the age of 18, he started a Japanese-style act in Berlin. He later took the name Okito and started an act with a comedian who painted himself black, called Okito & Polishing.

He married the daughter of an English theatre manager, Lilian Poole. Back in the Netherlands, he changed his act to a Chinese act but kept the name Okito. He went on tour throughout Europe. In 1902, he performed for the English Prince of Wales and the Shah of Persia. From 1908, he lived in the United States and toured the country.

In 1909, he started a magic shop on Broadway, but it was not a success. In 1919, he traveled with a new Chinese act through South America, Africa, India, Egypt, China, Thailand (Siam), and the Far East.

Okito was the first in the world of illusionism who could make an object float. That is the basis of all tricks to make objects, whether a light bulb, ball, or table, move through the air. He wrote a number of books about his tricks that are still available in antique stores, such as 'Okito on Magic.' Some of his tricks were later also performed by illusionists such as David Copperfield and Hans Klok. The so-called Okito Coin Box is very well-known, a trick with a box

of coins that you frequently see on the internet. After the First World War, he performed in renowned theatres.

With the 2000 kilos of luggage that came with the acts, he was able to perform the most exclusive illusionist shows in the world. He traveled through Europe to Paris, Budapest, Berlin, and Vienna.

Because the atmosphere in Vienna became too grim for him, he left for the Netherlands with his family in 1932. He had a house built in Rijswijk. When the Netherlands was subsequently confronted with the Second World War, he fled to Latin America with his wife. Fourteen crates with packaged attributes remained behind. After a tour of South America and Mexico, he settled in Chicago, became an American citizen, and died there in 1963.

Click on the following link (video is in Dutch): <https://anderetijden.nl/programma/1/Andere-Tijden/aflevering/979/Hans-Klok-en-de-erfenis-van-Okito>

Arno Haijtema wrote a review in De Volkskrant: "It is a sad story, but thanks to Klok, it shines. It is beautiful and touching how he honours the man who is only considered a legend by illusionists themselves with his variation on the floating ball. With a burning light bulb floating through the theatre, Klok sheds light on the extinguished star".



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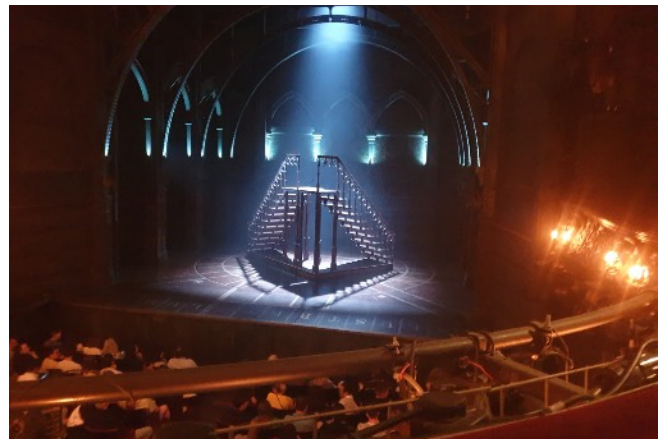
From Screen to Stage

by: *Evan Kastor*

How do you translate the magic of visual effects on screens into real-life magic for the theatre? I had the great fortune of getting to ask Chris Fisher just that. Chris is one of the illusion designers whose creations have captivated West End audiences nightly for almost a decade now in *Harry Potter*, *The Cursed Child* (2016) and more recently - *Stranger Things*, *The First Shadow* (2023). We are all familiar with *Harry Potter* and his years at Hogwarts—a world that has entranced generations of children and adults since the first book came out in 1997. The screen adaptations of the books were well done and gave us a yearly glimpse into the magical Hogwarts. The magic was primarily achieved with visual effects added in post-production, as most effects in movies are.

Bringing Hogwarts and its inhabitants to the stage simultaneously brought a whole new theatre-going audience - one that expected to see the movies happening live. This new audience demanded the production create and perfect new theatrical techniques in every department. For instance, it is easy on-screen to cut between conversations and storylines rapidly - no scene changes necessary. This new audience wouldn't wait for actors to walk into position, get set and begin a scene. So, how did they solve this? Embedded in the stage is a giant turn table. Set pieces and actors can be preset upstage while scenes are finishing downstage, then rapidly spun into position with the actors immediately beginning the next bit. Additionally, actors can

walk naturally and chat with their scene partners while the turntable keeps them in the same place in space, like a giant treadmill.



Chris and the team also pioneered an impressive new category of stage illusion - scene change magic. These are whole bits not driven by the needs of the plot but to speed up scene changes. For instance, one scene in *Cursed Child* requires two actors to begin their scene talking in a bed. There is nothing magical in the plot here, but in the production, an empty bed is wheeled into position downstage, and the sheet is placed on top. By the time the sheet hits the empty bed, our two actors magically appear in the bed, ready to play the scene.

The end result of all these new techniques is an entire theatrical experience that is as close to the screen versions as possible, combined with the immersion of a theme park. This world-building is also the case for *Stranger Things*, which includes a giant turntable and many of the same theatrical devices as *Harry Potter*. It

is no surprise, though, as it is from the same producers. Let's find out more from Chris Fisher.



Chris Fisher in rehearsals for The Time Travellers Wife Rehearsals Standard

E: What are the biggest differences in approaching the magic of Harry Potter and the effects in Stranger Things?

C: There are, of course, lots of differences between the two canons, not least that Stranger Things is a lot more scarier than Harry Potter! The initial approach is actually pretty much the same, in that you take the script, look at the story and devise effects that can be woven into the story and narrative, as well as into the design.

The difference of the two worlds though meant that we had to consider more what it was we were creating. With Harry Potter, it is very much a world of magic and spells. We do create a magical environment that the play exists in, but we are also creating magic that is "cause and effect"; for example, a wand is pointed at something, a spell is said, and an effect happens. A bit like when magicians perform their shows. Stranger Things is very different in that it is not a 'magical' world. It's a world where very odd, unexplained things can and do happen, but it's a different genre.

The actual series has telekinesis, monsters and horrifying acts. It's got suspense and jump scares. And these are things that we need to try and bring to the stage. We worked very closely with one of the scriptwriters from the series to work out what the moments could be and spent months developing the ideas. Stranger Things, in a way, had to be a lot more realistic for the horror to hit.

E: What were your biggest challenges in translating VFX magic to real-life stage magic?

C: I always like to think that anything that can be created on a screen, I can recreate a version of it in live action. Obviously, video effects and CGI can create certain impossible moments, but there is nothing like seeing one of those moments live onstage in front of your very eyes. That's what has been exciting about working on these massive shows in that it has brought a TV/cinema audience to the theatre, a lot of whom have never seen a live theatre production before. They have their minds blown by seeing these effects live.

What was extremely interesting and exciting working on Stranger Things, though, was that we did manage to blend the world of AV and illusion more than I've ever done before, working with the brilliant company 59 Productions, who were co-visual effects alongside Jamie (Harrison, co-designer) and me. We workshopped a lot of things together, taking a lot of the principles of magic and mixing them with a lot of their equipment and ideas. It has created some truly spectacular moments. A great example is when Henry produces live smoke from his hand that then seems to spread and morph in the air to become a much larger smoke cloud. This mixes an on-person smoke device coupled with brilliant projection onto a hologaze.

E: How was it working with other departments (like lighting, rigging, video, set

and prop designers), knowing they would have to be on board to help create the magic?

C: I always say that creating illusion and magic is actually one of the hardest roles on a production because we actually do straddle across almost every single department on the show. Just one effect alone will depend on the collaboration with the designer, director, choreographer, automation, stage management, props, costume, lighting, sound and wigs. It is critical that for every single effect I create I have thought about what I need from each of those departments. Then follows a lot of meetings as I talk through all the departments exactly what is needed to create the effect. I will then usually make prototypes, do workshops and make sure that everything I have designed is going to work.



We'll often get actors in to help us with this, too. It's highly collaborative, as I mentioned, and it's important I work closely with all the other designers to make sure the effects are integrated into all of their world, too. An effect should never feel 'shoe-horned' in, as you can see it from a mile. The best effects are when they seamlessly come from nowhere and are the least expected. You do need to trust the departments, but with the right communication and hard work, we can all come together to create some true miracles.

E: The time warp in Harry Potter and Henry's mother's last moments 'by' the dinner table in Stranger Things got me.

The time warp is incredible, when they do the actual 'time jump' the whole stage shifts and ripples in a way that is truly impossible. Henry's mother's last moments replicate a signature visual from season 4 that is, likewise, impossible. These were my favourite moments - what are your favourite magical moments in the shows?

C: I'm a fan of both of those, too, and I always enjoy watching people's reactions to them! In

Harry Potter, a couple of my favourite moments are the paper stacks, when Harry waves his wand and all the messy papers on his desk suddenly correct themselves and also Polyjuice, which is so much fun to watch. The paper stacks are particularly satisfying as they are something that wasn't in the show originally, and we devised the method during rehearsals. We made prototypes out of paper and it worked so well we developed it further to what

we have today. The joy of the effect is like I mentioned above about the collaboration with other departments. The effect works really well, but what really sells it is the flash of light on the papers when the spell hits and the sound effect of the papers flapping across the table. This makes it feel like real magic!

In Stranger Things, I think one of my favourite moments is when the rat explodes. People are convinced that the rat is real (and perhaps it is!), but that effect uses a combination of basic 'box' principles a lot of magicians would probably know, but with lots of convincers and subtleties that steer you away from this. It was a very complicated (and expensive!) build but it totally pays off.

E: One last thing - was that a spider squirmle I saw in Stranger Things?

C: Haha - well spotted!! Yes, there is a moment towards the start when Henry takes a spider from under the floorboard, plays with it in his hands, and then places it into his suitcase. And the idea for how to do that was totally the squirmle!

A huge thank you to Chris for taking the time—in the middle of teching a new show—to shed some light on these two outstanding productions.

Harry Potter and the Cursed Child is currently running in London (and many other cities), and Stranger Things, The First Shadow, is running in London through February 2025.



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Pictures by Evan





HOUSE of MYSTERIES

On June 29th, I had the pleasure of traveling to Belgium to watch some of my fellow society magicians (Amsterdam Magic Society/Amsterdam Magic Show) perform at the House of Mysteries in Gent.

The House of Mysteries is such an awesome place. If you are in Gent, you need to visit it. It's full of magic all the way up to the attic. It's like a magical Harry Potter world but with a focus on the history of magic.

The evening started off with Fritz "with a Z" and Evan Kastor performing a duo parlor act. I think Fritz is one of the funniest people I know. And I know a lot



of people. He's always on point with his verbals. If he were a boxer, his ring generalship would be second to none. Evan was just scary. His mentalism was, well yeah... scary. How he put it together and read minds was just scary. Not scary like a horror film, but like, for example, if a 2-year-old was able to play Liszt's "La Campanella" with their eyes closed. That type of scary. The way they mixed the magic, humor, and "scariness" was brilliant. Definitely a must-see, and I can't wait to see them perform together again.

After the parlor show, Fritz and Evan broke off into two separate rooms. Fritz did table magic and Evan did more mentalism. I went to the table magic room, so unfortunately I wasn't able to have Evan turn my brain inside out with more mentalism. But Fritz... Geeeee. I would paste that emoji with the hand holding the head all over this write-up if it was possible. This guy is a beast with it. As a dancer, I was one of those dudes who had this bursting energy of a way to do things. This is what I saw in him. His momentum is crazy. I'm actually surprised that people were not jumping out of their seats. But yeah,

I guess magicians watching magicians have to play it cool.



And then Edgar... Edgar Brumaire. This dude is something out of a movie. For his act, we all had to go up to the attic. Once again, mentalism. It was overly impressive. The chairs in a circle have you think, "Uh, what's gonna happen...???" Edgar is a storyteller. Combining a plot, storyline, hypnosis, and basically anything you can think of to make the story stick. He is a creative genius. Oh, not to mention the mentalism. The room would stand still anytime his mentalism was implemented. It almost made me feel like it wasn't understood.



But on the contrary, it made all of us speechless. The evening at the House of Mysteries was an unforgettable experience. Watching these talented magicians, each with their unique style and flair, was truly inspiring. The way they captivated and entertained the audience was nothing short of magical. If you ever find yourself in Gent, I highly recommend a visit to this enchanting venue. It's a place where the history and wonder of magic come alive, leaving you spellbound and eager for more. I can't wait for the next opportunity to see Fritz, Evan, and Edgar perform again. Until then, the memories of their extraordinary acts will continue to amaze and inspire me.

ORVILLE SMALL

AMSTERDAM MAGIC SH☆W

ANNIVERSARY EDITION ON JULY 4 IN THEATER DE CAMELEON

The anniversary show was a great success. Fritz, the host, did a fantastic job introducing the artists in a hilarious way. Zippo opened the Amsterdam magic show with a great performance of card manipulation. After the opening, it was time for David Globe, a mysterious and funny magician who could read the audience's thoughts in a unique manner. He took the audience on a journey through time, seemingly able to influence the past. He demonstrated this by restoring a broken rope and even hypnotizing his spectators.

Following David Globe, Alex Conradi from Italy took the stage. The amazing magician, with his passion for Italy, amazed the audience with his Okito box, a spectator's ring, and a rope. After tying the ring to the rope, the ring kept escaping, even when it was in Alex's hand. The ring would reappear in extraordinary places, like his keychain.



After the intermission, Willem was on a mission to find the murderer of his good friend Willy. Willy had been killed during a party in the restroom. Willem's task was to identify who had murdered Willy. He invited four suspects from the audience onto the stage.

One of the four was identified as the murderer without Willem seeing who it was. Would Willem succeed in uncovering the identity and

the murder weapon?

Zippo came back and performed a linking rope routine.



The headliner of the show was Rob Mollien. Rob invited the audience to gather around the table and showcased incredible card magic in a Spanish style. From a card under the pepper mill to an amazing ACAAN (Any Card at Any Number), he kept the audience laughing with his infectious jokes. He even got the entire audience singing along.



Overall, the show was a memorable and entertaining experience for everyone involved.

JARON LAMMERTINK



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AGENDA

August 4-7 - [MAGIC Live!](#) in Las Vegas Nevada, USA

August 9 - 10 - [MagiCon](#), Clayton, North Carolina USA

August 12 - [Amsterdam Magic Society](#), BBQ at "The Butcher Social Club"

August 13 - [Amsterdam Magic Show](#), Boom Chicago Amsterdam

August 14-17 - [KIDabra](#): The Conference of Kid Show and Family Performers in Chatanooga, Tennessee USA

August 18 - [Boulevard of Magic](#), Zandhuis in IJmuiden aan Zee

August 23-25 - [New England WizardFest](#) at Boxboro Regency Hotel in Boxborough MA

August 29 - 30 - 19:30 - [A Technology Demonstration](#) at Generator Amsterdam

August 30 - September 2- [Combined convention](#) - Dallas, Texas


September 5-7 - [Magicians' Alliance of Eastern States](#), Cherry Hills, New Jersey

September 5-8 - [Fröhlich Magic Convention](#) (National Austrian Convention) Bad Aussee, Salzburg, Austria

September 11 - 15 - [Magic All Festival](#) - Spa, Belgium

September 13-15 - [IBM British Ring Annual Convention](#), Llandudno (Wales)





EVOKING EMOTION *with* NLP

EVAN KASTOR

Evan recently wrote a book called Evoke. While some might say that Evan's book is very specific, mainly serving as a companion to the Evoke deck created by Murphy's Magic and Craig Petty, I would disagree.

Evoke, or rather, Evoking Emotions with NLP, is a book written for beginners to gain a better understanding of NLP and a better grasp of the human mind. As humans, we all have similar tools: Mind, Thought, and Consciousness. These tools create the way in which each and every one of us experiences the world around us, whether positive or negative. We end up feeling our thoughts.

Evan's book provides great detail about this specific factor: the feeling of thoughts. He explains that different memories (thoughts) can evoke different emotions. These emotions can be positive or negative. However, the last thing you want from a magic trick is to leave your spectator feeling traumatized or negative in general after having performed for them. There is a very fine line between someone crying because they felt something different

and became emotional, and them actually crying because they were taken back to a place where they would rather not go. Evan takes us through a "how not to mess up your spectator 101," to put it simply. But the book is so much more than that. Because if it's true that we can evoke negative emotions, then the opposite must be true as well. We can also create a much stronger, positive, and well-rounded experience for our spectators—an experience that will elevate them and leave them with huge amounts of positive feelings.

In the book, Evan begins by explaining a system of reading the cards and how to use this to influence a spectator. Finally, he takes us through his script specifically designed to leave a strong and positive impact on the spectator.

It is our responsibility to know what we're doing when playing with our spectators' emotions, whether consciously or unconsciously. This book is a great start and a perfect road map to treating our spectators in a humane way.

You can buy Evoke and Memfinity Deck [here](#):

Furthermore, if you're interested in more of Evan's work, he offers workshops in NLP training, and a new book on mnemonics with the Infinity Deck and his new book on mnemonics is available now.



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